

THE CORKSCREW

Newsletter of the

Wimborne Railway Society

Founded 1975



Issue 116

April 2020



Mallet 99.5906 shunts in the exchange yard at Gernrode on 10th September 1981. See Paul Carpenter's article from page 6.



Henschel 99.6102 at Wernigrode shed, normally used on shunting duties. 9th September 1981.

WIMBORNE RAILWAY SOCIETY COMMITTEE.

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George Russell....Graham Bevan....Barry Moorhouse....Jim Henville

Corkscrew Editor..Ken Aveyard

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Editorial

I'm writing this editorial in the somewhat surreal situation affecting many people as I'm working from home during the Covid-19 virus. Even more annoying is that had we not been in lockdown I would be enjoying my normal end of March holiday up north and probably on York or Preston station!!

The situation nationally has been extreme with severe cuts to bus and rail services, including the movement of many operations from franchises to management contracts as the government seeks to compensate for the massive revenue reductions affecting train operators. On top of this, both South Eastern and Great Western have had direct award extensions to their franchises to 2021 and 2023 respectively.

One further side effect of the virus situation is that training on new trains has been suspended to avoid two men in the cab, but testing and mileage accumulation of new units continues.

Our Chairman Peter Watson has two messages in this issue of The Corkscrew, one written before the advent of the current situation and one covering the later events leading to the suspension of club activities for the time being.

Also in this issue we have part two of Paul Carpenter's East German visit, Peter Watson looks back at 1981, Dave Round updates us on 6695, and I follow up on some winter modelling projects. We also have an extensive and varied picture gallery using pictures kindly sent in by members and friends. Society members will be receiving the regular mini updates and interesting snippets circulated by Martin Catford. The next issue of The Corkscrew will be in June 2020 and currently my folder for that issue contains absolutely nothing so please get writing or the next issue will be very thin. There won't even be my March holiday spotting article (stop cheering!!)

Sit back and enjoy Corkscrew 116. Closing date for 117 is 21 May 2020.

Cover Picture:- 66143 between Wraby Junction and Barnetby in June 2014.
Picture by Peter Watson.

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Well, here we are in the Spring, we've had our first, very productive, Committee meeting and I'm still in the Chairman's seat!

We've agreed budgets to allow all the Club's layouts to progress and a more hands on approach will be adopted so that we understand properly how new or altered schemes can add benefit and provide a better layout for the exhibition circuit. It's always gratifying to receive invitations to show off the Society's work and our layouts have received awards at both Warley (Tarrant Valley) and Frome (Wimborne) in the last 6 months.

You will doubtless have seen the Members' Sales table at Club Nights where any member can offer stock, books etc for sale. This is a replacement for the poorly attended Bring and Buy evenings. It's a free service with no commission – just designed to help members. A Programme of events has been created thanks to the efforts of the Committee but we would still like to see someone come forward to carry the programme through from September to February 2021. We've shown that, with a bit of thought and contributions from across the Society, an entertaining series of talks can be put together. Please help us to deliver that into the future.

You may have seen that the Committee has proposed that there should be a 50% discount on membership for those, admittedly very few, members who live over 50 miles from Wimborne. If agreed at the AGM, that will affect subscriptions from the start of 2021. We felt that those members loyally support WRS and very rarely have the chance to socialise or receive any of the benefits that membership offers and this is a small gesture to say "thank you".

The Society has accumulated quite an archive over the years since the mid 1970s. Programmes, membership lists, celebratory dinners, trips out, exhibitions, charter trains and so forth. It's a shame that this information isn't properly organised and available as a resource and as a way of publicising WRS. Do you think you could take on the task of organising our archive? It would be a relatively simple job that could be done over the next 12 months and then added to when necessary. If that appeals to you please speak to me and we can discuss what's available and arrange a handover. Similarly, WRS has a number of artefacts from the Wimborne line that are displayed at Wimrail and whenever we have Open Days – we desperately need to upgrade the way in which these items are shown and how their importance is explained.

Could you help to write some informative notes, to create or arrange for new display methods? If so, please speak to any Committee member. The deadline for this is Wimrail 2021 in March next year.

Finally, I know that many people enjoy reading “Corkscrew”, especially now that it is readily available on line in glorious colour. We rely heavily (too heavily) on Ken Aveyard to put together an interesting read every couple of months. Why don’t you contribute an article? It could be reminiscences, transport connections in your family tree, a visit you’ve undertaken, thoughts on modern developments and so forth. It doesn’t have to be rail related and if it’s just a couple of photos from a recent holiday then they could provoke other articles from members. Remember – it’s YOUR magazine and we’ve put together well over 100 editions so far. With your input we can make it to 200.

A FURTHER WORD FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

A lot has happened since I penned my first note – things that seemed beyond imagining at that time. One of our strengths as a Society has been the way that we, perhaps unknowingly, care for each other just by being there and by providing a place to talk and to listen. That opportunity is being taken away for an indefinite period. That doesn’t mean that we stop being supportive and acting as a focal point in a rapidly changing world.

There are numerous ways of staying in touch and through the kind offices of people like Martin we hope to be able to swap information during the enforced shut down. Our web site and facebook page will take on new significance as will emails and phone calls. My plea to you is not to self isolate and turn away from contacts but to reach out and keep those links intact. If you haven’t heard from someone for a while – give them a call. It’s what we do as a group of friends and like minded individuals. Some of our members don’t have the luxury of family around them and they will soon feel lonely and isolated – please don’t let that happen.

Wimborne Railway Society began in a small way 45 years ago. I fully intend that we should be a thriving Society when the time comes to celebrate our Golden Jubilee.

At the moment, we have the Moors Valley Evening to look forward to at the end of June when we may be able to enjoy the open air and the company of friends once more. Whatever happens in terms of opening the Club Rooms one thing is clear – we **will** reopen and we **will** continue to offer that special brand of friendship that has always characterised Wimborne Railway Society. So far as I’m concerned I may yet become the least visible Chairman on record and the one who has attended the lowest number of meetings during their tenure – not something to be proud of under normal circumstances but I’m sure you’ll forgive me – and if I haven’t managed to draw up at least a decent outline of a layout after such enforced exile you have my permission to mention it at every opportunity!!
With best wishes until we are able to meet again.

East Germany 1981 for Steam

Part 2 Narrow Gauge and Health & Safety Matters!

By Paul Carpenter

It would be absurd to suggest that visiting narrow gauge lines in the then East German Harz Mountains on a couple of days would qualify me in any way to talk about the once extensive networks that covered the now reunified country. Instead I'll give a little outline history of the two lines visited, this largely lifted from Wikipedia rather than knowledge on my part! This revealed that the history was complicated to say the least and a visit today would show significant differences to our visit in 1981.

On 9th September we made our way to Gernrode station. Here the truncated metre gauge line to Lindenberg (now renamed Strassberg), around 22km was a remnant of a once more extensive route. Alexisbad station, the junction for a short branch to Harzgerode, about 15km out was I think the limit of where we were allowed to go on this line, due to it being a sensitive area then in what was an Eastern Bloc country.

The 'Selkeltalbahn' (Selkel Valley Railway) was opened as far as Magdesprung in 1887, and soon extended to Alexisbad and Harzgerode. Later the Alexisbad to Harzgerode section became a short branch when the line was extended considerably in stages beyond Alexisbad to meet the Harz Railway (Wernigerode – Nordhausen) at Eisfelder Talmuhle. If it hadn't been for World War II then things may have remained as they were, doubtless with closure in the 1950 – 60s. Of course things didn't continue normally. A large proportion of the routes had the rails removed around 1946 and taken as war reparations to the Soviet Union, leaving 22 km south from Gernrode to Lindenberg, plus the 3 km branch from Alexisbad to Harzgerode. In 1949 the remaining lines became part of the newly nationalised DR (Deutsch Reichsbahn).

However not long after our visit starting in 1983 reinstatement has taken place of much of the lifted track so that there's now 140 km of metre gauge line to visit in the area, and without the chance of being arrested and taken in for questioning! Swatting up on the subject now, I find that Gernrode which was to us as interesting for standard gauge steam on the line from Quedlinburg through Gernrode and on to Ballenstedt and Frosse has seen some changes that could not have been envisaged at the time. The standard gauge line now part of Deutsch Bundesbahn was closed in 2004. Not only that, the successful tourist line that is the Selkel Valley line was extended over its trackbed with conversion to metre gauge to Quedlinberg in 2006. That makes my standard gauge photos a degree more interesting than my metre gauge ones!

Talking of photography, our luck with the weather had now run out, and to illustrate this article I'm trying to sift through one awful photo after another with just a few marginally acceptable examples. One forgets now when using digital how pretty acceptable efforts can be produced on the dulllest day in near darkness. I can't say I was ever particularly into photography itself as a hobby, but looking back the photos illustrating this article would probably have been better in monochrome, if not taken by someone else!



Mallet 99.5901 restored to original identity as No 11 leaves Gernrode with the second train of the day for Alexisbad. 9th September 1981.

Anyway we had arrived at Gernrode around midday after some photography in murky conditions on the Saalfeld – Jena line (looked at in Part 3). Both standard and narrow gauge sides of the station were busy, the narrow gauge having its small separate buildings across the forecourt of its much larger neighbour. On the metre gauge side we found 1897 vintage 0-4-4-0T Mallet 99.5901, though carrying its earlier number No 11, and in smart green livery to boot being readied to work the next passenger train. It wasn't long before sister loco 99.5902 in standard black livery arrived with a passenger train. A number of goods wagons including one tank wagon around the station suggested freight operations were still of some importance.

However our attention now turned across the tracks to the standard gauge side, 2-10-0 50.3552 had arrived from the Quedlinburg direction with a passenger service. Meanwhile classmate 50.3629 was engaged in some vigorous shunting, possibly encouraged by our presence.



50.3552 has arrived with a passenger service at Gernrode. Meanwhile 50.3629 blocks the level crossing whilst shunting some cement hoppers. 9th September 1981.

From what I can see in my photos it looks as though cement hoppers were being shunted into what may have been a cement distribution point. Certainly as far as road users were concerned the level crossing barriers were down a lot of the time. Before long we were able to witness the departure of No 11 with her short train of a van and three coaches. The metre gauge line left in an easterly direction immediately turning away from the standard gauge to turn sharply towards the south-west over the road, though its own level crossing was ungated. For some reason we decided to intercept 50.3629 with its now much truncated freight heading east to get an utterly uninspiring photo. I remember even now I'd rather we'd followed No 11, but we did come back the next day. Anyway we headed for Halberstad where there was a busy freight yard for more Class 50 action including 50.3649 and 50.3562, all the above being coal burners.

The German class 50 had first seen the light of day in 1939, eventually numbering over 3,000. Only 350 were to pass to the East German Deutsch Reichsbahn after the war, far fewer than stayed in the west. Between 1958-62 208 of these were rebuilt (Rekoloks). The main difference was reboiling with boilers constructed from better quality steel which gave better heat conductivity, and also a considerably longer life. In addition a water preheater and improved draughting arrangements were amongst features that gave better performance.

The rebuilt locomotives were renumbered between 50.3501 – 50.3708. In fact it was an engine of this class that saw out the end of normal steam operation on DR in 1988.



50.3680 makes quite a spectacle restarting its freight out of Quedlinburg. 10th September 1981.

Next day we did follow the metre gauge out of Gernrode, but not before we'd first gone to nearby Quedlinburg, where the metre gauge now extends, though not at that time. We were lucky to find 50.3680 stood at the head of a southbound freight waiting the road, and watched it make a volcanic departure over the level crossing.

On to Gernrode where the weather was as dull as yesterday. Black liveried Mallet 99.5906 shunting in the exchange sidings provided some interest. (See picture on page 2) This loco, although similar to the previously seen Mallets was built in 1918 for the German Army railways, differing from the others in that the rear two axles were inside framed. After attending to some open wagons carrying gravel, it then made up the morning passenger train with what was apparently the standard formation of a van and three coaches. We would catch up with this loco later at Alexisbad.

Standard gauge steam was still more of a draw, and time has shown that was probably a correctly judged priority. Some heavy freight was being moved from Quedlinburg through Gernrode. Through a pleasant orchard area we stationed ourselves overlooking the single line. 50.3556 came storming up the gradient with a mixed freight. It obviously berthed this at Gernrode because after a while it came back past us tender first light engine for Quedlinberg.



50.3556 and 50.3708 combine to lift their heavy freight out of Quedlinburg towards Gernrode. 10th September 1981.

The next freight was an even more extraordinary spectacle. 50.3556 was back but piloting 50.3708, the pair storming the grade. Whether the quality of the coal added to the smoke effects we cared not. We caught up with this train in Gernrode station, noting that a fair number of the wagons contained agricultural equipment. We watched the two class 50s depart eastwards, as did a number of lads leaning on the crossing barriers. All every day stuff to them no doubt.

I've done a photo search on google (in the absence of street-view coverage for Germany on Google Maps). What a difference, as stated earlier the standard gauge line closed in 2004, and even photos taken a while back show an abandoned trackless formation on that side of the station.

After the excitement of the double-headed 50 class, we now turned our attention back to the metre gauge part of the station where 99.5902 was at the head of the next service (probably early afternoon) formed of three coaches. It was decided walking along the lineside bank just beyond the level crossing would provide the best viewpoint of the departure. Instead of concentrating on 99.5902 brewing up, I'd have been better watching where I was walking. A small length of wood with an upturned long nail was found by my foot in my lightweight trainers (more like tennis shoes). Needless to say the nail went straight through the sole, carrying on right through my foot.



99.5902 has the mid-day train today from Gernrode station. Our impressive (in East Germany!) Ford Escort Mk 3 is in the station forecourt. 10th September 1981.

The response from the others was, "that'll teach you to wear proper boots", and we just carried on as though nothing had happened, although it curtailed me taking my share of the car driving. No rushing off to A&E, in fact didn't get it looked at, if I remember rightly even on return home. Not the lack of attention to be recommended, either pre or post puncturing of my foot!



Left 99.5902 traverses the pleasant countryside en-route from Gernrode to Alexisbad. 10th September 1981.

Right 99.5902 drops down the steep gradient to run alongside the road at it is believed Drahtzug on its way to Alexisbad. 10th September 1981.

We would follow this train as far as we were allowed in those days which from my photos would appear to be the attractive station at Alexisbad. My fellow enthusiasts take the credit for having identified up front some good photo opportunity locations, though goodness knows why I took so few shots. Guess that's living in the digital age today that's changed ones perspective. Obviously I've forgotten how expensive film was. Anyway some weak sunshine helped as the day wore on. The terrain made for difficult railway construction as the line did a lot of contouring, and short steep gradients were seemingly fairly commonplace. At one point, possibly at a place called Drahtzug, the line dived steeply down to run alongside the road tramway fashion before peeling away again.



The impressive station at Alexisbad is the backdrop for 99.5906. 10th September 1981.

The train had already become a tourist attraction for East Germans and the train was more than comfortably full with a possibly a school party or at least young adults. Doubtless this welcome traffic was helping to keep the line alive, though after reunification, under Deutsch Bundesbahn, the financial costs of a lot of lines was looked at in a different way. Happily a fair bit of the narrow gauge has survived to the present day.

Another piece of narrow gauge that we'd slotted in between the two visits to Gernrode was to Wernigerode where again standard and metre gauge could be seen alongside one another. From Wernigerode a metre gauge line to this day runs south to Nordhausen with an important branch up to the Brocken mountain.

In 1981 the Brocken mountain top was an area of extensive surveillance and intelligence gathering at two listening stations, one Soviet and one German Democratic Republic. Certainly a restricted area and 'westerners' were definitely 'verboten' within this general area, something perhaps forgotten in the now freely visited area. Anyway during our visit we didn't seem to have ventured much further than the Wernigerode area. The line from here was mainly in the hands of very large locomotives, members of the 99.23 / 24 class. These 2-10-2T locos were built in the mid-1950s for the route from Wernigerode and also a line from Eisfeld to Schonbrunn, and in number totalled seventeen. They were essentially a development of an earlier class of three locomotives (class 99.2) of 1931 of which one survives to this day on the Harz group of lines.

Unsurprisingly the post war locos are the most powerful steam engines to have run on the narrow gauge in Germany. They have undergone many changes during their life. Problems no doubt caused by the long wheelbase in the initial batch of seven engines, resulted in a system of side play in the form of coupling pairs of axles to aid running round the curves encountered on the routes over which they were utilised. This was built into the subsequent batch. Plate frames have always caused problems with the class and several now have redesigned frames. Conversion from coal to oil firing occurred over seven years commencing in 1977. Originally numbered 99.231 – 247, then in 1970 into a computerised numbering system, 99.7231 etc, then on conversion to oil burning becoming 99.0231 etc. At a later date subsequent to our visit they were gradually restored to coal burning, presumably why they are now again numbered 99.7231 etc. All the class survive with about a dozen in service at the present time.

If this section of important narrow gauge didn't occupy a lot of our time, I'd put the blame on the inclement weather, the few photos suggesting heavy rain was never far away. Anyway there was plenty of activity at the shed at Wernigerode on the morning of Wednesday 9th September. Three 99.23-24 class were being prepared for service 99.0242/46/47. Also on shed was 1897 built Mallet No 13, strictly speaking this was 99.5903, but had been restored to green livery and its former identity.

Another interesting loco on shed, in steam this time unlike the Mallet, was 99.6102. (see picture on page 2) This 0-6-0T, one of a class of two was built by Henschel in 1914 for the German Army apparently as a research test into the merits of superheated and saturated steam locomotives. 99.6102 was built as the saturated boiled loco, and was formerly number 7. Both locos had been transferred to the Wernigerode – Nordhausen line by 1921. Generally used around Wernigerode up until the early 1980s, they survived to be taken over by the present operators of the Harz narrow gauge railways.



Wernigerode with 50.3649 on the standard gauge engaged in shunting whilst on the metre gauge shed are, left to right, 99.5903 (as No 13), 99.6102 and 99.0246. 9th September 1981.

On the standard gauge main line 50.3649 arrived on a freight, and after engaging in some shunting retired to stand alongside the metre gauge locos on shed. Would have made for some great photos but for the appalling light! First arrival of the day at Wernigerode on the narrow gauge was 99.0241 on around seven coaches, after which it went on shed to take water and oil, the four locos of this class noted here all being converted to oil burning. The two older locos were coal burners. The turntable allowed access to the three road shed in a semi roundhouse layout.



Left 99.0241 arrives at Wernigerode. 9th September 1981.

Right Perhaps not as attractive as the older narrow gauge locomotives 99.0241 on the turntable at Wernigerode nevertheless presents a brutish powerful look! 9th September 1981.

Anyway it was time to move on because of our tight schedule, and next time I'll finish with action around Saalfeld in part three. Apologies again for any errors in this account, others will be more familiar with the country and its railways than me.

WITH THE BENEFIT OF HINDSIGHT – 1981

by Peter Watson

Thanks to Pete Renaut offering his old magazines I have been able to enjoy looking back through the early copies of “Steam World”, beginning in April 1981, and what interesting contents there are. So much so that I thought I would pick out a few and put them into occasional articles that will coincide with my reading.

Michael Draper, the then General Manager of the Severn Valley Railway, wrote a provocative article suggesting that the preservation movement was set on a path that was completely unsustainable and that, in his opinion, there could be room for only 5 or 6 large preservation sites in the country – clearly the SVR being one. There was insufficient money and volunteer support to sustain any more.

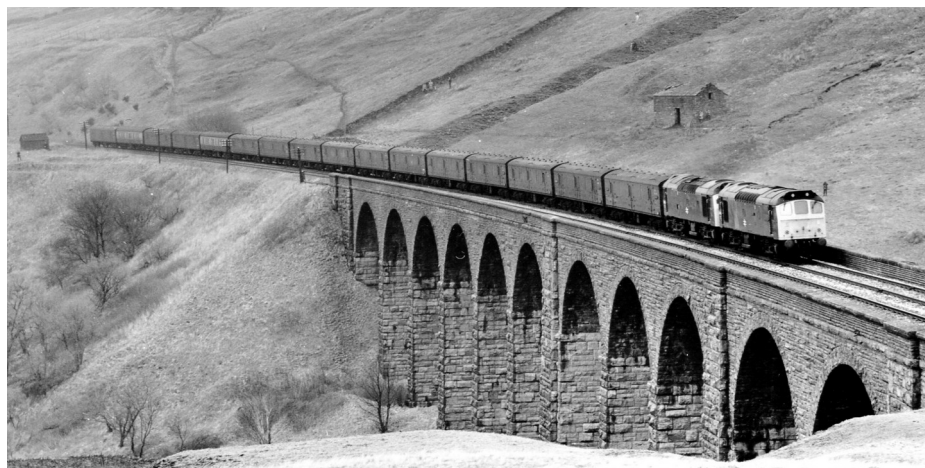
What would he say now to the number of sites, their geographical spread, their importance to the wider tourism industry and the cash that can be raised for not only maintaining fleets of locomotives but also for creating new builds to replace those lost in the widespread scrapping of the 1960s (“Grange”, 47XX and A1) but those older and long departed locos such as a “Saint”, GWR “County”, LNER G5 and P2?? There was a consensus then that it would be good for steam preservation if a number of smaller lines and proposals foundered as this would prove that proper economics applied and sentimentality had no place.

Would there be a Swanage Railway if his predictions had been close to reality? Would the preservation “industry” be dying a protracted death from lack of interest and investment? Which 5/6 schemes do you think would have survived?

That brings me neatly on to the vexed question of enabling steam engines to access the Capital. Remember, this was at a time when only KGV had been in steam in London – in 1971 and 1979. The writer suggests that there is only one “under used, non Inter-City railway backwater penetrating right into London: Marylebone”!! Long before Chiltern Railways showed how a dedicated route franchise could work to benefit both the operator and the customer, Marylebone in the early 1980s had an hourly dmu service outside peak hours. The terminus saw only 4 train movements an hour. Compare that to today where there are 47 trains scheduled to arrive and depart in the 3 hours between 07.00 and 10.00 on weekdays. Now we have regular steam hauled trains at Victoria and other termini are not immune from their presence. What would our author have made of this transformation – for transformation it surely is.

In the October 1981 edition is a report that Dorset County Council had recommended the use of a 2 mile stretch of the trackbed as a Corfe Castle by pass. Had the scheme gone ahead we would no longer have the railway, the station or the viaduct over the Studland road and the railway cutting would have been doubled in width! A previous proposal to build a by pass to the west of the village would have been somewhat cheaper and the County Council had, only the previous year, spent thousands of pounds on research into the railway restoration plan and a survey had found a 3:1 majority of local residents in favour of the railway resurrection scheme. DCC was not entirely opposed to the plans for a preservation line – it was about to agree the lease of the track from Swanage to Harman's Cross and the GPO had offered a contract to carry mails from Swanage to Wareham should the line eventually be reopened throughout.

S15 30828 arrived in Eastleigh on 4th March 1981 under the auspices of the Eastleigh Railway Preservation Society. It was the last complete loco built at Eastleigh that was still at Woodham's Yard in Barry and cost £10,500 to purchase – the same price it cost to build in 1927! Restoration was scheduled to be completed in 1985 – it was 1994 before that target was achieved. In November it was reported that Jubilee "Leander" was almost complete after overhaul but the costs had left the owning group in a "dire state". The Gloucestershire/Warwickshire Railway managed to raise £73,000 in a share offer to enable the purchase of the trackbed from Cheltenham to Honeybourne and Long Marston to Stratford and the first track was laid at Toddington. Survey work on the Ropley to Alton section of the Watercress Line was completed at a cost of £6,000 and works to complete the line were priced at "not less than £500,000". Meanwhile T9 30120 arrived at the railway on loan from the NRM.



Not Ribbleshead but still on the threatened Settle and Carlisle 25259 25302 Perth to Red Bank vans at Arten Gill 6 April 1985. WRS P679_4

The Ribblehead saga continued with Barbara Castle asking the European Parliament for financial assistance. Sir Peter Parker had told local MPs that the £6m costs to repair the viaduct were difficult to justify given all the other maintenance liabilities on the S&C.

Modellers were getting excited about the forthcoming release of the Mainline Pannier tank at a cost of £16.50 – “the amount of detail is staggering for an off-the-shelf model – even the whistles of two different sizes are there”. The Hornby Schools was also well received but would set you back £26.95 – that’s £92 today.

The final magazine of 1981 reported that Preston Park sheds near Brighton were the target of a preservation group who wanted to set up a steam centre for the south of England including locomotive workshops and a museum. At the Swanage Railway, ten thousand names had been added to a petition to block the proposed bypass route along the trackbed. In Corfe Castle itself, over half the electors had signed a petition in support of retaining the line through to Wareham.

If ever an article had an appropriate title..... in 1981 the West Somerset Railway had to make staff redundant to stem its financial losses. A major internal reorganisation took place (does any of this sound familiar?) with a new Chairman and Finance Director. In the short term, the loss making mid-week dmu service linking local communities along the line was stopped.

What a wonderful opportunity went begging in late 1969 according to a feature article. The Meon Valley line from Fareham to Alton had seen a small section used at Droxford where a Sadler pace-Railer had been based for testing. This was a single ended luxury road coach mounted on a 4 wheel chassis (an early Pacer?) with platform level entry, air conditioning and reclining seats (no – definitely not an early Pacer!). Rolling stock and locos, including a USA tank, had been moved there by a group hoping to generate interest in a scheme to keep all or part of the line. Imagine that today with a junction near Fareham and joining with the Mid-Hants at Alton. Sadly, it was not to be as BR took out the junction and sold the line in 1970. The stock went, temporarily, to Liss on the Longmoor Military Railway and the USA tank ended up on the Bluebell after the LMR closed down. As for the pace-Railer.....

Do you remember PhotoRail? They were offering to process 36 exp colour film in 5x3 format for £3.99. Meanwhile, you could buy a Radio Caroline souvenir of two records, a colour poster and their latest magazine – all for £7.00.

Senior members of the Society will be available on Club nights to explain any of the above to younger members.

Winter Modelling Projects

by Ken Aveyard

In Corkscrew 114 I showed some of my winter modelling projects including the floor of an otherwise anonymous bus or coach.



The next stage was to paint and add the seats, front bulkhead and engine cover seen as here in front of the completed and partially painted body.



The finished model posed on a new diorama made for the 2020 Model Bus Federation London Show.

Now those of you who know your old buses will know exactly what this is, but for those who don't, it's a model of a Leyland Gnu the first example being announced in November 1937 and unusual by having the radiator positioned to the side of the engine in front of the nearside cab seat. This allowed a longer saloon floor of over 25ft and the provision of 39 seats. At the time the maximum length for coaches was 27ft 6in on two axles and 30ft on three and the Gnu was seen as an alternative to the more conventional looking twin rear axle Leyland Tiger where tyre scrub on the rear axle was a problem. With twin steering tyre scrub was eliminated.

The first pair designated TEP1 were fitted with front entrance bus bodies for Alexanders in Scotland, and a single centre door coach was produced with a slightly shorter wheelbase than the model. In August 1939 City Coach Company of Brentwood in Essex took the only other five Gnu's produced on the TEC2 version as depicted by the model. The advent of the second world war resulted in Leyland's bus production being much reduced, post war more conventional designs were favoured, and with the relaxation to allow 30ft on two axles for single deck vehicles the Gnu faded in to history. A similar twin steer design with an underfloor midships engine, the Leyland Panda, saw only a single example built.



The two Bradford trolleybuses in the previous article were finished in the early post war livery of light blue with grey roof. On the left is the Northern Coachbuilders Mk1 style of body fitted in 1946 to a 1934 AEC 661T chassis. Bradford rebodied many trolleybuses between 1944 and 1963 both domestic and second hand acquisitions of which there were many.

The picture on the right is of the Roe utility body as fitted to 18 Karrier W chassis delivered in 1945 and 1946. Whereas the AEC is yet to receive fleet and registration numbers, the Karrier represents 739 DKY739 using a transfer made from a colour picture of the actual bus. Destination displays were also made by scanning colour prints in my collection.

The side and rear adverts I found on line as a free download and are authentic reproductions of adverts found on Bradford's buses and trams. The fleetnames are Fox Transfers.

6695 update

by Dave Round

The WRS and the 6695 Locomotive Group historically have had a close working relationship, with many members actively working to promote the engine. After a very successful working period on the Swanage Railway, the locomotive, some 5 years ago, met with an untimely accident, on its way to the West Somerset Railway, causing the engine to be prematurely withdrawn from service. Since that day the locomotive group now known as the 6695 Locomotive LTD, have undertaken to carry out a 10 year overhaul to return the locomotive to steam.

Early 2020 has seen the chassis of the locomotive relocated to the Swindon and Cricklade Railway and the boiler being brought up to standard, ready for the fitting of smoke tubes, at the Flour Mill in Gloucestershire. The summer of 2020 could see the return to steam of the locomotive providing the final funds of around £45,000 can be raised.

Shares in the new company are set at £50 with the old share system holdings being converted to £50 and multiplied by the number held. Our £30 smoke tube appeal is more urgent now, as the 218 small tubes, are on order from a German manufacturer. A new website promoting the engine is in through final stages of completion and should be up and running very soon. So 2020 is going to be an interesting year in the 6695 Story.

Picture Gallery

A selection of pictures received recently.



I took an RT bus up from Somerset to Reliance Bus Works, Stoke on Trent. The nearest station to get a train back is Longport. 56302 was in the up loop north of the station waiting a path on a ballast working. Paul Carpenter



60007 Sir Nigel Gresley working hard on wet rails to get the 13.30 departure for Pickering away from Grosmont on 30th May 2013.

P Watson



Line up of Class 25NCs at De Aar in May 1980. These locos were all named after ladies - usually the wife or daughter of the regular driver. The idea was started by the Locomotive Foreman, Gordon Watson. He was Foreman at De Aar from 1969 to 1978 and about 50 of the big 4-8-4s carried names, as did a couple of shunting engines.

It was Gordon Watson who looked after withdrawn locos of both 2ft and 3ft 6in gauge that found their way to De Aar before heading to a proposed South African Railways Museum. At one time he had over two dozen historic and last survivors stored alongside the main running shed. As this was in the middle of the Karroo there was no likelihood of deterioration in the open air and they were there when I visited in 1980. He later moved back to his home town of Germiston and died in early 1980 while at work at Germiston shed. I missed meeting him by just a couple of months.

A true champion of steam he undertook modifications to locos in response to the suggestions of crews and was not afraid to make changes that would make the lives of his men easier. When he was told to allocate his stoker fired 15Fs to shunting and trip work he arranged to have them transferred to another depot where they would still be able to undertake main line work.

Similarly, in 1977, he took two dozen unrebuilt 12A class locos that were scheduled for withdrawal and had them allocated to De Aar as yard shunters - the rebuilt 12ARs and 15ARs being moved on. They were busy around the shed and yard when I was there and provided some fine photographs under the clear blue skies of the South African winter.

Peter Watson



Class 24 3627 crosses the Kaaimans River bridge alongside the Indian Ocean on the 06.55 George to Knysna mixed in May 1980. It was about 7.40am with frost on the ground - I had been waiting for almost half an hour and was so cold I could barely focus the camera. Peter Watson



08436 shunting a PW train at Swanage station on 21 January 2020.

G Barnard



The RT that Paul Carpenter took to Stoke on Trent seen at Michael Wood Services M5. Paul Carpenter



DRS Trans Pennine liveried 68029 seen stabled between duties at York on 10 January 2020 with a pair of class 66's alongside. Colin Aveyard



This sculpture by George Wyllie was commissioned by **SCOTRAIL**[®] to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway and was unveiled by The Rt. Hon. The Viscount Whitelaw KT, CH, MC on Sunday 16 February 1992.

This sculpture can be found on the Edinburgh bound platform at Falkirk High station. The plaque reads “This sculpture by George Wyllie was commissioned by Scotrail to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway and was unveiled by The Rt. Hon. The Viscount Whitelaw KT CH MC on Sunday 16 February 1992.” KA

A busy day at Doncaster 24 January 2020

Pictures by Colin Aveyard



801110 and 801106 both 5 car all electric sets waiting to couple up.



Hull trains 802303 one of the Hitachi units replacing the 180's.



37402 seen passing en route from Norwich Crown Point to Neville Hill with a short rake of Anglia mk3 coaches. Since the conversion of Norwich depot to a Stadler facility, all repairs and tyre turning for mk3's require them to be taken to the East Midlands HST depot at Neville Hill.



Still dumped at Doncaster after many years is this EPS generator coach number 97634.



Northern Rail liveried class 144 Pacer unit 144009 seen at Doncaster on a Sheffield service.
Colin Aveyard



One for the ship enthusiasts, the Norwich Sea Scouts training ship TS Lord Nelson seen moored on the River Yare opposite Norwich Station.