



Western Locomotive Association e-Newsletter – February 2025

Welcome to your February edition of the Western Locomotive Association e-Newsletter and an update on activity and news from the first month of 2025.

A busy month with lots to report as D1062 Western Courier's Winter Maintenance Work Schedule commences, and significant progress continues to be made on the overhaul of D1013 Western Rangers "B" end bogie.

Whoever, as this e-Newsletter is being prepared, the news of a catastrophic embankment failure at the northern end of the Severn Valley Railway has shocked us all. This is going to take time and money to repair and to re-establish the rail link to Bridgnorth – and comes at a time when the SVR was starting to get back on its feet after all the trials and tribulations that the 2020s have already exposed us all too.

The WLA have offered to help the SVR in any way that we can – see News from the Chair for a further update from Roger Smith and we all now need to pull together in order to get this sorted as quickly as possible so that we once again can hear the roar of Maybachs powering up Eardington Bank.



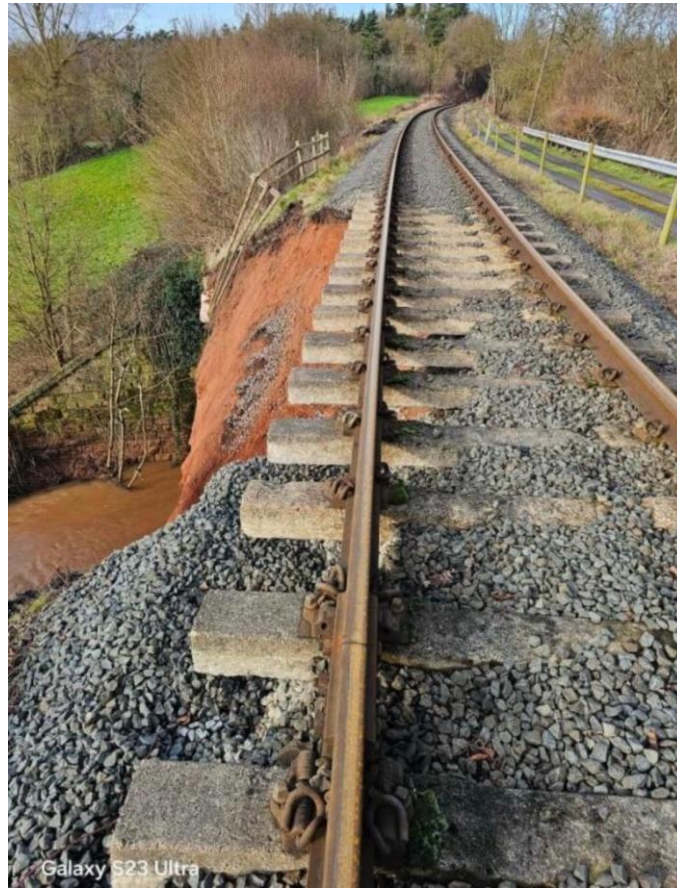
The SVR's announcement was as follows:-

"We are sad to report that a serious embankment failure as occurred between Hampton Loade and Bridgnorth, leaving the line unpassable.

We are due to open the whole line on 15th February for half-term and the start of the 2025 season, but clearly services between Bridgnorth and Hampton Loade cannot run. We are still planning however to run trains from Kidderminster on the unaffected part of the railway line.

This is of course a further impact on us as a heritage line and the cost that we now face to being the line back into full operation. Things were beginning to stabilise for the SVR, following several years of financial struggles and this is the last thing that we needed.

Inevitably, we are going to have to find the funds for the essential repair and would welcome all the help that we can get. If you would like to assist, we would be extremely grateful, and you can donate to the SVR Resilience Fund at <https://svr.co.uk/resilience/> “



Anyone at the TMD on 18th January would have witnessed one of the depots “super shunts” as locomotives were moved all around the yard like chess pieces in order position locomotives booked into the TMD over the pit lanes. D1062 was of course at the centre of these moves, with her final resting place being over the side pit for the commencement of winter maintenance – read on to find out more.



Carried over from last month, and spotted whilst working on D1013's "B" end bogie, the question was asked "why is number 73 painted on the corner of the bogie?"



Of course, we received an array of answers, ranging from it must have been under D1073 Western Bulwark, or it last received attention in 1973!

At the same time as this question being circulated, one of our members asked a similar question regarding bogie numbers as he was the lucky owner of a number of bogie plates from both Swindon and Crewe locomotives with numbers varying from 1000/47 (Swindon) to 1000/1061 (Crewe).

But returning to the "73" question, and looking at Swindon paperwork, it is confirmed that the bogies under D1013 are bogie numbers 35 and 73!

Our intrepid report, Mr Mark Perry, then took things further and confirmed that the "B" end bogie on D1013 is indeed number 73C which was we believe fitted at Swindon on 30th November 1972 after a major failure on one axle identified during UAT testing.

Our "source" also believed that at "A" end, the bogie number is in fact 85C fitted again at Swindon in January 1972!

So, roll on the commencement of work on "A" end bogie – and the big reveal – 35 or 85.

For any of wanting to own your own “Western”, then maybe there is an opportunity on February 7th when D1022 Western Sentinel comes up for auction.

Lot 3 5 inch gauge Class 52 D1022 'Western Sentinel' in expertly W...
by Best Model Toys



**“5” inch gauge Class 52 D1022 'Western Sentinel' in expertly Weathered condition
From the Rob Denton collection (Reading)**

Dual Battery (included) operated model of a diesel hydraulic locomotive Class 52 locomotive Co-Co configuration, finished in Rail Blue livery with Number D1022 (nameplate 'Western Sentinel' not attached but included). Weathered finish to very high standard. Imposing 1.83m in length. Large motors fitted to each bogie. Steel chassis with fibreglass body shell. Two 12v batteries plus separate Yuasa battery for the four speakers, lights, Mtronics DCi 120-24 speed controller, two Mtronics digiSound 602. Dual sound controllers for increased realism. Controller unit finished in co-ordinated livery. Excellent paintwork and fine detailing, cab driver and his mate, along with newspaper reading engineer and another smoking driver (needing to be fixed to rear cab), many decals including 'Built Swindon 1963' plate.
Locomotive active until recent times.

Not Tested; Buffer to Buffer 183cm, Height 37cm (approx)

The display stand is not included. A video is available and further images. Viewing at Horsham, West Sussex by appointment.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLnBzFQPAAK5EJCbYzx1ENovkUeXzKnmXu>

Footnote:

Rob Denton was a member of the Reading Society of Model Engineers, regularly showing his large scale locomotives across the country to the delight of young and old. Rob had an eye for detail which was reflected in the detailing of his models.

Western Sentinel was built in Swindon in 1963, in service until 1977 and scrapped in Swindon in 1978.

The auction is being held by Best Model Toys on 7th February at 10.00am

See www.bestmodel.toys for the full 4 minute video of D1022.

Approaching 90 miles an hour – to end this introduction, I would like to thank Nigel Ratledge for allowing me to share this magnificent image – and a massive thanks to John Baker, who actually took the photograph, and to John Lewis and Lindsay Lambert.



In this e-Newsletter

Features in this e-Newsletter include the following:

- News from The Chair.
- The Western Lottery.
- D1013 'B' Bogie Outstanding Workload (repeated from last month for information and updates)
- Monthly News Updates – an update on all that has been happening over the last month.
- Western Courier re-visited.
- Whizzo Woods.
- Sales Team Update.
- Membership News.
- Book of the Month.
- Media Coverage.
- Severn Valley Railway News – Running Dates & Events.
- Members Forum & Gallery – where we hear directly from you, our WLA membership.
- Closing Notes & Book Ends.

Of course, the usual reminder - the aim of this e-Newsletter is to keep you up to date on all things “WLA” – what we have been doing and what is being planned along with anything else that we think you will find interesting. Your feedback and suggestions regarding what you want to see and read are important, so please do share, and please do not hold back!

And please send in anything that you think will be of interest to your fellow members – memories, photographs, stories and articles - and help to keep this e-Newsletter alive and interesting and informative.

News from the Chair

Well, January went quickly with lots going on behind the scenes!

First of all, though, I expect you've already heard the sad news concerning the embankment failure on the SVR, which will restrict services from Kidderminster to Hampton Loade for the time being, if not for the year ahead. A news item was posted on our website and social media which summarised the position as follows:

On behalf of the SVR, everyone will be concerned to hear about a serious embankment failure which occurred between Hampton Loade and Bridgnorth, leaving the line impassable.

The SVR reports:

"We are due to reopen the whole line on 15 February for half-term and the start of our 2025 season, but clearly services between Bridgnorth and Hampton Loade cannot run. We are still planning, however, to run trains from Kidderminster on the unaffected part of the railway line.

We want to reassure passengers who've pre-booked tickets that we'll be in touch soon by email, and they don't need to phone us. We'll get this sorted out as quickly as we possibly can.

There is of course, a further impact on us as a heritage line, and that's the cost we now face to bring our full line back into operation. Things were just beginning to stabilise for the SVR, following several years of financial struggles, and this is the last thing we needed.

Inevitably, we're going to have to find the funds to pay for this essential repair and would welcome all the help that we can get. If you would like to assist, we would be extremely grateful, and you can donate to the SVR Resilience Fund at <https://svr.co.uk/resilience/> "

Obviously, it is too soon to know how this might affect the WLA's running season but rest assured, we will let everyone know if there's to be any changes to our planned events, once further information becomes available.

Donations to the SVR Resilience Fund can be made by at: <https://svr.co.uk/resilience/>

You may like to know that I sent a personal message on behalf of the WLA to Jonathan Dunster, MD to express our full support in helping to put things right and that once the SVR knows the full extent of the of the problem and what's needed to undertake the repair, we will certainly do our bit to help.

As mentioned above, it's too soon to know how this is going to affect our running season and it's as well to bear in mind, whilst all our running dates are now on our website under Events, there will undoubtedly be some changes.

I'm sure that everyone will do their best to support the SVR in whatever way possible, during this challenging time.

In other news, we launched our new Western Lottery at the beginning of the year, thanks to the initiative of our Fundraising Office, Mike Tromans. Although our raffles have been a regular success story, this is uncharted waters for the WLA, especially after Christmas when money can be a bit tight! Anyway, so far we've raised £1,725, where 50% will go to prize money and 50% will go to our locomotives. And although the draw will take place later on this month, there's still plenty time to buy a lottery ticket from our on-line shop, if you're feeling lucky!

During the month, we held a meeting to understand and clarify the work required to return D1062 back to traffic and work required on the continuing overhaul of D1013.

Basically, D1062 is booked onto the pit at Kidderminster TMD to Sunday 9th February and then from 10th to 20th April, whilst D1013 has been requested to go over the pit for 7 weeks from 17th May to 6th July.

Work required for D1062 includes:

- IBC to be placed in pit area, ready to drain down coolant at “A” end – Done
- “A” end preheater to be replaced with overhauled unit from Bridgnorth – Work in Progress
- Preheater and 6 brake cylinders to be transported back to Bridgnorth - Done
- Radiator element No. 3 to be replaced with element & gasket in Container No. 2 - Done
- All cardan shafts to be greased with MP 2 grease (or more modern equivalent).
- Both bogies and axle boxes to be greased with MP 3 grease.
- Final Drives to be drained and refilled with fresh oil by 9th February.
Sticking brushes at “B” end preheater to be attended to.
- Air governors and safety valve to be repaired/replaced and tested.
- Check to see if front air receiver straps need replacing.
- Engine components to be checked
- Underframe checks to be completed.

Work required on D1013 includes:

- Cooler Group at “A” end to be lifted out for repair.
- Thrust brackets to be attended to.
- On-going bogie work.
- NDT’s to be carried out.
- Bodywork/window & frame repairs.
- Horn box repair.
- Fuel hose replacement.
- Remove both preheaters for attention and testing.
- Turbo charger overhaul

Thanks to all those who have been helping out with the work, whether at Bridgnorth or Kidderminster and special thanks to Paul F who hired a van to transport the refurbished pre-heater to TMD and to Darren who managed to get the pre-heater installed, ready for connecting up!

To help keep tabs on how we manage things, we have a Committee Meeting (by Zoom) on 12th February, a Board Meeting (by Zoom) on 19th February and then a Working Members Meeting on the 15th March at Kidderminster, so not only is there plenty of work going on with the locomotives, there’s plenty going on “behind the scenes”!

Finally, a great deal of work has been undertaken to update our Business Plan for the next three years. This will shortly be made available to the Management Committee to review and then, as usual, a copy will be made available as a download PDF from our website. Needless to say, with all the business uncertainty in general, not to mention the latest challenge facing the SVR, we are proposing what we think are achievable figures rather than anything unrealistic – best to overachieve, rather than the other way round!

And despite everything, there’s still lots to look forward to!

Thank you!

Roger Smith
Chairman

The Western Lottery.

WESTERN LOTTERY

WESTERN LOTTERY 2025.

2025 SEES THE LAUNCH OF OUR NEW WESTERN LOTTERY.

This lottery will run twice each year, in January and in June **with the first draw being held in February** and the second in July.

The Lottery will be OPEN FOR ENTRIES ON January 15th.

Go to the Lottery page on our website, enter your membership number and purchase your £25 donation ticket.

The lottery is open to WLA members only.

You can enter as many times as you like!

The more entries the more prize money!

50% of entry funds going to the Association and
50% is split between 1st, 2nd & 3rd prize winners.

So, as an example if we have 100 entries, we raise £2500

£1250 goes to D1013, D1048 & D1062.

£1250 to be won by members in Prizes, split as follows:

60% 1st prize £750.

25% to 2nd prize £312.50.

15% to 3rd prize. £187.50.

You can win a big cash prize with the main beneficiaries being our 3 class 52s.

More chance of winning than the national lottery!

Many thanks.

Mike Tromans. Fund Raising officer.

D1013 'B' Bogie Outstanding Workload.

Bogie Frame

- Scrape, Clean and Prime Paint – on-going.
- Identify areas (welds) requiring Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) and carry out NDT testing, to be carried out in conjunction with Torque Arm rubber replacement – first testing on 5th February.
- Write procedure/s, carry out repairs to any welds identified by NDT – only required if faults found.
- Primary spring pocket recess edges – build up with weld and dress back areas worn away by Primary Springs rubbing.
- Prime paint and finish paint (Black) complete framework.

Brake Rigging – removed / in-situ.

- Scrape, clean, prime and finish paint (Black) – on-going.
- Refit all removed rigging (timing of this to be advised)– new fasteners required.

Intermediate Gearbox

- Drain oil, remove Oil Pump for inspection, repair if required and refit.
- Casing exterior – scrape, clean, prime and finish paint (Black).
- Refit to Bogie.

Equalising Beams – 2 off

- Items currently at Bridgnorth in a stripped-down state – now returned to TMD for NDT testing.
- NDT of central pivot weld
- Weld 'top hat' bushes in place around central pivot
- Re-assemble Equalising Beams complete – new pins, bushes and bearings in-stock, awaiting arrival of new Spring Hangers (on order)
- Pedestal Bracket – new grease pipes to manufacture and silver solder in position – SVR ESMP (Bridgnorth workshop) currently undertaking this work.
- Refit Equalising Beams to Bogie frame.

Brake Cylinders – 6 off

- Transfer to WLA Bridgnorth workshop – now at Bridgnorth.
- Brake cylinder seals – new seals on order.
- Strip, clean, inspect, rebuild and air test each cylinder.
- Clean, prime and finish paint (Black).
- Refit to bogie frame – new fasteners required.
- Carry out Air test.

Spring Hangers – 4 off loose, 4 off captive

- Remove from bogie frame – on-going
- Thoroughly clean to remove all debris from threads and shank, threads to have die-nut run down them (1.5/8" BSW to confirm)
- NDT inspect each spring hanger
- Refit to bogie frame. (Loose washer to be tack welded in position)
- Spare spring hangers to clean and NDT test – currently located in store at Bridgnorth.

Thrust Brackets – 2 off

- Scrape, clean and prime paint – on-going
- Rear Thrust Bracket – new rubbing plate and fasteners required
- Rear Thrust Bracket – rebuild with new rubbing plate and fasteners
- Front and Rear Thrust Brackets to clamp in position to Loco underframe, drill / ream out existing mounting holes, manufacture new location bolts – this work to be carried out in conjunction with SVR ESMP and requires the locomotive to be on the Lifting Jacks.
- Finish paint (Black)

Hydraulic Dampers / Brackets – 2 off

- Dismantle end fittings from removed Dampers and fit to refurbished Dampers – refurbished Dampers in-stock.
- Damper Brackets - Scrape, clean, prime of finish paint (Black).
- Lateral Side Reaction Brackets – 2 off
- Scrape, clean, prime and finish paint (Black) – only metal sections require painting.

Primary Springs – 6 off

- Scrape, clean and protect removed Primary Springs with preservative for possible future use and store away in container.
- Fit new Primary Springs to Bogie frame – items in-stock.

Drive Shafts – 3 off

- Items removed from bogie to be stored away in container.
- Fit new Drive shafts to bogie – items in-stock.

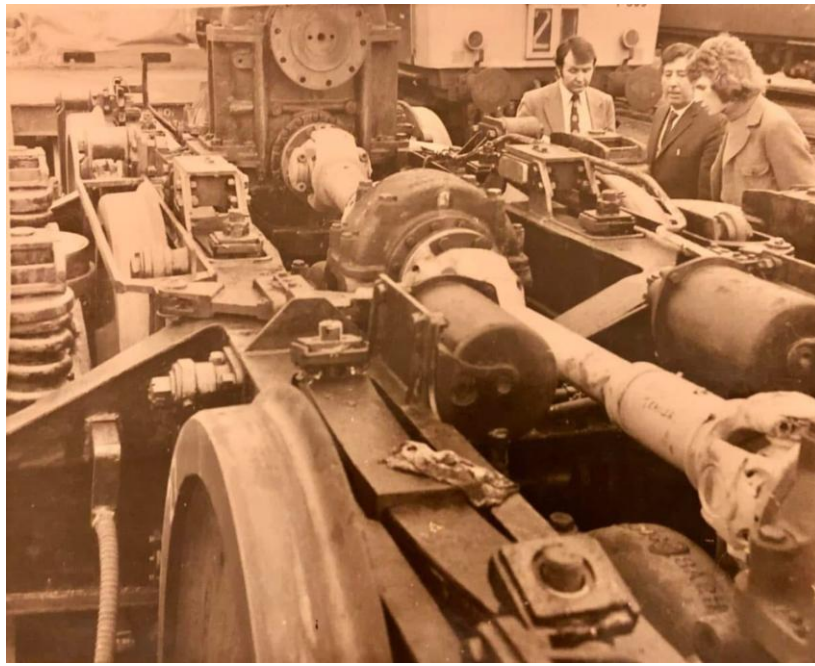
Air Piping

- Scrape, clean, prime and finish paint (White) – on-going.

Torque Reaction Arms – 3 off

- Scrape, clean and prime paint – on-going whilst in-situ.
- Dismantle, inspect and assess Torque Reaction Arm sandwich plate trunnions, replace existing Torque Reaction Arm rubbers and rebuild – TMD side pit required when the Bogie is mobile – new Rubbers in stock.
- Finish paint (Black) Reaction Arms.

On the subject of bogie overhauls, below, an image from Laira in 1974 – with an overhauled bogie from Swindon Works on a Weltrol Wagon and inspecting from left to right – Jim Mackenzie WR Maintenance Group Bristol, Frank Bellamy Traction Maintenance Engineer, Laire and Paul Roynon – who has kindly allowed me to share this picture.



News Update – January 2025 (All pictures supplied by Working Members present at the time)

Saturday 28th December

Missed at the very end of last year, on 28th December, Mark Smith and Graham Gant were in attendance at the TMD. Work included assessing the Spring Hangers, understanding the reasons why some cannot be removed from “B” end bogie, plus some initial cleaning of the Spring Hangers ready for NDT to be carried out.

The damper ends were also removed from 2 dampers for re-use with refurbished units.

The damper bracket was removed from the front thrust bracket and finally D1013's transmission output shafts were rotated.

Monday 30th December – Winter Diesel Day

Again, a quick trip back into 2024 and the Severn Valley railway Winter Diesel Day – and a selection of memories provided by Joshy Brinsford, starting with D1015 Western Champion ready to depart Bewdley with a Bridgnorth bound service.



A classic view, featuring sunshine in December!!! & again, D1015 powering up Eardington Bank. Let's hope that we can see scenes like this again soon, so please, if you can help the SVR with a donation, large or small, it will be appreciated.



And something a little different, because I just love these little Class 14s and I am now even starting to fall in love with the DMU – both seen heading south from Highley.



If you don't look too closely, it maybe the Class 37 creating all that clag – but alas not the case.



To end, absolutely no clag whatsoever, but still a great winter view.



A big thank you to all that attended the Winter Diesel Day and supported the SVR.

Thursday 2nd January

A small team were at the TMD on Thursday 2nd January and shared the following pictures of work in progress. To start with, and just three days on from the Winter Diesel Day, and the sun was still shining, D1048 seen basking in the sunshine alongside 40 106 Atlantic Conveyor.



No time for relaxing in the “cold” sunshine however, it was on with the protective work wear and back to “B” end bogie, with a smile 😊



The preparation for NDT testing means taking those parts to be tested back to bare metal and as clean as absolutely possible. So, someone who remains nameless (but was reported on in last month's e-Newsletter), but armed with the yellow marker pen, has again been busy highlighting all areas that need to be cleaner than they were on their day of manufacture. The Spring Hanger in the last picture even revealing its DoB!



Saturday 4th January

Single Digit attendance today and it was cold – but great progress reported – “ I have made progress on the spring hangers. I did the remaining un-captive hanger and the two untouched captive hangers as well as cleaning up the threads – slightly more difficult on the captive ones. They all now look like this and hopefully ready for NDT. I don't mind admitting it was cold in the TMD !





At the end of a cold day's work, "B" end bogie is covered in order to try and keep the damp and condensation out.



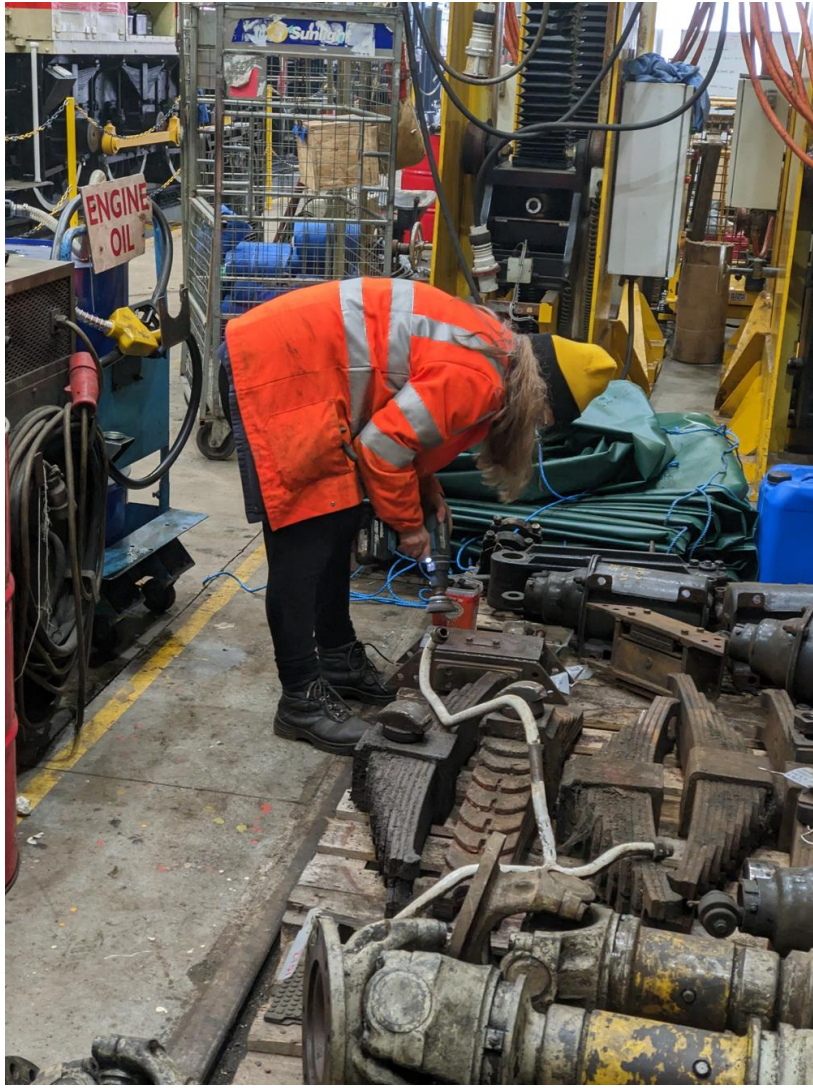
Saturday 11th January

A working party assembled at the TMD for further bogie scraping and component cleaning, whilst Courier was being shunted and looking like a ghost from Halloween trying to spook her sisters!



Some action shots from the day.....







Saturday 18th January

The day started with a rather looking empty TMD, a couple of shunters and of course a mandatory Class 50 😊



However, lots of activity was planned, with a SVR Diesel Groups Meeting in the morning, followed by a “Super Shunt” as mentioned in the introduction in order to get D1062 over the side pit lane in the TMD. It was indeed another cold and gloomy day to start and Ranger looking pleased to be under wraps.



Courier, also under wraps, alongside a shivering maybe Lady.



Accompanied by the sound of Maybachs, thanks D1015 for the sounds, 62 is soon in the TMD.



Even with 62 inside, the shunting continued, a cavalcade of locomotives seen alongside the carriage shed – shunter, Class 20, Western Champion (still in stereo) and Class 37.



We end this section with a Class 20 trying to look like a Class 52!



Inside, in the dry, in the warm (well maybe slightly warmer but not warm yet)

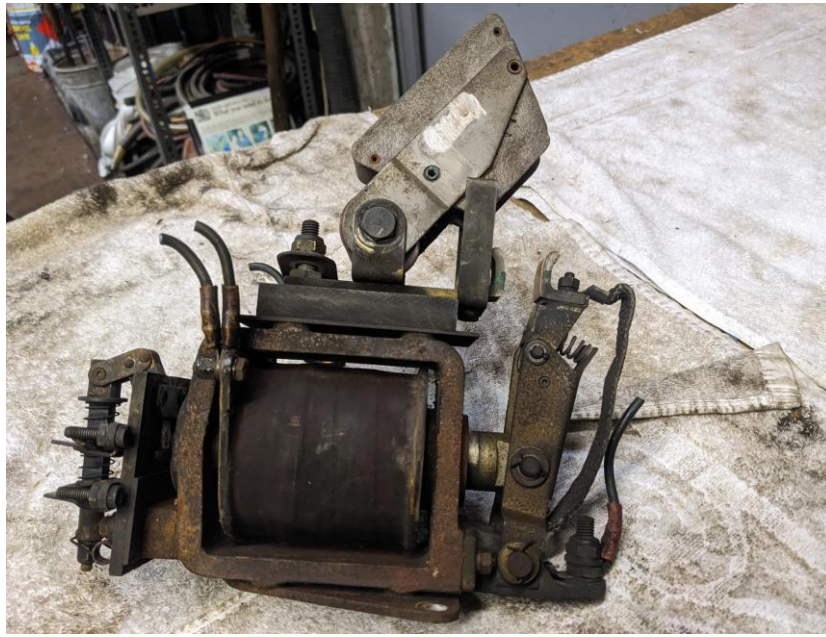




Courier maybe inside and secure – but what exactly was Darren doing?



Meanwhile, real work was taking place at Bridgnorth, and work started on restoring a starter contact relay (pictured) for Ranger. Initial resistance tests showed the coil to be ok.



Also, Worker Bees - Roger Fry & Dave Marsh are seen in their hive, wonderfully heated by the wood burner!



Saturday 25th January

A successful day reported – in summary, a faulty pre-heater and 6 brake cylinders being delivered to Bridgnorth from Kidderminster for attention, and a refurbished pre-heater and equalizing beams returned to Kidderminster from Bridgnorth.

Although D1062 was removed from the TMD for the weekend in order to give pit access to the SDMU, this allowed the coolant from “A” end to be drained, a pre-requirement in order to swap out the faulty pre-heater and install the refurbished one.

This also allowed for the replacement of the faulty cooler group element with a serviceable replacement from Bridgnorth, made easier by the removal of one of the cooler group floor covers.

Following this, the installed and faulty pre-heater was disconnected ahead of its removal in the middle of the coming week.

More scraping of “B” end bogie was carried out ahead of scheduled NDT testing on 5th November, and the threads on all of the spring hangers were cleaned.

At the end of the day, work having been completed on the DMU, D1062 was shunted back inside, this time onto the jacking area.

Next jobs planned are the pre-heater swap and then the oil in the final drives will be changed, remembering to take oil samples first! Also, the bogies will be greased followed by the cardan shafts.

Those arriving at Kidderminster on the 25th were greeted by the sight of D1015 alongside the platform in the station, alongside a yellow HST.



The faulty pre-heater is prepared for despatch to Bridgnorth, Darren seen in charge of lifting from the work bench to the trolley, before being wheeled outside to the waiting transport.



Said transport is seen outside of the TMD, squeezed between 40 106 and Roland and his JCB.



Pondering on the easiest way to lift the pre-heater from the trolley and into the van, it was decided to highjack the JCB – and job soon done!



Safely loaded and successfully transported to Bridgnorth – where the refurbished pre-heater was collected and transported south.



Wow, just look at that refurbished pre-heater, a fantastic job done by the Bridgnorth team.



A few more shots of the refurbished pre-heater, looking as good as new.



Meanwhile, in D1062 work was progressed on disconnecting the faulty pre-heater.



The replaced element in the Cooler Group is also seen below – hopefully no more coolant leaks.



Equalising Beams being prepared for NDT testing – fingers being pointed at areas needing further attention.



Locking up the locomotives towards the end of the day is always an opportunity to capture other locomotives around the yard...

Starting with D1013 Western Ranger, with an HST and a Class 58 trying to get in on the act.



Talking about that HST !



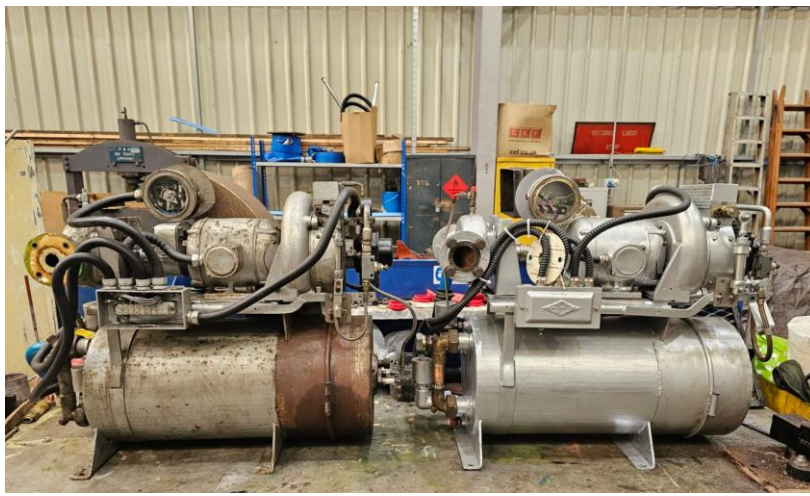
Looking backwards, 50 049 was smoking away nicely, and being prepared for a trip to Derby.



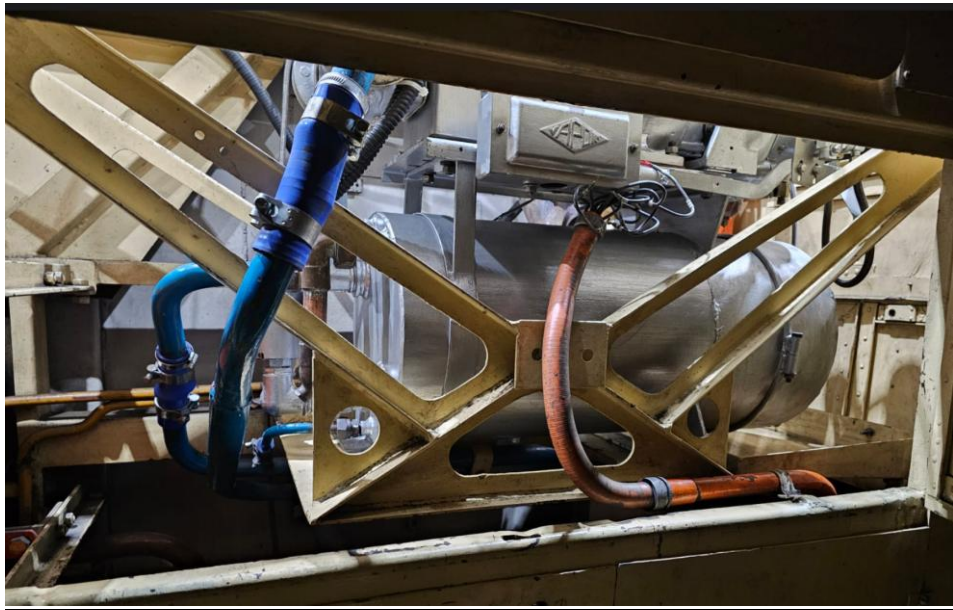
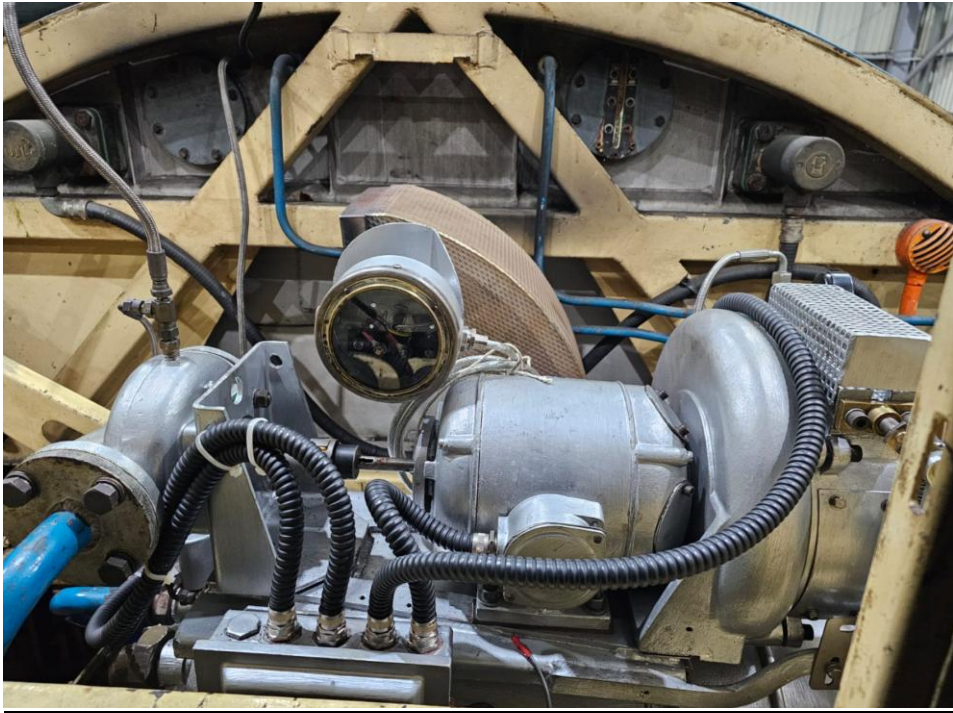
Wednesday 29th January

Darren spent a day in the TMD and successfully removed the faulty “A” end pre-heater and replaced it with the refurbished unit delivered from Bridgnorth on Saturday. Reconnection has commenced and will be completed over the next two weekends.

What a comparison – the faulty preheater on the left and the refurbished unit on the right.



In the blink of an eye, the refurbished unit is in D1062 and ready to be re-connected.



With NDT Testing scheduled for Wednesday 5th November – which will of course be reported on next month, a final look at areas being made ready for testing, with a last burst of activity taking place on Saturday 1st February.



Western Courier – Issue 1017 WINTER

Western Memories – September 1976 – Paul Smith

A few days holiday in September 1976 was a suitable opportunity to travel down to the southwest in search of the soon to disappear “Thousands”. With the imminent introduction of the HST services the remnants of the class could not have long to live.

The morning of 21st September saw us (“the wife and I”) begin the adventure. Courtesy of Greater Manchester Transport and British Rail, we travelled from Horwich to Manchester Piccadilly where we were to catch the 10.23 departure to Plymouth as far as Exeter.

The journey south was uneventful. Hopes of seeing a “Thousand” at Gloucester and Bristol were dashed, as our “Duff” headed for Exeter, doubts began to creep into my mind as to the possible success of the trip. Taunton was passed and still no sight of the elusive “Thousands.” Staring blankly through the window I pondered our fate, only to be disturbed by a passing light engine. It took few seconds to sink in, but the loco was a Western. Quick check with the other spotters on the train revealed it has been **D1036 Western Emperor**. It was like a ray of sunshine on a cloudy day.

We alighted at Exeter and checked on the Western activity with the spotters at the station. Their replies did not exactly encourage me but there was no turning back now.

A position at the down end of the station was secured, camera at the ready. We did not have to wait long, from an unexpected quarter, the line from Central Station came a Western being pushed down the hill by a train of Polybulk wagons. It was an old favourite of mine, **D1065 Western Consort**. Thirty minutes later, D1065 passed through the station again. This time heading for Plymouth with a train of freight wagons. This sudden burst of activity continued as **D1058 Western Nobleman** arrived light and went into the stabling point. Things were getting better.

At 17.20 we left Exeter on a DMU bound for Plymouth. From our vantage point at the front of the train we could observe in comfort anything approaching us on the up line. The journey was uneventful as far as Totnes where D1065 was being held on the down road, and the same fate was to befall us. A few enquiries on the station revealed that an up train had failed on Hemerdon Bank. Thirty minutes later we were on our way west again but with no sign of the delinquent loco and its train. Soon though, all was revealed as we passed a failed Class 50 being assisted by a sister loco on its way to the capital. On we trundled to Plymouth passing a procession of trains on the up line being held behind the failure. At the foot of Hemerdon Bank, we passed **D1028 Western Hussar** on an up passenger working. Laira Depot revealed **D1033 Western Trooper** recently with drawn and **D1063 Western Monitor**. The other locos on the scrap line were unidentifiable from the train.

At Plymouth, we were immediately rewarded with the sight of **D1022 Western Sentinel** on an up parcels and mail train. Things were definitely getting better all the time. At this point I decided that in order to keep the other part of the party in good humour, we should leave the station and find a restaurant. This having been done and the possibility of a mutiny avoided, we returned to the station with the aim of catching the 23.45 overnight service to Paddington. A Class 25 arrived in the station with a train of cement empties from the west. The loco detached and ran off towards Laira Depot leaving the wagons in the platform awaiting a fresh loco. It was 23.00 when **D1009 Western Invader** arrived and backed on to the wagons, her throbbing Maybachs filled the quiet night air. Too soon she moved away into the night leaving the station at peace again. The minutes ticked by as we waited for our train, praying for a Western to London.

A rumble to the west heralded the arrival of our train and as it drew into the platform the head code panel revealed the numbers 1015, it was **D1015 Western Champion**, and my prayers had been answered. After collecting the sleeping cars from the adjoining platform, D1015 set back onto the train her engines and exhaust making it a truly memorable moment. We found ourselves an empty compartment and prepared for the journey to Paddington.

Soon fatigue took its toll, and I drifted into a half sleep only to be jerked back into consciousness every time we started up after a stop. I peered through the steamed-up window at Bath Spa to note **D1048 Western Lady** on a down newspaper train. Then it was back to sleep again until we reached Reading where **D1005 Western Venturer** kindly put in an appearance on the down line with empty coaching stock.

As we approached Paddington, **D1054 Western Governor** was seen to be refuelling at Ranelagh Bridge refuelling point. At 6.50 we rumbled into Paddington dead on time.

After a freshen up, a cup of coffee and a bite to eat, it was back to the platforms to check on Western activity once more. **D1005 Western Venturer** arrived on a commuter train and drew up to the buffer stops, the occupants of its carriages spilling onto the platform and heading for the city.

It was our plan to return north via the Birmingham route, so when **D1068 Western Reliance** set back onto the carriages of the 9.05 departure, we quickly commandeered seats behind the engine. As our engine accelerated away from Paddington leaving behind a trail of smoke from the exhausts, we passed D1015 refuelling at Ranelagh Bridge. At Old Oak Common, **D1058 Western Nobleman** was seen for a second time running light towards Paddington and empty coaching stock was passed in the capable hands of **D1028 Western Hussar**.

Reliance bucked and rolled as we sped towards Birmingham and too soon the adventure was effectively over as we reached New Street.

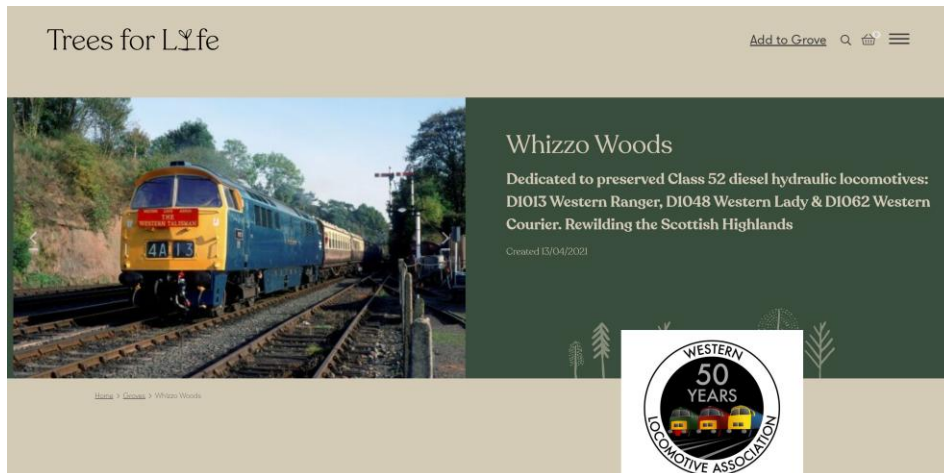
On reflection, it had been a great trip with eleven different active Westerns spotted. I wish I could see that many today.

A note of thanks must go to my wife who accompanied me on my travels without a word of complaint and cheered me up with her cynical remarks!

Whizzo Woods

At the end of November, we have **429 trees** in Whizzo Woods, an increase of 5 since the last count - thank you all for your continued support of this initiative, not long before we hit **500 trees!**

Trees can be purchased for just £6 – what an investment, and can be found at <https://westernlocomotives.com/shop/a-tree-in-whizzo-woods/>



Whizzo Woods was first established in April 2021 with an objective of planting 62 trees a year – further details can be found at – <https://treesforlife.org.uk/groves/315992/>

Sales Team Update

Proceeds from merchandise donated by "Project 22" now total over £500 with the "set of four" Class 22 colour prints down from 24 sets to just one set left (so get your order in quickly!) plus a few odd ones.



The Class 22 pictorial booklets are down from fifty to twenty of the second volume. Apparently the booklets were the inspiration for our own D1013 and D1062 booklets, a few of which also remain. These and many other goodies available from the online shop.



A SECOND PICTORIAL SALUTE TO
THE BRITISH RAIL (NBL) CLASS 22






We have a selection of Project 22 polos, sweatshirts and fleeces available in the on-line shop at bargain prices. Cold temperatures will be here for a while yet so wrap up warm! <https://westernlocomotives.com/product-category/class-22-clothing/>

The Adrian Curtis book "Cast of Thousands" raised a magnificent £110, and we have now managed to secure three more of his books - see below. As always first dibs to WLA members, please email sales@westernlocomotives with your offer please if you are interested, the reserve price is £50 per book.

SUN & SEA!

WESTERN CLASS 52 LOCOMOTIVES ON SUMMER SATURDAYS IN 1975

A Survey of Summer Saturday holiday traffic featuring the WR Class 52 Diesel Hydraulics

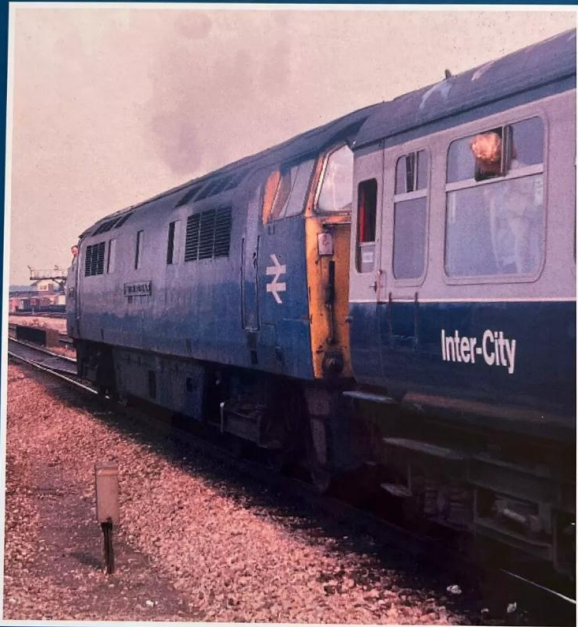


By ADRIAN CURTIS
The Western Locomotive Research Society

TRACKS *of my* YEARS

Parkas, Platforms & Maybachs

One man's obsession with the Western Class 52s



By Adrian Curtis



WINDS OF CHANGE **73**

by ADRIAN CURTIS

Membership News

Thank you to you all for your continued support.

Please all remember to renew whenever you receive a reminder, or at the start of the year as your continued support makes it possible to do what we do.

You can join the WLA, or renew your membership in three ways:

- Payment by Credit Card (via Stripe) from our website – www.westernlocomotives.com
- Joining with a membership form and paying by cheque (including renewal) – post to Paul Tucker, forms can be downloaded from our website – www.westernlocomotives.com
- Downloading a Standing Order Form = as above

One of your objectives is to continue to grow our membership, so please continue to talk to your friends and colleagues and tell them all about the WLA and what we do and see if they are interested in joining, they will be made very welcome.

Just think, if every member persuaded one other person to join, we would double our membership! So why not step up to the challenge and help us to achieve our objective of doubling our membership.

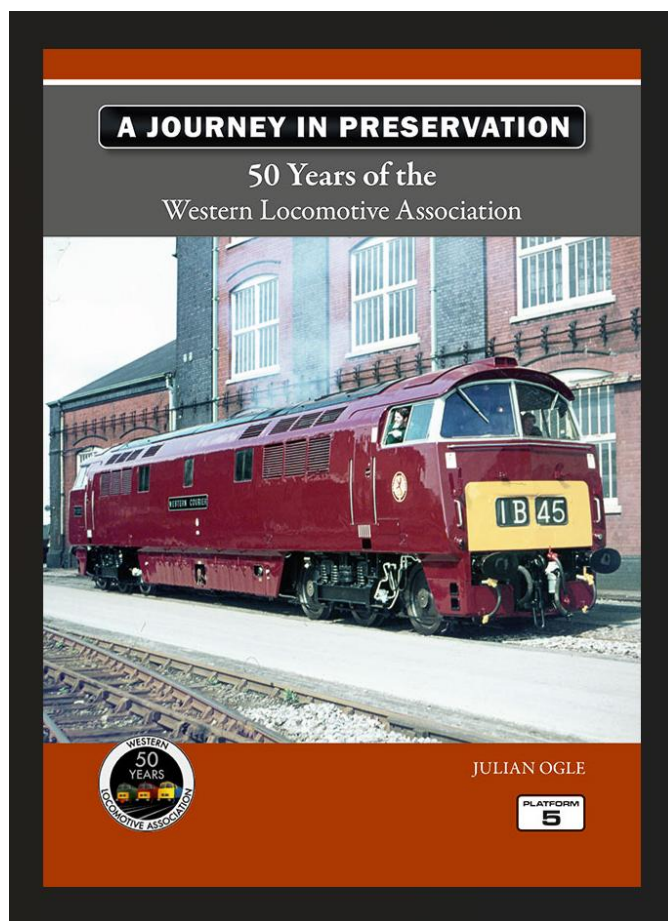
We are also always looking for “Working Members” to come and help us with our work on the locomotives, and with all of the other essential associated work carried out at Bridgnorth and Kidderminster – no specific skills are required to help, just enthusiasm and a good sense of humour. Of course, any engineers or railway professionals are VERY welcome.

If you are interested in helping us, please do not hesitate to contact any Committee Member or Working Member directly, or contact the WLA at [info@westernlocomotives.com/](mailto:info@westernlocomotives.com) or contact me at wp.finch@icloud.com

Book of the Month

Two books being promoted this month, starting of course with our own “A Journey in Preservation – 50 Years of the Western Locomotive Association.”

AVAILABLE NOW – have you purchased your copy yet?



The story of how a small group of enthusiasts came together to save a “Western” locomotive for preservation in the 1970s.

The concept of diesel preservation was unheard of at the time. In the face of considerable adversity, the group found a way to break down the barriers to diesel preservation and set a path that many others have since been able to follow.

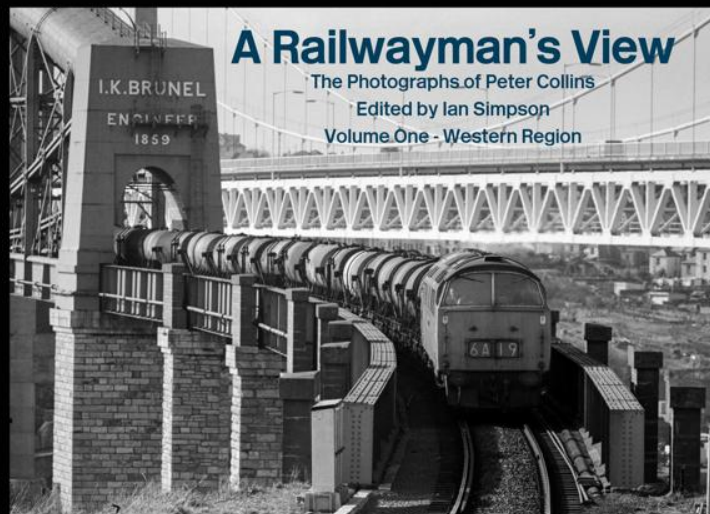
But acquiring their “Western” was only the beginning. From the early escapades and a turbulent few years in Devon, “A Journey in Preservation” tells how the WLA subsequently settled into a new home at The Severn Valley Railway and developed into the well respected and professional organisation it is today.

The book examines the herculean task of maintaining a “Western” and goes behind the scenes at the Association, with contributions and recollections from many key Association members.

WLA members will be able to claim a £10 discount and can order a copy now from the publisher's website <https://www.platform5.com/Catalogue/Modern-British-Railways/A-Journey-in-Preservation-50-Years-of-the-Western-LoCo-Asso-5JP50>

You will need to use the promotion code **JP50** at the basket on the website to claim your discount.

And our second offering, a brand-new publication featuring the photographs of Peter Collin, edited by Ian Simpson. This book is well worth a look as the pictures within have not been seen before.....



Announcement - 1st February 2025

EllyBelly Publications is pleased to announce an exciting offer for all members of the Western Locomotive Association.

From today until June 30, 2025, all members who purchase a copy of Peter Collins' Western Region Book will receive complimentary postage and packing (details will be provided separately to current members).

Additionally, a £5.00 donation will be made to the Association for each book purchased by the membership.

Furthermore, for any photographs purchased from the book, a further 10% of any profit will be donated to the WLA.

We are delighted to be able to assist the Western Locomotive Association in its endeavours to preserve and operate two (hopefully three) Class 52 Westerns from their home at the Severn Valley Railway.

Buy the book, priced at £30.00, from www.ellybellypublications.co.uk.

Visit the [Western Locomotive Association](http://www.westernlocomotiveassociation.co.uk) website for details of the amazing work they do!

Media Coverage

Railway Magazine – January 2025

Wensleydale fleet expands as '47/7' arrives from Doncaster

THE Wensleydale Railway (WR) has expanded its fleet with the addition of push-pull fitted Class 47 No. 47714 from long-term external store at Doncaster Works.

The former Nos. D1955 and 47511 (which was named both *Thames* and *Grampian Region*) had not worked for several years when it was moved by Hanson & Hall Rail Services Solutions's No. 50008 *Thunderer* on November 11. It was tripped between Doncaster and Castle Hills Junction, Northallerton, before being moved to Leeming Bar Station by resident Type 3 No. 37250, then was started for the first time in preservation on November 16.

The engine is one of the original 16 fitted with 'push-pull' equipment in 1985 for use on

the Scottish Region. The latest move follows a chequered career that saw it owned at various times by both Cotswold Rail and Harry Needle Railroad Company (HNRC), which sold it to the WR.

Tim Williamson, director of engineering and rolling stock at the WR said: "The purchase of this locomotive improves our operational capabilities. It has electric train-heating capacity which will allow us to heat our carriages during the cold winter months. Our immediate focus is to get No. 47714 fully operational and available as a back-up for no. 33035, which is currently in use for this year's Polar Express Train Rides. We will begin bodywork repairs in the New Year and aim to have it repainted for the summer."



No. 47714 after its arrival on the Wensleydale Railway on November 11. The Class 47 still wears original Anglia livery from its time on hire to the former operator. NICK KEEGAN



Hired-in Class 10 shunter No. D3489 was at one end of a Bodmin Railway 'Santa Special' on December 8, which had Small Prairie No. 5552 at the other. JON HIRD

Bodmin '37' suffers overhaul setback

BODMIN Steam Railway-based Class 37 No. 37142's long-term overhaul has suffered a setback with the news that both sets of the steel tanks for its radiators are leaking through pinhole corrosion. The news means that the tanks will have to be removed for what the line has described as 'full-scale' repairs.

On a more positive note, the brake system on the locomotive is returning to health, having been charged up to 90psi, with some minor leaks successfully addressed. The boiler room and main roof sections have also been cleaned, repaired and repainted, while replacement gutters have been fabricated from scratch.

Progress has been steadier on Class 08 No. 08444, which is also being overhauled at Bodmin, with the radiator the latest component to be worked on. Its place and that of Class 10 No. D3452, which is in long-term storage awaiting work, is being covered by Class 10 No. D3489 *Colonel Tomline*, which is on loan from the Helston Railway.

This year's Santa Specials have also seen extensive use of No. 47306 *The Sapper*, which recently celebrated its 60th birthday. The '47' has been used to top-and-tail with the line's steam services in lieu of No. 50042 *Triumph*, which has already been placed into winter storage.

Work on 'Western Courier' sees pre-heater faults addressed

THE Western Locomotive Association's (WLA) No. D1062 *Western Courier* has undergone maintenance to rectify some minor faults, including a recurring pre-heater issue.

These included adjustments to the brake system's pilot valves, and both Maybach engine pre-heaters, during a routine 'A' Exam on August 10. A replacement pre-heater was fitted to the 'A' End engine, and another overhauled unit to be installed during the winter maintenance period – although this may need

further adjustment.

Other work has seen new brake blocks fitted to the intermediate wheelsets on both bogies – this will allow all the blocks to be of similar thickness and brake stretcher bars to be aligned correctly.

An issue with a compressor governor is also likely to be fixed during the winter period, which will also see D1062 receive a 'B4' Exam.

The WLA has also stated that work on the bogies of D1013 *Western Ranger* will continue during the winter, while the locomotive has been lifted.



PLYM VALLEY POWER CAR: Former GWR power car No. 43063 (plus No. 43161) has been donated to the Plym Valley Railway, and is pictured there on November 26 just after being delivered, meeting Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 705 for the first time. The vehicle is to be cosmetically restored as an exhibit as its power unit has been removed. BERNARD MILLS

Pre-booked tours start on 7 March, priced £27.50 (concessions and locals £16.50), but are already fully booked until 30 May. <https://www.scienceinnovationpark.org.uk/visit-us>

SELLINDGE

68078 SOCIETY

The custodian of one of only two genuine LNER 'J94' 0-4-85Ts is looking for a new home for its nearly-complete locomotive. Built in 1946 by Andrew Barclay & Sons, the 'Austerity' (Works No. 2212) entered LNER service as No. 8078. It was one of 75 'J94s' operated by the company.

Withdrawn by BR in 1963, No. 68078 went into industrial use, working at the National Coal Board's open cast mine at Widdrington until 1978, by which time it was the last former BR standard-gauge locomotive in commercial operation.

A former Kent & East Sussex Railway resident, No. 68078 moved to Sellindge in January 2001. Following acquisition by Kent Locomotives Ltd., it has been restored in conjunction with the 68078 Society. The former Inningham and Langwith Junction machine only requires fitting of pipe runs plus minor adjustments before it can steam.

Classmate No. 68077 is at the Spa Valley Railway.

SEVERN VALLEY RAILWAY

A new shower block is being built at Bridgnorth, thanks to Network Rail staff using their Volunteer Day

allowance from the company to help create the new facility. To blend in with existing 'period' buildings, the cinder block structure will be clad in 'wriggly tin' and have a matching roof profile to the adjacent workshop.

ERLESTOKE MANOR FUND

GWR 2-8-0 No. 2857's tender is being repainted into BR lined green at Bridgnorth prior to the arrival of No. 7802 *Bradley Manor*, overhaul of which is approaching completion at Tyeley Locomotive Works. The EMF-owned 'Manor' will be paired with the tender when it returns to traffic while work continues to build a new 3,500-gallon tender of its own. *Bradley Manor* previously ran with a Collett 4,000-gallon version.

EMF-owned No. 7812 *Erlestoke Manor* will feature in the 4/5 January 'Winter Steam Gala' line-up alongside Collett 0-4-2T No. 1450. The 'kate-tank' is making its SVR debut following completion of its overhaul at the Flour Mill in the Forest of Dean, but as it is still being run-in, will be double-headed with Collett 0-6-0PT No. 7714.

WESTERN LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION

Western Courier was withdrawn from the SVR's 30 December 'Diesel Day' due to a fault in the locomotive's air system; this was detected at the end of the 'Autumn Diesel Bash' but could not be rectified in time. It is hoped to have No. D1062 ready for a return to service at the 'Spring Diesel Gala' on 15-18 May, by which time winter maintenance and a 'B Examination'

should have been completed. Diesel Traction Group-owned classmate No. D1015 *Western Champion* was, however, able to give enthusiasts a 'hydraulic fix' on 30 December.

Annual income in 2024 was £87,300k (£6,600 more than in 2023). Mike Trueman has been appointed as the Association's Fundraising Officer. The Association aims to raise £15,000 to complete bodywork repairs on newly acquired No. D1048 *Western Lady*.

SITTINGBOURNE & KEMSLEY LIGHT RAILWAY

A nearly £75,000 legacy has allowed a new boiler to be built for Kerr, Stuart 'Brazil' Melior (Works No. 4219), which was withdrawn for overhaul in May. The £38,000 boiler for the 1924-built 0-4-2ST is being built by Bennett Boilers of Highbridge (Somerset) and is due to be delivered early in 2025. Melior's old boiler will then be restored ready for use with classmate *Leader* (No. 926 of 1905) once it returns from display at the One:One Collection at Margate. *Leader's* boiler will then be repaired to ensure a spare is always available for the line's fleet of Kerr, Stuart saddle tanks.

SPA VALLEY RAILWAY

Caledonian Railway 0-4-0 No. 828 (BR No. S7564) is to remain at the Southern line for most of 2025. A

SEVERN STANDARD'S NEW TURN

BR 4MT 2-6-4T No. 80079 has arrived at Barrow Hill Roundhouse for display from the Severn Valley Railway. The out-of-ticket Riddles engine is on a rolling store and display agreement (T41).



'Barns Night Murder Mystery Dining Experience' is to be held on 25 January, although at the time of writing it was not yet clear if No. 828 will be in action as it is undergoing winter maintenance. To book, visit www.spavalleyrailway.co.uk

The 40th anniversary of the closure of the Tinbridge Wells Central - Eridge Line will be marked by the railway on 5/6 July. It also plans a 'Cockoo Line Gala' (after the name given to the

Eridge - Polegate route) on 13-15 June.

STAINMORE RAILWAY COMPANY KIRKBY STEPHEN

Work on the interior of the re-created signalbox at Kirkby 5 East has begun. It follows the fit the last tiles to the roof in November. Cleaning of the former Peasepool Junction lever frame is taking place in preparation for its installation.

'Spam Can' 257 Squadron digs into the 1-in-60 bank between Ropley and Medstead & Four Marks at Rookwood Lane on 4 October. James Taviner



'SQUADRON'S' SWANAGE RETURN

Southern Locomotive Ltd's 'Light Pacific' No. 34072 257 Squadron is due to return from the Watercress Line to the Swanage Railway to replace No. 34028 *Eddystone* when that is away on main line duty (T42). The gap left at Ropley should be filled by 'Merchant Navy' No. 35005 *Canadian Pacific*, which is approaching completion of its overhaul.

PRESERVATION



During the Severn Valley Railway post-Santa services the Class Forty Preservation Society's No. 40106 was rostered for service due to need for steam heat for the carriages. The 'Whistler' is seen entering Arley on December 29, 2024, with a Bridgnorth to Kidderminster working. MARTYN TATTAM

WLA begins assessment of Western Lady

THE assessment of No. D1048 Western Lady, which will ascertain if returning the Class 52 to working order is viable, has begun at the Severn Valley Railway.

Work so far has focussed on electrical aspects and the Western Locomotive Association is pleased with the results so far: testing has been done at 110 volts and 25 of the 30 main wires were found to be in working order. The lighting circuits are operational, along with some warning lights.

Mechanical assessment work will not be carried out until undercover space is available at Kidderminster depot. The condition of the power unit and transmission at the 'A' end of the locomotive is very much unknown, as is that of the final drive which ran hot when it was moved to the Bodmin & Wenford Railway in 1968.

Brighton Belle debut in 2025?

WORK on the SBEL Trust's rebuilt Brighton Belle EMU is in its final stages of completion at Locomotive Services' Crewe depot and the four-car unit could begin main line testing on the surface section of the Merseyrail Wirral lines from Chester in the coming months prior to its long-awaited launch into service. A ten-year agreement with the Royal Scot Locomotive and General Trust will see the train operated by Locomotive Services Group.

TOPS identities have already been allocated to the vehicles (see table). Only one of the four cars being returned to use originally carried names, but the other three have now

BRIGHTON BELLE FORMATION

TOPS No.	Original Nos.	Type	Name
99282	82, S2825	TPFK	Doris
99285	85, S2855	TPT	Gravetye Manor
99288	88, S2885	DMPBT	Beryl
99291	91, S2915	DMPBT	Mabel

been had names applied. Two of these continue the tradition of ladies names, but the third, No. S2855, is named after a country house and hotel in Sussex which has been in the ownership of Jeremy Hosking since 2010. A kitchen has been installed at one end of this car, providing two kitchens in the set.

Two further Brighton Belle cars are owned by the SBEL Trust. TPFK No. 279 Hazel and TPT No. 287 are both in store at Rowsley (Peak Rail). An engineering appraisal is being carried out to assess the feasibility of restoring a fifth BEL car after successful completion and operation of the first four vehicles.



ESSENTIAL READING FOR TODAY'S RAIL ENTHUSIAST... EVERY ISSUE! SUBSCRIBE TODAY ON PAGE 16

DIESEL DIARY

Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway to hold Diesel Gala

FOR the first time in over a decade, the Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway is to host an event featuring its resident diesel fleet.

In action over the weekend of March 29/30, will be LMS-built former War Department No. 70272/AD601, a pair of Class 03s (Nos. D2072 and D2117) and No. 20214, along with the line's

Class 110 Calder Valley DMU (Nos. 52071+52077).

New additions to the list of events include those at the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway (which is expected to include visiting traction) and the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway.

The Epping & Ongar Railway's gala in late April will see another appearance by

No. 50021 Rodney, which has remained on the line for the winter season; prior to the gala, the locomotive will be used on some driver experience sessions.

Another event involving a Class 50 will take place at the Great Central Railway on February 22. No. 50017 Royal Oak has been chartered for a 90+ mile running day, making six

return trips between Loughborough and Leicester North. The first train leaves Loughborough at 09.30 and a flat fare of £25 cash covers the entire day; 25% of the proceeds will go to the GCR and the remainder to charity. It is hoped that the line's generator van can be included in the train formation to provide heat.

2025 GALA DATES:

- February 8: East Lancashire Railway
- March 29/30: Lakeside & Haverthwaite Railway
- April 4-6: Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway
- April 11/12: Peak Rail/Ecclesbourne Valley Railway (Twin Peaks' joint event)
- April 25-27: Epping Ongar Railway
- April 25-27: Great Central Railway

- May 8-11: Swanage Railway
- May 15-18: Severn Valley Railway
- May 30-June 1: Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway
- June 5-8: West Somerset Railway
- June 7/8: Llangollen Railway
- June 13-15: North Yorkshire Moors Railway
- June 13-15: North Norfolk Railway

- June 19-22: Keightley & Worth Valley Railway
- July 3-6: East Lancashire Railway
- July 11-13: Mid Hants Railway
- July 18-20: Ecclesbourne Valley Railway
- July 18-20: Kent & East Sussex Railway
- July 25-27: Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway
- August 1-3: Caledonian Railway

- August 1-3: Spa Valley Railway
- September 4-6: Great Central Railway
- September 5-7: Bluebell Railway
- September 13/14: Dean Forest Railway
- October 2-5: Severn Valley Railway (Heritage Railcar)
- October 4/5: Llangollen Railway (Heritage Railcar)
- November 8/9: East Lancashire Railway (DMU)

Railway Herald

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Read this issue...



6 First Class 99 heads to Velim test centre



26 Successful year for Western Locomotive Association



Successful year for Western Locomotive Association

by John Whitehouse

For the Western Locomotive Association (WLA) 2024 was a momentous year.

The Association celebrated its 50th anniversary, as well as recording a significant increase in revenue and membership. This was not an insignificant achievement given that it started from humble beginnings in January 1974, when a group of like minded individuals, responding to BR's decision to withdraw its diesel-hydraulic fleet, decided to form a society to preserve a 'Western' for future posterity. That became the Western Locomotive Association, whose membership subsequently increased through adverts in the railway press to the extent that in October 1976 the purchase of withdrawn No. 1062 *Western Courier* was completed. Soon after the final withdrawal of the

class by BR in 1977 No. 1013 '*Western Ranger*' was privately acquired by WLA-member Richard Holdsworth, and placed into the custody of the WLA, which finally purchased the locomotive in 2004. Initially, based on the Torbay & Dartmouth Railway, the WLA took the momentous decision to transfer their locomotives to the Severn Valley Railway in 1978, where they have been based ever since. Both of the 'Westerns' are regularly in traffic on the SVR, along with visits to other heritage lines. In 2023, over 45 years since the Class ended their main line careers, the Association's fleet was further increased, following the gifting of No. D1048 *Western Lady*.

The WLA's 50th anniversary celebrations commenced with a well supported and profitable event at STEAM in Swindon featuring a number of presentations, followed by a formal dinner. Then, once

the operating season got under way *Western Courier* covered a total of 1,600 miles with a 98% availability record that generated over £10,000 in revenue earning service. This revenue, along with buoyant merchandising sales, raffle receipts and donations resulted in a

record year financially with receipts increasing by just under 9%. There was also very good news on the membership front, which grew by a further 30% during the year to a very healthy figure of 540.

Of the fleet No. D1062 remains active, although

Top: 'Western' No. D1062 *Western Courier*, the first locomotive acquired by the Western Locomotive Society from British Rail in 1976, approaches Highley with a northbound service on 18th May 2024, during the Severn Valley Railway's Spring diesel gala. *Gareth James*

Right: With its headcode box proclaiming its identity, D1013 *Western Ranger* is pictured in Kidderminster Depot 'on the jacks' in late 2024, as part of the preparations for the removal of its bogies, for the first time in nearly 50 years. The extensive overhaul of the locomotive remains an ongoing project for the Association. *Paul Finch*



presently temporarily out of service due to an issue with its air system, the rectification of which could not be concluded in time for it to appear in the SVR's recent Winter Diesel Day in December. The problem will be dealt with along with other scheduled winter maintenance prior to a 'B' examination, ahead of a return to traffic in time to participate in the Spring Diesel Festival from 15th-18th May.

Classmate No. D1013 *Western Ranger* was taken out of service in 2009 and is currently the subject of a major overhaul, which includes all its ancillary equipment such as pre-heaters, compressors, exhausters and dyno-starters together with a total rewire of the locomotive. Both power units are included in the overhaul package, as well as braking systems and body work attention. However, perhaps the biggest, and most important element of this work, is a complete overhaul of both bogies. This resulted in the locomotive being lifted clear of its bogies for the first time in nearly half a century for a complete strip down, so that they may be



Above: The latest addition, No. D1048 *Western Lady*, which was gifted to the Association in 2023, stands in the yard at Kidderminster awaiting an extensive assessment. *WLA/Sally Sheldon*

cleaned, overhauled, repaired and eventually re-assembled, a project that will also include fitting new tyres to the wheel sets. This work is the subject of a specific ring-fenced appeal, for which over £30,000 has already been raised. Once complete, the long-term active future of No. D1013 will be assured.

As mentioned earlier, the third member of the fleet, No. D1048 *Western Lady*, was gifted to the Association in 2023 by owners Pete Simpson and Mark Koch. Previously, it had had a

number of owners and in recent years had been based at the Midland Railway - Butterley. A full assessment of the state of the locomotive is planned, and a small team is already investigating the state of the electrical systems. Only when the full extent of the condition of *Western Lady* has been established can any decision concerning its future be determined. However, in the meantime a ring fenced fund has been set up to support the locomotive, which currently stands at just over £5,000.

Looking ahead, the WLA is seeking to further strengthen its membership base and revenue streams while maintaining No. D1062 in traffic until the comprehensive overhaul of D1013 is complete, although currently no completion date has been announced. A good insight to how the WLA is progressing and its future direction can be gleaned from an impressive business plan for the period 2024-2026, which is available to download from the [Association website](#).

Below: Marking its 60th birthday, 'Western' diesel-hydraulic No. D1062 *Western Courier* is pictured at Arley on the Severn Valley Railway on 7th May 2023, working the 09:00 Kidderminster to Bridgnorth service. *John Whitehouse*



Severn Valley Railway News – Running Dates & Events

Latest Update below regarding Diesel Footplate Experiences – the DFE’s on 4th July and 25th July are already fully booked, but we are hoping additional dates will soon be published – 15th August and 26th September – as soon as I hear that these are confirmed, I will let you all know.

FRIDAY — 4 JUL	W27
D1062 DFE	09:00 17:00
FRIDAY — 25 JUL	W30
D1062 DFE	09:00 17:00
FRIDAY — 15 AUG	W33
DFE	09:00 17:00
FRIDAY — 26 SEP	W39
DFE	09:00 17:00

< > This Month Mar 2025

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
24	25	26	27	28 18:00 - 21:30 Boogie Lights Express	1 18:00 - 21:30 Boogie Lights Express	2 14:00 - 17:30 The Bistro Express Winter
3	4	5	6	7 18:00 - 21:30 Boogie Lights Express	8 10:00 - 17:30 Vintage Afternoon Tea 18:00 - 21:30 Boogie Lights Express	9 14:00 - 17:30 The Bistro Express Winter
10	11	12	13	14 18:00 - 21:30 Boogie Lights Express	15 Spring Gift Fayre 10:00 - 17:30 Vintage Afternoon Tea 18:00 - 21:30 Boogie Lights Express	16 13:30 - 17:30 Gourmet Sunday Lunch
17	18	19	20	21 18:00 - 21:30 Boogie Lights Express	22 18:00 - 21:30 Boogie Lights Express 19:00 - 22:30 The Spike Train	23
24	25	26	27	28 18:00 - 21:30 Boogie Lights Express	29 18:00 - 21:30 Boogie Lights Express	30 12:30 - 17:00 Mother's Day Lunch
31	1	2	3	4	5 Open House Weekend	6

< > This Month Apr 2025

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
31	1	2	3	4	5 Open House Weekend	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 11:30 - 17:30 The Pie Train	13 13:30 - 17:30 Gourmet Sunday Lunch
14	15 11:30 - 17:30 The Bistro Express Spring	16	17	18 Spring Steam Gala	19	20
21 Spring Steam Gala	22	23	24 11:30 - 17:30 The Pie Train	25	26	27 08:00 - 17:30 Gourmet Sunday Lunch
28	29	30	1	2	3 Model Railway Weekend	4

< > This Month May 2025

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
28	29	30	1	2	3 Model Railway Weekend	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15 Spring Diesel Festival	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

Member's Forum & Gallery

"12 Memories"

No memories received this month, although pictures to follow from Alan Byrne certainly make up for this month!

This could be your chance to share your own memories next month!

I was pleased to receive the following feedback below from Andy Collett who enjoyed last month's Western Courier re-visited article "Westerns in Winter" by Western Sparksman.

"I may have already told you that I was involved in the early days of the WLA when D1062 was purchased for preservation. I was part of the small band of volunteers (led by Graham Howell and Phill Harper) who worked on the loco at Swindon Works around 1976/7.

So, the 'Westerns in Winter' article was a wonderful trip down memory lane for me. I believe that the author - 'Western Sparksman' - must have been Phil Harper.

I was there in Paignton on that bitterly cold weekend of 18th/19th February 1978.

In these paragraphs from the article, I am the 'Andy' that is mentioned...

"The following Saturday (18th), Mike, Derek and Ken put in an early appearance at Paignton and by the time Andy, Joe, Stuart and myself arrived at 11.20am, D1013 had been watered, pre-heated and was running that distinctive Maybach sound, having started in her own batteries that had not had the benefit of a decent charge the previous weekend."

"At five-thirty pm, a halt was called and after washing and tidying up, Joe, Graham, Andy and myself were piloted to our lodgings by Stewart in his Dagenham Dustbin (Ford, to the uninitiated.)"

I clearly remember that night, possibly the coldest I've ever felt in my life!

I also remember the train journey home on the Sunday. We weren't sure whether would make it past Taunton. Our train got stuck and needed assistance from behind to clear a snow drift.

I'll see if I can find any photos taken in those early days of the WLA.

Just thought you'd be interested to hear this.

All the best and keep up the great work!

Andy Collett

"

W.R Locos at Didcot GWS

Thanks to Alan Byrne for his great write up and pictures below.

“Hi Paul,

As promised, please find attached some old negative shots of mine which I have now added to my rapidly expanding digital domain(!), and which, hopefully, may be of interest to our members.

I've decided to send you a few pictures from the various GWS / BR Didcot Open week-ends that were held there during most of the '70's, and which I regularly attended, although I did not attend their 1974 event, as I chose instead to go to the marvellous Swindon works Open day that year.

These events were jointly arranged with BR (WR) and there was always a display of current WR diesel power, which for many of us was the big draw, although if memory serves me correctly (and I am getting old!), 1973 might have been the last occasion that the WR actually displayed any locos?

Anyway, in date order:

19/09/1970: Hymek D7071 (the young girl on the footplate was part of our visiting group and would now be in her 60's!).

As a footnote, this was the day I visited Paddington for the first time, and it was strangely deserted on that gloriously warm late-Summer Day, but that was until a certain D1048 'Western Lady' arrived on an Up working, looking immaculate, and therefore the first Western I ever saw there.



22/9/1973: D821 'Greyhound' stands on display without her nameplates and in 'as withdrawn' condition, having arrived at Didcot under her own power from Laira some four months earlier.

I make no excuses for including a Brush Type4 in this selection, as these 'namers' were unique to the Western Region, at the time, and we all enjoyed seeing them (especially the 'long-namers', such as 1663, shown).

I have a small request here, as my notes over this period have all but vanished, and I have therefore no knowledge of the EE Type 3 & Brush2 which were also displayed that year, so if any members could fill in the gaps in my notes, I would be very much obliged?



September 1975 (no notes on this, but it was a Saturday!): Hymek D7018 outside the main shed and in a new coat of shiny green paint, having been withdrawn from WR service earlier that year.

I knew a GWS working member at this time, and he confirmed that the majority of the GWS volunteers there were certainly not diesel fans, and would rather they be kept somewhere else, instead!

Another request: As we were parking in the Didcot station carpark, two Down Western-hauled expresses arrived and departed, and all I could see were their roofs (any members know their identities, please?!?).



30/08/1976: D1053 'Western Patriarch' powering out of Didcot station on a Down working (shot taken from the GWS coaling stage with my trusty 135mm lens!).

Sadly, and unknown to me at the time, this would be my last ever Western photograph whilst they were still in BR service, although not the last time I would point my camera at one before their Feb'77 finale (long story!).

In Fact, I have had to 'resurrect' this photograph from an extremely poor original, as somehow, this negative has also been long-lost.



I would have liked to have included some photos from the excellent 1971 GWS / BR Didcot, Open days, at which D829 'Magpie' & Hymek D7032 were on display, but again luck was against me, as this exposed film was then lost by the processors (it also included shots of D1017, D1070 & D868 at Paddington...ugg!).

Happy days indeed!

Cheers,

Alan

Peter Squire has also been digging into his archives and whilst sorting some pictures has found D1015 on The Western Noon Tour 17/08/02 at Blakedown.

Wonder what else we will turn up – well the 2nd picture certainly did!



Closing Notes and Book Ends

We end with a puzzle – literally!!!!

Hi Paul,

Happy New Year!

Possibly something for your next e-newsletter!

I treated myself to the latest WLA jigsaw puzzle, and as you can see, I am about halfway through.

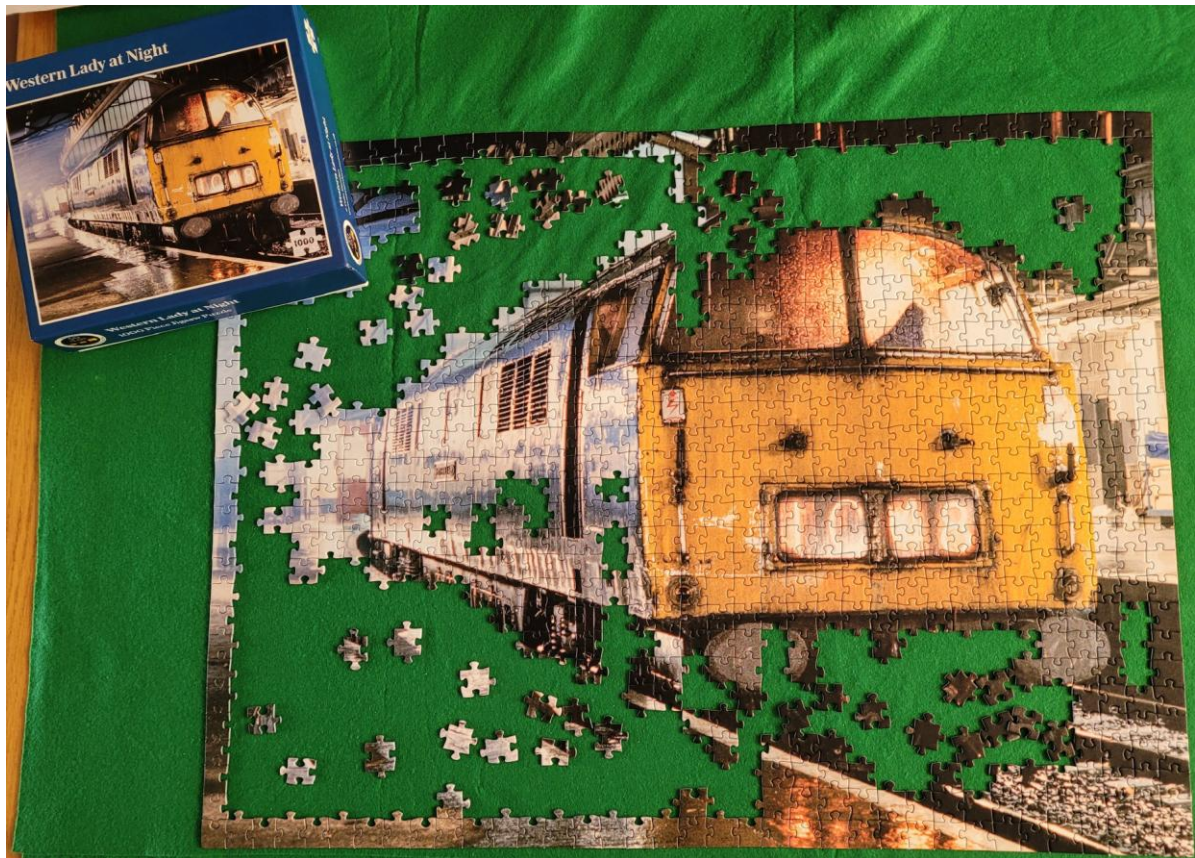
If other members are thinking of buying one, I highly recommend it for its challenge!!

Whoever came up with the idea of making this picture into a jigsaw puzzle, knew exactly how difficult it will be..... so full marks to them!

I will persevere and finish it, but I've left the difficult bits until last!

Best wishes, as always,

Jeremy



Thanks also to Nigel Ratledge, for a second time, who posted the below picture on social media and having been part of the bidding team to being the featured headboard back to the WLA to be re-united with D1013, and also I hope one day D1023, I contacted Nigel and asked if I could share.

The photographer is unknown, but may be Chris Guntripp (I will ask him when I next see him), and shows D1023 Western Fusilier on that infamous last day, on the morning of 26th February 1977 outside the Factory at Old Oak (along with D1013 behind!) with driver "Gunner" James ready for the trip to Paddington to work The Western Tribute Tour.



And we end with some facts and figures shared with us this month – taking us back to 15th October 1976 and locations of all Class 52 locomotives or their reported destinations.

-----TOPS RECLASSIFIED SHEET-----4ZK62. DATEX 15.10.76

INFORMATION GAINED 07.00 - LONDON OFFICE MB 720X49

'52' LOCATIONS OR REPORTED DESTINATIONS.....

1005 WESTBURY MPD. WORK 08.18 WESTBURY - MEREHEAD STONE 6B18.
RETURN 12.00 MEREHEAD - WESTBURY EMPTIES 6B28

1009 LAIRA MAINTANANCE - TURBOCHARGER DIFFICULTIES DUE TO BE O.K. FOR
DUTY 09.00.

1010 ARRIVE MARGAM YARD 04.40 SXV3

1013 NEWBURY 06.50 PAD-WESTBURY PARCELS 3B96

1015 PENZANCE MPD REFUELLING THEN 08.45 PENZ-PAD
1A69 TO PLYMOUTH ONLY.DOUBLE-HEAD AS REQUIRED.

1022 OOC DUE OUT 07.30 LD TO ACTON THEN 07.45
ACTON YARD-HACKNEY GOODS JNC. CROSS LONDON FITTED BLOCK TRAIN.
RETURN AS REQUIRED.

1023 INVOLVED IN SLIGHT COLLISION.PRESENTLY LAIRA MPD FOR CONTINUATION OF
REPAIRS.DUE O.K.FOR DUTY 08.00.

1036 ARR.GLOUCESTER 11.15 SX2W.STONE 6B57 RETURN WESTBURY LD.

1041 07.00 PADDINGTON ETH 7B18XX.

1048 DUE ARRIVAL PADDINGTON 06.50-00.55 PENZANCE-PAD.SLEEPERS.RETIMED TO
ARRIVE 07.10 1B93.

1053 BATH RD. BRISTOL.DUE BRISTOL FOR LIGHT REPAIRS AFTER WORKING 20.40
PENZANCE-BRISTOL 1E63.

1054 06.50 ST.BLAZEY-NEWTON ABBOT POLYBULK 6M55.RETIMED TO ARRIVE NEWTON ABBOT
EAST 11.00.

1056 PLYMOUTH STATION PILOT 07.00. WORK AS REQUIRED 09.00 PLYMOUTH-
KENSINGTON OLYMPIA PARCELS. 3A90.

1058 07.00 LAIRA.TO WORK 08.10 PLYMOUTH-LEEDS TO GLOUCESTER.RETURN LIVERPOOL-
PLYMOUTH-11.15.

1065 RETIMED TO ARRIVE PENZANCE 08.10 WITH 23.45 PAD-PENZANCE SLEEPERS.1B93-
DUE TO FAILURE OF PRECEEDING TRAIN.

1068 TRANSFER BLOCK TO SWINDON.OOG LOAD.ARRIVE SWINDON 05.00 FOR SCRAP.

1070 EXETER RIVERSIDE STABLED-07.00.POSSIBLE WORKING 04.30 KENSINGTON-ST.ERTH
MILK EMPTIES.DEP.EXETER-09.25 6B48

1071 04.50 ST.ERTH-ACTON MILK.ARRIVAL-DUE ACTON 10.20.

1072 LAIRA MPD -----NO FIXED WORKING YET ALLOCATED.

Sticking with the 1976 theme, let's end with a view of Birmingham New Street, and D1037 Western Empress, on 1st May that year – Time Machine now required.



If you know of anyone with an interest in the railways of the 1960s and 70s, or has a craving for anything diesel hydraulic, or remembers seeing the magnificent Westerns whilst in service, please encourage them to join us.

We are also looking for members to come and help us with our work on the locomotives, and all of the essential associated work at Bridgnorth and Kidderminster that makes what we do possible – no special skills are required to help, just enthusiasm and a good sense of humour, of course any engineers or railway professionals are VERY welcome.

If you are interested in helping, please do not hesitate to contact any Committee Member or Working Member directly, or contact the WLA at info@westernlocomotives.com or contact me at wp.finch@icloud.com

Please keep sharing with me your photographs, memories, stories and experiences, so that they can be shared in the e-newsletter with members, keeping the e-Newsletter interesting, informative and fun.

Next Member's e-Newsletter should be available early in the New Year - on or around **1st March.**

<https://westernlocomotives.com/>

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