



## Western Locomotive Association e-Newsletter – January 2026

Welcome to your November WLA e-Newsletter and your monthly update on all things WLA.

I would like to of course start this e-Newsletter by wishing you all a very happy New Year, a year that is certainly going to be an interesting one for the WLA, with much to do over the next few months as we dive into our Winter Maintenance Work Schedule mapped out for D1062, continue with our on-going assessments and early stage tasks on D1048, and make a big push to complete the long term overhaul of D1013 and prepare the locomotive for a return to service – read on for further news regarding this in “News from the Chair” in this e-Newsletter, I am not going to spoil the news at this stage.

Last year ended with a busy month which is fully reported in the e-Newsletter and our Working Members have all enjoyed a rest of the Christmas period – and have hopefully recharged their batteries for the work to come in January and the start of the year.

The year also ended with a great day out on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> December when a dozen of us joined The Pathfinder Finale with the DTG's D1015 Western Champion at the head of the train. It was indeed a great day out traveling behind a diesel hydraulic from Gloucester to Manchester, and then around east Lancashire on a mini-tour taking us into the fringes of the Pennines and the perfect way to celebrate the last tour organised by Pathfinder. I am sure a few pictures will feature later, but to start, here is one shared with us of D1015 and the Pathfinder Finale by WLA Member Peter Squire who was out to capture the service cresting The Lickey Incline.



Back at base, our three locomotives were recorded at Kidderminster in December enjoying a little bit of winter sunshine.



The BIG news of the month, also covered in detail in “News from the Chair” is that the WLA have been able to acquire two MTU 538 engines that we found for sale in India and which, after some serious negotiating, we have been able to purchase at a price that was too good to refuse. The following pictures were the first that were shared with us and started to get us a little excited!







The announcement was made internally to our Working Members during the December, a bit of an early Christmas present, ahead of the announcement made to our membership – “ We are pleased to announce that following a period of negotiation, an offer was accepted by an Indian Shipping Company for a pair of 538 V12 engines. These are likely to be shipped in the next couple of weeks for delivery to Kidderminster. Once they have arrived, they will be stored for a period of time (whilst the immediate focus is on D1013 and D1062) pending conversion to 655 specifications. New purpose made tarpaulins are currently being ordered to ensure their safe storage and their condition is protected”

This was followed by the general announcement, made by Roger Smitgh, our chairman :-

**“ Christmas has come early for the WLA – but it’ll take a while for it to be delivered!**

Some good news for the future of the WLA where our engines are concerned... we’ve just bought two MTU 538 V12 engines – the more modern successor to the Maybach MD655!

The 538 engines purchased are a marine version of the MD655 but more durable and better quality all round and so much more likely to last a lot longer. However, the WLA will only make use of the engine from the heads of the block down, in effect converting the engine to an MD655 specification with replacement cams boxes, intercoolers and turbo charger – thereby keeping the same power output and of course, that Maybach sound!

The engines have been purchased from Narayan Marine Tech Pvt Ltd in India, prepared and ready for shipping before Christmas but of course, it’ll take a while for the engines to reach us at Kidderminster TMD (probably in the New Year), where they will be placed into store.

You may be aware that we already have a 538 engine in store, ready to be converted for “A” end of D1013 plus these two 538’s to add to our collection, which will ultimately end up in our locomotives keeping the Maybach music alive for many more years to come....!”

The two engines are seen together in the next picture – and certainly look good. They were soon wrapped and made ready for dispatch and transport to the UK.





Arrival at the port....



And safely stored in a container for transport.



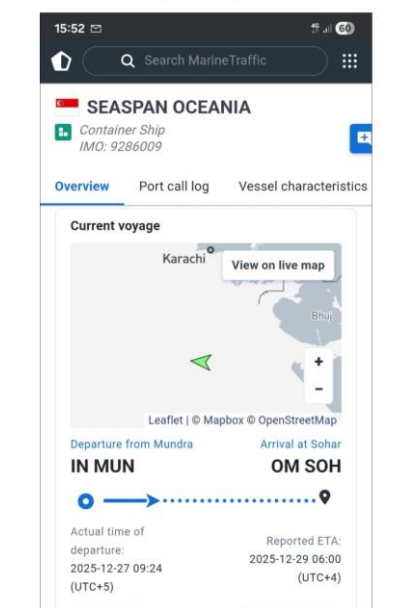
I hope they remember to send us the key 😊



Seaspan Oceania – our “Courier”



And on its way on 27<sup>th</sup> December





## **In this e-Newsletter**

Features in this e-Newsletter include the following:

- News from The Chair.
- D1013 – A Progress Update
- D1048 – A Progress Update
- Monthly News Updates – an update on all that has been happening over the last month.
- Western Courier re-visited
- Sales Team Update.
- Whizzo Woods.
- 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**

### **Happy Whizzo New Year!**

Well, we're certainly going to do our best and make it one anyway! No sooner as we've enjoyed a well-earned break over Christmas, the pressure's back on again, not least within the WLA anyway. Most of you will be aware that the winter maintenance on D1062 provides a whole list of things to be done, not to mention the air receivers which need to be certified and a bogie lift at "A" end to replace an equalising beam – a common fault with the Class 52's which were often fixed at depots improvising with portable jacks but we'll be making good use of the depot's jacks you'll be pleased to hear!

Of course, the pressure is on not just with D1062 but with D1013 with an important anniversary creeping up on us as in February next year as it'll be 50 years since the very last BR railtour with the Western Tribute railtour (which I was privileged to be on, ending up in a bar in Plymouth with Julian Ogle, drinking beer before the run back to Paddington!). Who would have thought that we could still see and hear the sounds of Westerns 50 years later; I don't think anyone of us would have believed such a thing (it really would have been perceived as just "beer talk"!), especially with the opportunity to do a few trips out on the mainline now and again! It seems that the ever-growing support amongst our Working Members is such that we'll do our best to get D1013's overhaul finished in time for the biggest anniversary celebration of all time, but with 60 weeks to go, the pressure really is on!

A big thanks to all those who've helped out over the last few months when the weather is not the warmest but as I'm sure you'll see elsewhere in this e-Newsletter that the fuel pipes have been replaced on D1013 and that the bogie overhaul on D1013's "B" end bogie really is progressing well and not far off completion – so much so, that the talk is about the next plan of action with "A" end bogie.

So far, we've managed to avoid much of the snow, which tends to hold things up, but I thought I'd share a rare photo of D1018 Western Buccaneer at Dawlish Station taken on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1967 by Geoff Lendons. Apparently, there was a points failure at Exeter, but the locomotive was sanctioned to run with passengers in both cabs as far as Newton Abbot, with Geoff taking the shot along the way. I can't imagine anything like this being approved in this day and age – different times, different ways and maybe someone just turning a blind eye to help passengers get back home:



Probably one of the rarest photographs ever taken with snow at Dawlish (my home Station) and camera shy D1018 Western Buccaneer no less – our thanks indeed to Geoff Lendons for taking the shot all those years ago!



Some sad news to report but this time with another Geoff who worked on the SVR as a volunteer on the steam side for many years – Geoff Harsley. In many ways, Geoff taught me all the things I should know (and shouldn't know!) about driving trains on the SVR, through what many of us unofficially described as "The Geoff Harsley School of Driving!". Of course, back in those days, like with D1018 they were different times and different ways. To start off with we would regularly do a mid-week steam turn each year, where our turns would be between 12 to 13 hours long. These would cover two to three round trips to Kidderminster each day, with the objective of ending up in the Railwayman's Bar before 7pm, ready for a meal and more beers out on the town with the other crew, ready to repeat the following day. At least we slept well, especially as we had everything to do ourselves with no lighter uppers, no cleaners and no disposal crew! By the way, Geoff affectionally referred to D1013 which was in service at the time, as the "County of Dorset" which for those who aren't aware, was a GWR County Class locomotive No. 1013! RIP Geoff, you were a great friend to us all!



The late Geoff Harsley – giving some friendly words of advice at Bridgnorth!

As we move into the New Year, we have two MTU 538 65 litre V12 engines heading our way from India (currently out in the Gulf of Oman!). As you probably know already, these are a marine version of the MD655 engine but a more modern variant with much higher quality block and components. The WLA purchased these from Narayan Marine Tech Pvt Ltd who specialise in used marine engines and spares. The two units were secured after negotiating a very favourable price and after being prepared for shipping have begun their long journey to Kidderminster TMD from the port of Mundra, on the sea container vessel Seaspan Oceania. Upon arrival, the engines will be placed into store but ultimately, they will be converted to MD655 spec with replacement cam boxes, turbos and intercoolers so you can be assured that they will still sound the same as a Thousand! As you can imagine, this project took up a lot of admin time to organise and the last time I organised a shipment was over 47 years ago, bringing over 20 tonne shipments of ceramic tiles from Villeroy & Boch and the like, back in the day! Makes you think how some things can go a full circle sometimes!

And with any start to the New Year, it's always good to reflect on how things are going to work out for you, for the year ahead. We often relate to and reflect upon things that happened in the past, hoping that the future will be in some way better. Maybe it's those "different times and different ways" we experienced in the past, that gives us the inspiration to do the things we love for the future...!

See you on the Valley!

Roger Smith  
Chairman



## **D1013 Progress Update**

### **A Further Update**

Following the update made at the AGM in November (and summarised again below) and Roger's announcement in "News from the Chair" that our objective is to have D1013 operational again for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the infamous last "Western Tribute" Rail Tour on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1977, some of our internal thoughts are shared below :-

"It has been decided that we need an "aiming point" for the completion of the overhaul on D1013 and so we are aiming to return Ranger back to traffic on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2027. This coincides with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ranger's last tour and the end of diesel hydraulic operation by BR.

To achieve this would be a monumental effort by Directors, Committee and Working Members, needing some firm commitment. But to achieve this would be quite something and of course not to mention the opportunities that would arise from it!"

We are embracing the challenge and will keep you up to date every step of the way and appreciate all of the support that I know you will give us.

Below as mentioned above is the latest now "abridged" progress update for D1013 as shared at the AGM in November.

At the start of the year (2025) the focus was on scraping the bogie framework to remove decades of dried on dirt and particularly areas on the top side of the bogie to have it ready for Non-Destructive testing using the Dye Penetrant process. This was carried out by a sub-contractor on 5<sup>th</sup> February with no problems identified.

Once this was completed, the team applied red oxide and then chassis black paint to the framework. They also continued throughout the summer scraping and painting brake rigging, the Intermediate Gearbox, Air Piping, Wheelsets and Thrust Brackets.

D1013 was moved back into the TMD on 17<sup>th</sup> May to be lifted, this allowed the SVR ESMP department to ream out existing holes in the Thrust Brackets and manufacture new Thrust Bracket bolts, a procedure that was carried out during BR days.

There are 2 Thrust Brackets, and each has a Thrust Plate bolted to it. One of the Thrust Plates was found to have a faulty weld, and the other Thrust Plate was found to be worn beyond limits, thus a decision was taken to have new Thrust Plates manufactured. These were delivered and sent to a sub-contractor to have a manganese liner welded on each plate and are now back in our stock ready for refitting.

Moving onto Brake Cylinders, we took delivery of new Cylinder Seals in May. Once we had them the first 6 cylinders were stripped, cleaned and rebuilt with new Seals and the Cylinders pressure tested by the Bridgnorth team. The Brake Cylinders have been returned to the TMD and have now been refitted to the Bogie.

Another item that has been taking up our time are the Equalising Beams of which there are 2 per Bogie. The Beams that came off the Bogie are very badly worn and need quite a lot of work to bring them back to standard, this work is just now being started. Fortunately, we also have spare Beams.

New Spherical Bearings have been pressed into the new Spring Hangers. The SVR ESMP have also helped out again by manufacturing and brazing new grease pipes to the new Pedestal Brackets. Assembly of the Spring Hangers and Pedestal Brackets to the Equalising Beams is currently on-going again by the Bridgnorth team, the Beams should be ready for refitting during this month.



We had a bit of a re-organisation in the TMD during August, and the Bogie was moved closer to the Carriage Shed end of the depot. This allowed the Bogie to be moved a little more easily onto the Pit Road on 8<sup>th</sup> Oct, just a mere 6-hour shunt to achieve it.

Whilst on the pit, work has concentrated on the underside of the Bogie, more scraping to get it ready for stage 2 of the NDT process which took place on 31<sup>st</sup> Oct, again no problems identified.

There has also been a big push to replace the Torque Reaction Arm Suspension Rubbers, each Final Drive has a set of Rubbers and Darren has led on this with each set taking 2 days to replace. This work is now complete.

Then more paint with red oxide and chassis black has been applied to the underside, easier to access whilst on the Pit.

The Bogie was moved off the pit on 14<sup>th</sup> November and now awaits space again in the TMD to allow us to finish it off.

Work to complete it includes fitting the Equalising Beams, new Leaf Springs, refitting the Intermediate Gearbox and the fitting of new Drive Shafts, however the latter can't be refitted until D1013 has been back on the Jacks to have the Thrust Brackets set up. So, plenty still to do before we start to do it all again to the "A" end Bogie.

We have removed and refitted "B" end Cooler Group to enable us to weld in a drain pipe, something we had waited 3 years to carry out and finally we have removed both Pre-heaters which had been fitted back into the locomotive in 2011 (approx.) in order to have them checked over and that the "A" end item was in good order and was being looked over by Marty Kent.

## **D1048 Progress Update**

Below is the latest "abridged" assessment update for D1048 as read out at the AGM. **(Repeat from last month)**

### **Electrical**

A new set of batteries purchased by the WLA have had all connections fitted and were fully prepared to be connected to D1062. With D1062 being called to cover services due to the summer steam ban, as well as an already hectic schedule, there was simply not a sufficient gap in D1062's operational commitments to remove Courier's existing set of batteries and install the new set. As a result, the new set of batteries have been temporarily fitted to D1048 so that they can be put "on charge" to preserve their longevity. Naturally, this opportunity has not been missed to progress Lady's electrical assessment.

### **Dyno starters**

Both dyno starters have had their inspection covers removed for visual inspection of comm and brush gear. "A" end was found to have 3 of the 8 brushes seized, one of these seized brushes has been freed with the other two being a work-in-progress. "B" end has all 8 brushes free. All 4 supply cables on "B" end dynostarter have been subject to insulation testing and are within specification.

### **Final drives**

All 3 final drives on "A" bogie have received an oil change. As part of the oil change the opportunity was taken to assess the final drives. Once the existing oil was drained the bottom plate housing the oil pumps were removed and internal areas inspected. All 3 oil pumps were found to be in working order in both directions, cleaned and filters removed and themselves cleaned. All visible bearings and surfaces are as expected. Fresh oil inserted following completion of each individual assessment.

Additional attention was given to final drive #2 (centre axle) as this is the final drive reported to have run hot many years ago. Final drives 1 & 3 were reported to be in "very good" condition following everything looking as expected after visual assessment. The entire internal area of final drive #2 was cleaned to assess its internal condition. Slight signs of water ingress was evident with mild corrosion and slight pitting visible on internal casing and pump body. Old oil was found to emulsified. Old oil was put through a sieve with no debris of any kind collected. No bluing visible on any surface whatsoever, including gears and bearings. Small bearing also assessed and discovered to be in good condition with no play, another very encouraging sign.

### **Air Brakes**

D1048 has received an initial air brake assessment. With the air brake system back fed, two massive air leaks immediately presented themselves. Their locations and cause are as follows: Behind "B" side valance due to a missing spirax valve. D1048's spirax valve has since been located. "B" end cab. The cause found to be all three connections to the main air reservoir control box being disconnected.

The WLA have yet to confirm but during the hand over procedure of D1048, the previous owners informed the WLA that a section of air brake pipe, underneath the engine room floor at "B" end, was found to be badly corroded and removed.

Spirax valve to be re-fitted, air reservoir control box connections to be remade and a new section of air brake pipe to be installed, to progress air brake assessment.

### **Vacuum Brakes**

Both vacuum exhausters have had their inspection covers removed, comm and brush gear assessed. Internals of both exhausters looked to be in very good condition. All 8 brushes on exhauster #1 were found to be free. Both vacuum exhausters have been energised from switches on Davenset and both ran as expected with no issues reported. Both vacuum exhausters operational.



We are unable to verify the integrity of the vacuum brake system as all 4 vacuum gauges (2 in each cab) have been removed.

Vacuum gauges to be replaced to progress vacuum brake assessment.

### **Miscellaneous**

The damaged-beyond-repair due to water ingress internals of "A" end overspeed unit have been replaced with a spare.

### **Electrical Control Circuits**

The 2 major earth faults at "A" end have been revisited. The 2 cables have been traced through to the instruments they supply and disconnected. Both wires were then earth tested again to find, on both counts the faults remain. This proves that the major earth faults are with the wires themselves and not the equipment they supply. Further investigation required.

### **Electrical Power Circuits**

With "B" end dynostarter having passed mega testing and found to be free, "B" end oil pump was then run to lubricate "B" end engine, showing 80 psi at the engine oil pressure gauge.

With the new set of batteries fitted "B" end dynostarter was energised and successfully turned over "B" end transmission, which in turn, turned over "B" end engine and "B" end serck pump. All four components responded as expected with no issues reported.

Based on the above we are now in a position to make the following statement:

"The WLA can confirm, that on the ELECTRICAL POWER side D1048, in her current condition, is capable of starting "B" end engine"

Following this milestone success, the team of working members involved have set about trying to achieve the same results from "A" end.

"A" end engine oil priming pump was previously reported to be unresponsive when energised. "A" end oil pump has been revisited. On secondary inspection it was found that despite the full 110v leaving number 1 electrical frame, 0v were arriving at the pump motor.

The wires in question were traced to the nearest electrical junction box where the wires were retested. The full 110v were recorded at this point.

"A" end oil pump motor was then separated from the pump itself and, using "A" cab desk as a temporary work bench, it was discovered that the motor had a missing brush, missing cable gland and the comm to be very dirty.

The comm was cleaned, a replacement brush sourced and fitted, a replacement cable gland sourced and fitted, and, using off-cuts from D1013's re-wire, the motor re-wired with approximately 1-metre-long tails. The motor was then energised on "A" cab floor and ran. The motor was then re-fitted to "A" end oil pump with the new wiring pulled through the existing electrical conduit and connected to the original wiring in the aforementioned electrical junction box. "A" end oil pump was then energised via the oil pump relay under the desk at "A" and ran with no issues reported.

"A" end engine oil priming pump now operational.

"A" end engine dipstick was then dipped and found to be bone dry.

"A" end engine to be filled with engine oil and the last 2 seized brushes of "A" end dynostarter to be freed in order to progress "A" end engine, "A" end oil pump, "A" end transmission, "A" end serck pump, "A" end dynostarter and "A" electrical power circuit assessments.

## **News Update – December 2025** (All pictures supplied by Working Members)

### **Winter Maintenance**

D1013 Western Ranger and D1062 Western Courier were due to be shunted into the TMD on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> of Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December.

Ranger was due to be placed on the Jacking Area and Courier on the Side Pit Lane

Ranger is due to be there until the end of December and then moved to Number 3 Road.

Courier is due to be there until Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December, but then returns to the Side pit Lane from January 1<sup>st</sup> for 2 months, after which Ranger will take her place until early April.

These are the current bookings – so we have a great opportunity to work on the locomotives.

A list of work to be carried out has been drawn up as follows:-

#### **D1013**

- Remove Roof Panels
- Remove broken oiler Room Window & Frame, prepare area for welding
- Prepare “B” End for engine refitting
- Continue Bogie Work – both “B” End and “A” End

#### **D1062**

- Inspection of Bogies – to be carried out Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup>
- Oil change on “A” End Transmission
- Replace Fuel Filler Valves
- Change Fuel Filters
- Clean Fuel Strainer
- Clean Cooler Groups
- Clean all Air Intakes & Filters
- Replace Decompression Valves on both engines (ongoing with Youth Team)
- Overhaul Fuel Pumps
- Cab Repaint and general locomotive refresh

More tasks to follow....

## Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December

### **D1048 Wrapped Up for Winter**

A team were assembled today for the wrapping of Lady for Christmas.  
Thanks to Mike T, Coop, Dave H, Paul N, Mark P, Jack, Krystian and Peter S.

Getting the ropes ready for throwing over the locomotive.



The moment of realisation, yes, the rope is stuck Mike!



Mission Accomplished 😊



What a Team.





Worthy of a Close Up.



Some views of the yard from earlier on a sunny December chilly morning, and FOUR Class 52s in shot.

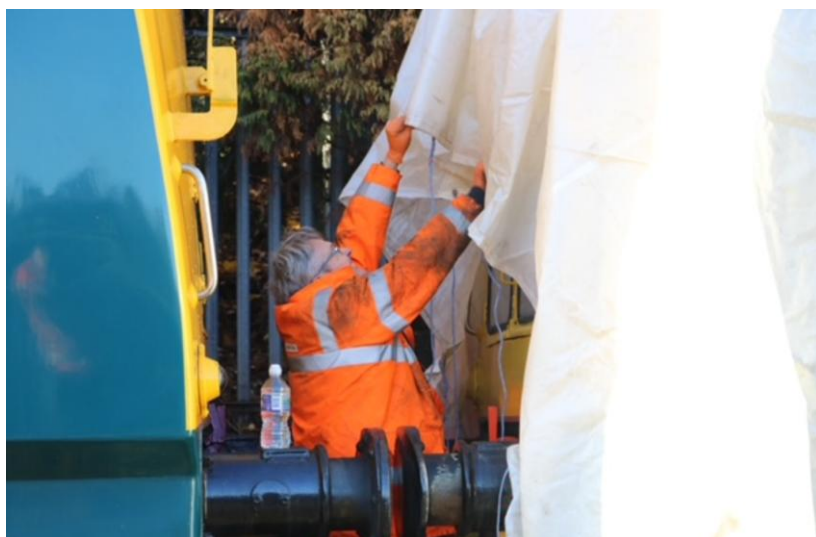


A final two from a successful day.

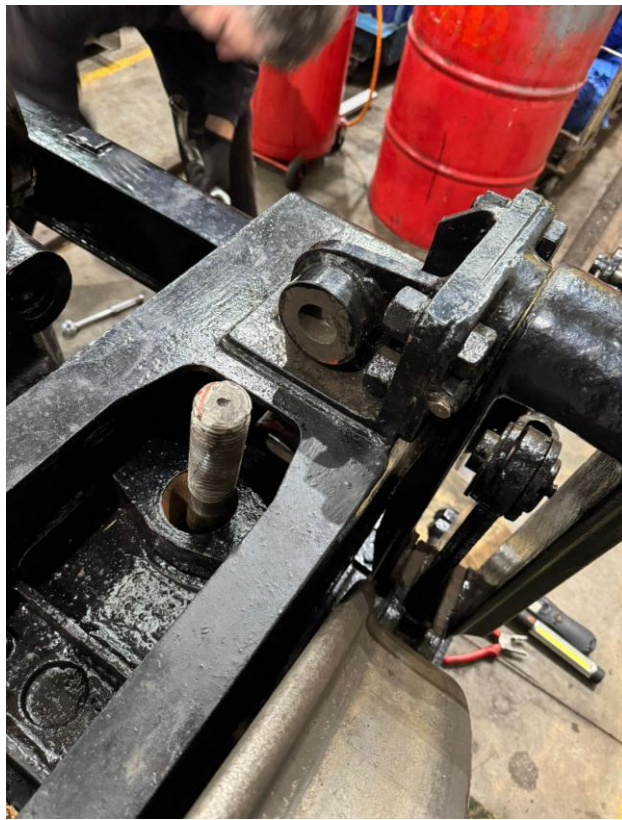




Just to end – a couple more action shots !



In addition to the Wrapping of Lady, a brake cylinder was also removed from D1013's "B" end bogie, the spring hanger fitted and the brake cylinder refitted. Pictures by Paul Northcott.





### **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December**

Our latest Working Member reporting for duty - actually, it's the TMD cat just keeping an eye on things – and keeping out of the rain. Thanks Sally for the picture.



### **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December**

Richard Hargreaves has been busy, over the past few weeks sanding, applying red oxide and grey primer and a splash of silver to a rather splendid looking pre-heater.





### **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December**

An inspection on D1062 has revealed that the equalising beam on the second man side on "A" end bogie has moved towards the outside of the bogie frame. A gap has also been noted between the base of the brushes. Following discussions, the decision has been made to change the equalising beam. A beam and pedestals will be required which we hope to have ready by late January. Once confirmed, work will start on disconnecting the bogie and ensuring that we have all of the consumables required available so as to hasten the job.

It is also suggested that at the same time as the bogie is out, that the transmission oil and also a Drain Tap that has been noticed to be weeping.

Consideration is also being made as to whether to replace the bogie cardan shafts as these are the last of the original BR shafts in use on our locomotives.

### **Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December**

Focus was on the replacement of the remaining fuel hoses underneath D1013 and Krystian and Greg did a brilliant job replacing the final four hoses. All seven hoses now require final checking, mark-up and sign off (and a bracket at position 5 needs to be reattached permanently!)

One down, three to go!







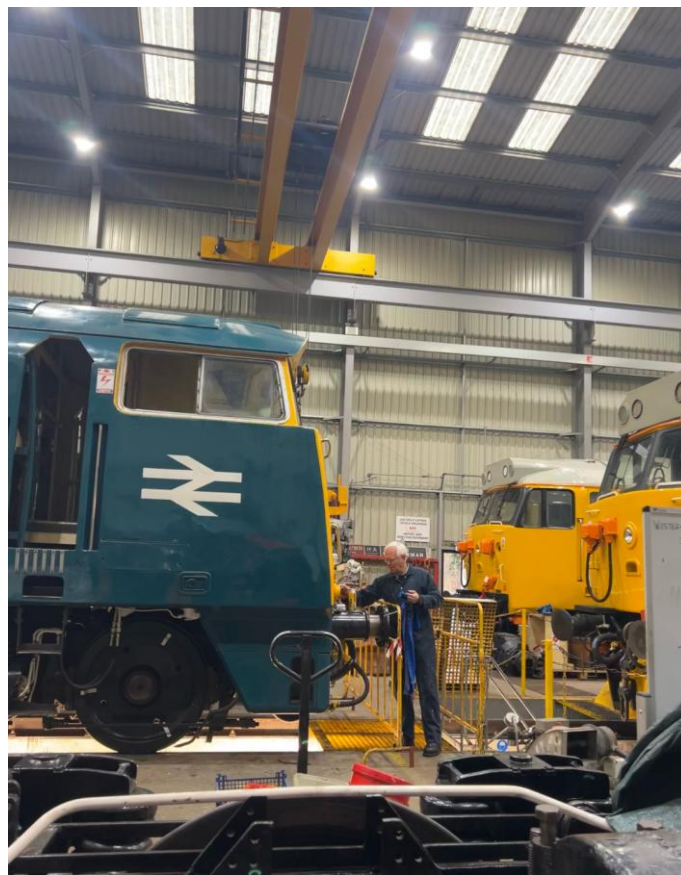
Mark returned one of D1013's equalising beams following successful testing – this can now be refitted. (He is reported to have said it's not TOO HEAVY!"





### **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December**

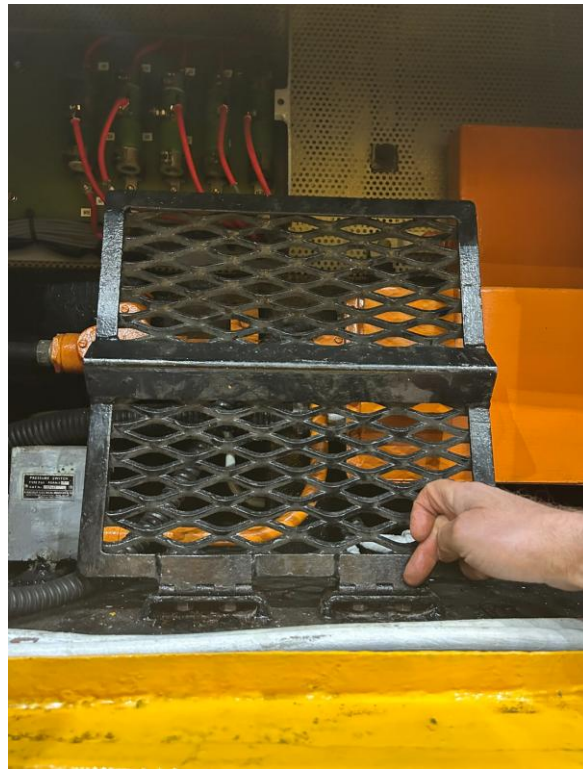
The Chairman was noted in the TMD helping with progress on D1013 and fitting FOUR awkward bolts on one of the head code box steps – a tough job but someone had to do it !



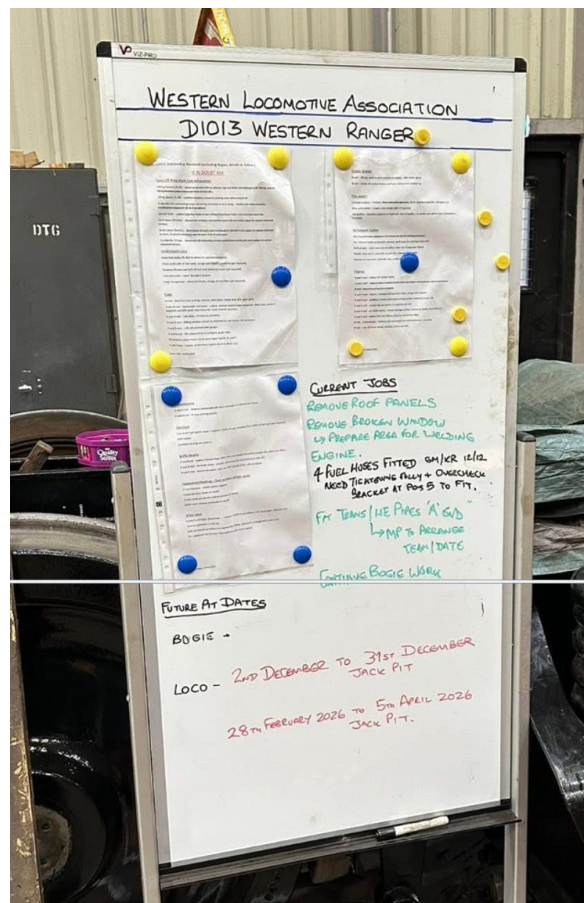




One of those awkward bolts ...

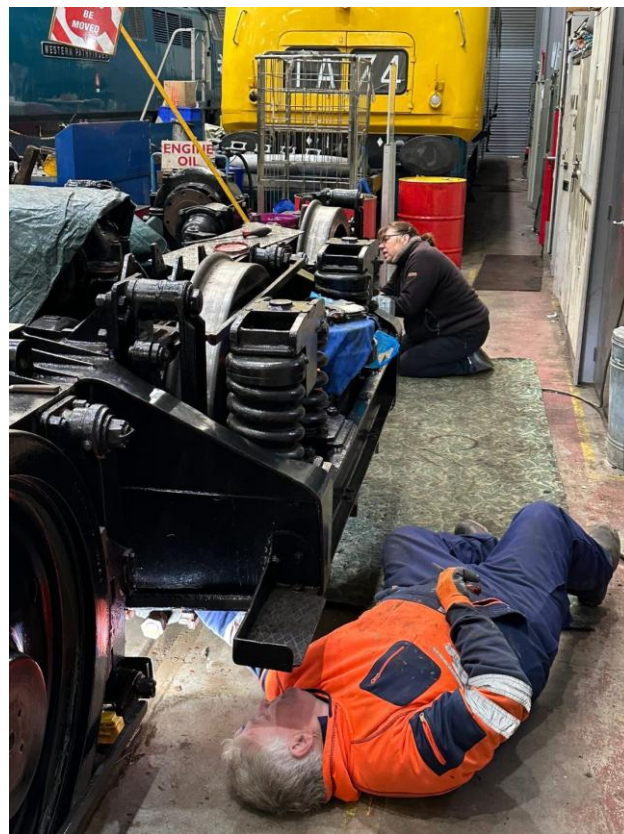


Still lots of other work to get on with – all documented on the To Do List..





Everyone appears to be extremely busy and searching underneath the bogie.



At least 8 Working Members are in shot below...



Equalising Beams ready to be returned to the bogie.





A few more pictures of progress made, the intermediate drive...



And awaiting a turbo and then fitting back into the locomotive.



**And of course, Happy Birthday to D1013 on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December!**

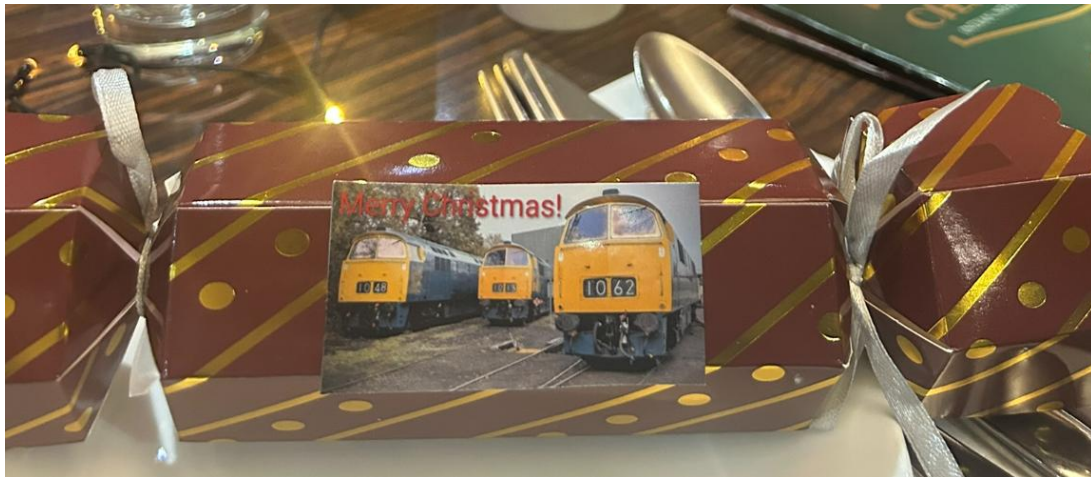


We ended the day with some Christmas Celebrations, and Mr Hiscocks certainly came dressed to impress.





The WLA Xmas Crackers were also impressive!



A great time was had by all in attendance – a perfect celebration to end a successful year.



There was also a big surprise earlier in the day as D1001 was spotted passing the TMD – a Ghost of Christmas Past maybe.





Or preparations for next Saturday's big tour – The Pathfinder Finale and the DTG's Western Champion on one side displaying Western Pathfinders name and number.



### **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December**

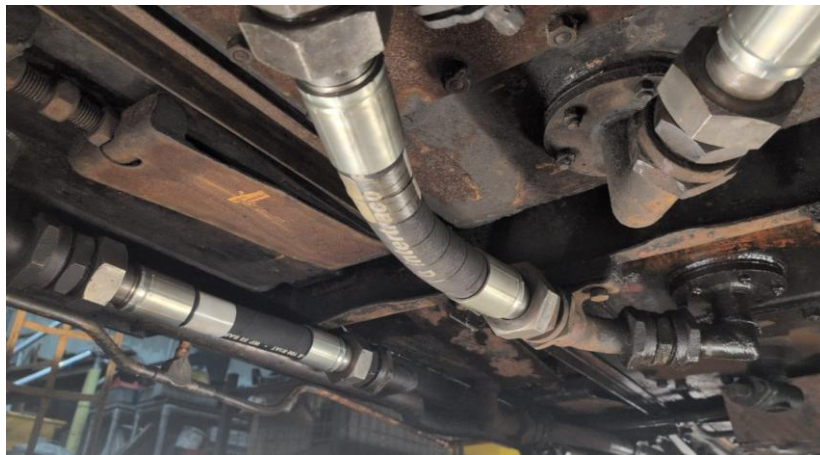
Phil Hiscocks was back at work on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> – waist coat removed I am pleased to report, with work focusing on the continued removal of “crud” in the awkward areas near the centre wheel on Ranger’s bogie, and then applying red oxide, prior to being planted chassis black. It has been noted that long brushes are required and double- jointed arms!

### **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December**

The Youth Team were back at work (Jack & Krystian) with new Team Member Angad – welcome to the team.



Some final attention was paid to the fuel pipes.





## Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> December

Time for the Pathfinder Finale ! The departure board at Bristol Parkway for some of the early risers!



Departures	Plat	Expt
07:09 Manchester Picc	3	On time
07:21 London Paddington	3	On time
07:24 Gloucester	4	On time
07:25 Swansea	2	On time
07:31 Charter train	3	On time
The Pathfinder Finale		
Ending 52 Years of Railtours		
07:42 Edinburgh	3	On time
Page 1 of 1		07:05:12

D1015 Western Champion (D1001 Western Pathfinder) takes over at Gloucester for the journey north.



Old vs New !





A great crowd gathered to see the hydraulic arrival.



Time to pay tribute to the team from Pathfinder Rail Tours.



A Western back at Cheltenham Spa, a picture taken by Terry Coleman, from the fence where I spent many hours trainspotting after school in the 1970s.

The last Western I saw in this position back in the good old days was our won D1013 Western Ranger – with Red Backed Plated and silver Buffer Beams.



Under the wires at Birmingham New Street.





Reflections !



The WLA Dozen in attendance to celebrate the last tour. ( I was taking the photograph so am not in view 🙄 )





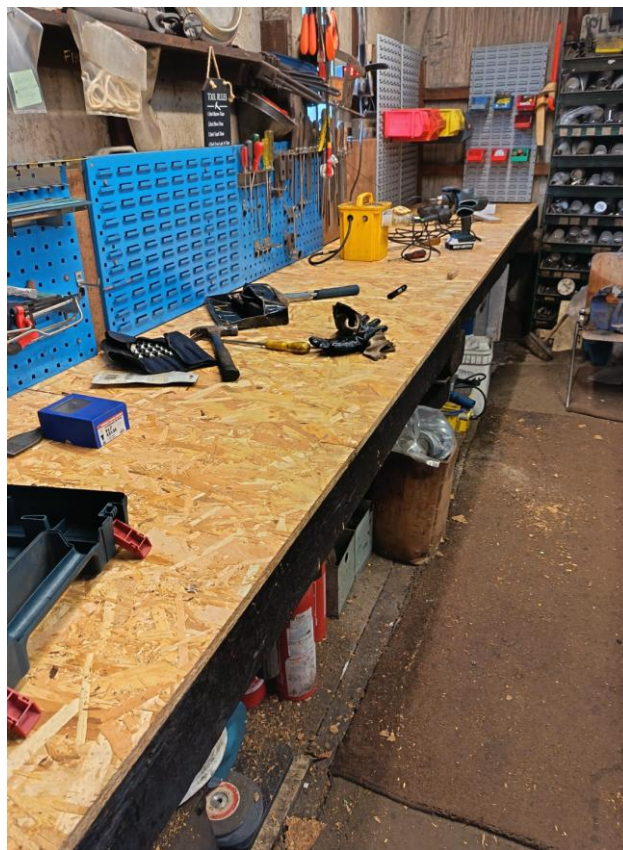
The end at Gloucester.



That's all folks!

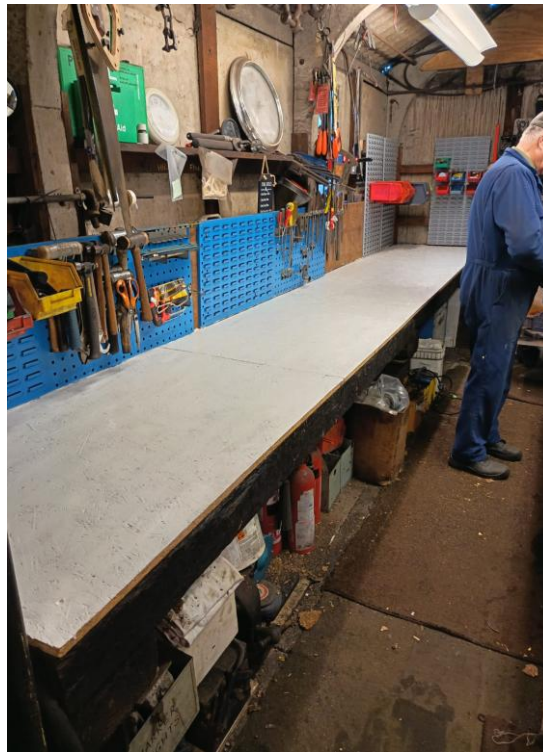


Meanwhile, the “real” Working Members were busy at Bridgnorth, as the old work bench top surface is replaced, Roger Fry acting as Project Manager 😊



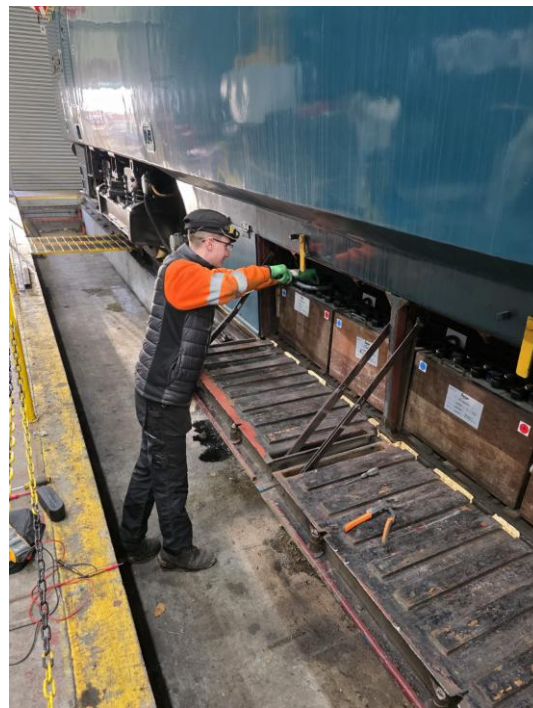


Looking much better.



### **End of year Update**

Work has now started on the Winter Maintenance on D1062 – Air Filters have been cleaned and refitted, the fuel strainer has been replaced with the floating spare – a new O Ring will now be required for the spare strainer. New Fuel Filling Valves have been fitted on both sides. Batteries have been checked for voltage and topped up – these will be swapped over with the new batteries current in Lady over the winter.







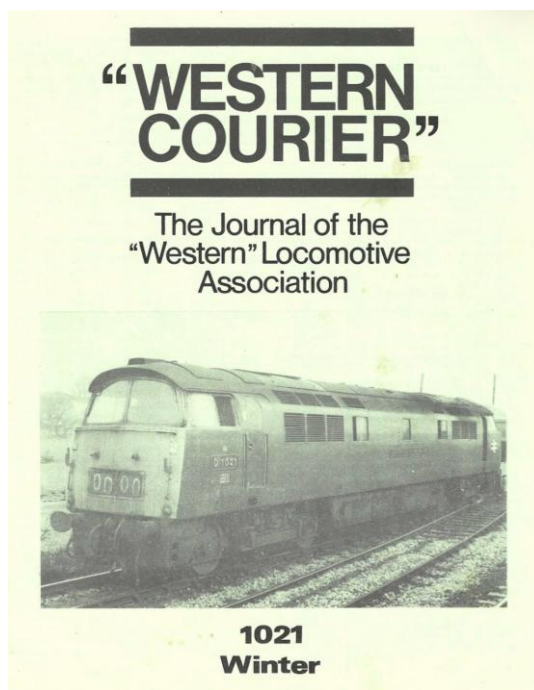
Looking ahead – whilst Ranger is over the pit, there are a few areas underneath the locomotive that can now be cleaned and made ready for future work – all that we can do now will help to save time later. Specifically, the fuel steel pipework needs to be degreased , old paint scraped, red oxide applied, primed and painted.

Thanks to Paul N and Krystian who have already made a start on this.



**That's all folks for 2025!**

## **Western Courier**



### **Westerns in Retrospect**

Western Sparksman

It was generally accepted that, with but a few exceptions, the whole fleet of Westerns was identical with one another. Electrically, this was not so, for almost from their first days to within three years of the demise of the class, removals, modifications and additions to the control system occurred causing headaches to both shed and workshop staff alike.

Listed below, with a brief description, is some of the equipment which was subjected to change.

#### **A.T.C. — Automatic Train Control**

All 74 locomotives were so fitted when built. Later, A.W.S. or Automatic Warning System was added which led to the removal of the Western Region A.T.C. cab-equipment. In its place an electro-pneumatic valve, change-end switch, bell and horn and cancel switch were fitted to each cab. A voltage converter along with a relay unit and junction box for either A.T.C. or A.W.S. signals was sited under the floor of "B" end cab. The A.W.S. receiver button was mounted at the trailing end of "A" bogie whilst the A.T.C. shoe was mounted at the trailing end of bogie. These modifications were carried out at the same time as the dual braking modification took place.

#### **Air/Vacuum Brake**

As built, all locomotives were fitted with a straight air brake fed from one small compressor at "B" end, whilst two exhausters located at "A" end provided the means to create vacuum. Later, dual train brake capabilities were incorporated in 70 locomotives, the exceptions being D1017, D1018, D1019 & D1020. This major modification was carried out by removing a fuel tank from the underframe toward "A" end and fitting a Westinghouse 3VC50 type compressor in its place. Internally, a dual brake changeover cabinet was fitted in the boiler room along with electro-pneumatic valves and a brake distributor. In the cabs a brake indicator was situated under the horn access panel, whilst at the driver's side the vacuum brake handle was replaced by an auto-air brake for air or vacuum working.



(Straight air is used for light engine working, while air or vacuum is used for braking fitted wagons behind, or coaches:)

### **The Deadman's System**

In its original form, the Deadman's valve was activated by either a foot button or hand switch(es) energising a solenoid. A lamp indicator at the drivers' desk fed via a relay and resistor told whether or not the Deadman's valve was operating. With the advent of A.W.S. a new magnet valve was fitted to replace the Deadman's valve; the new valve was known as the E.B.V. — Emergency Brake Valve, the lamp indicator being made redundant along with the hand switches.

Many locomotives, D1013 included, would keep this revised though simple system. Others, D1062 included, were fitted with electronic D.S.D. — Drivers Safety Devices; some, D1056 included, were fitted with Vigilance Control which was electro-magnetic in operation. Both these systems worked in conjunction with the E.B. Valve, but long before the first withdrawals took place these latter two safety devices were modified to give the same operation as that employed by D1013, and now in the preservation of D1062 (see Courier 1017).

### **Engine Temperature, Oil Pressure and Transmission Temperature Sensing.**

As built, all locomotives were fitted with Smiths Industries Protection Devices to engine and transmission. Engine protection comprised:-

O.T.S.	Oil Temperature Switch
H.W.T.S.	High Water Temperature Switch
L.W.T.S.	Low Water Temperature Switch
S.O.P.S.	Start Oil Pressure Switch
R.O.P.S.	Run Oil Pressure Switch

O.T.S., H.W.T.S., L.W.T.S. acted via gas/liquid filled capillary sensors.

S.O.P.S., R.O.P.S. acted on oil pressure diaphragms.

O.T.S. was discarded from the protection system very early on as its temperature settings duplicated those of H.W.T.S.

H.W.T.S. was fitted with two micro-switches set at 195 F and 205 F to give a warning light in the driving cab and then shutdown. Later, the control circuit was altered to bring the engine down to idling as this induces more rapid cooling than total shutdown of an engine unit.

L.W.T.S. was set at 110 F in order to prevent cold starting. On selecting direction at the master controller, a relay is energised and if starting temperature has been attained a blue light shows at the co-driver's desk and part of the start circuit is completed.

S.O.P.S. prevents an engine start until the lubrication Oil pump has built up a crankcase pressure to 15 p.s.i. (pounds per square inch).

R.O.P.S. has two micro-switches each set as 45 p.s.i., one to maintain the engine run valve circuit and the other to shut down the pre-heater.

In 1967 it was decided by the CM. & E.E. (Chief Mechanical and Electrical Engineer) to seek alternatives to the Smiths system. Equipment embodying similar characteristics was ordered from Messrs. K.D.G. and locomotives D1065, D1066, D1067, D1070 and D1072 were fitted with modified protection boxes at Laira. A step was made into the electronic era during the same period with the fitting of Hawker Siddeley Dynamics resistance thermometers to engines and transmissions.

### **Fuel and Boiler water contents gauges**

As built, they were fitted in the side servicing points and in the boiler room but owing to damage from ballast etc. and the ingress of oil/water, the side service gauges were removed leaving only those internally for crew checks.

Coolant water levels were monitored by sensors mounted in each header tank with their associated gauges sited in each vestibule. However, because water level float switches incorporated in the starting circuit were sited also in each header tank duplication became an extravagance. The sensors were removed and blanking plates fitted.

Later, when most of the class were based at Laira a modification was embodied whereby if an engine cut out owing to loss of coolant and full power was required a shorting switch for the relevant engine could be closed and power regained. The engine would, if loss of coolant continued, eventually be shut down by the crew when a high-water temperature was shown. D1013 Western Ranger has been so modified unlike D1062 Western Courier. Current opinion in the W. L.A., in light of our preventative maintenance schedule, is that it has no practical application.

Some modification not proceeded with or curtailed owing to fleet withdrawal:—

### **Windscreen wipers**

A departure from the normal air driven type was a nautical type of rotary device driven by a small electric motor (The Naval version is the Kent Clear-View Screen for ships operating in adverse weather.) Two models were tested on D1006 and D1039.

### **Electronic wheel slip sensor with automatic sanding.**

Fitted to D1040 only.

### **Either engine R.P.M. switch mounted on the driver's desk.**

Fitted to D1066 only.

**Bubble sensors** fitted to the coolant water circuit to give indication of cracked cylinder heads. It was intended for progressive fitting to all locomotives. D1021 was one which was fitted.

One might suppose that "if" policy had not led to their demise from B.R. the Westerns would have been further modified during general repair to include E.T.H. capability (intended fitting of a diesel generator had reached last design stages during Warship production) at the exclusion of the train boiler. Solid state voltage regulators, removal of exhausters/ vacuum equipment. Instead, we are left with but a few examples of Westerns to give the next generation a taste of classic design and advanced technology of the period.



## Sales Team Update

December has been very busy with new books, you might think that everything that could be said about diesel hydraulic locomotives, the last of which were withdrawn by BR nearly fifty years ago, has already been said. However, you would be wrong, & "Preserving Diesel Hydraulic Locomotives 1977-1982" has been written by Steve Crowther, who was there, and covers the first few years of preservation of our own D1048 plus D1041 and D832. The first fifteen books had sold before I actually even received them, and more are on order.

Please Book of the Month for further information.

Details of other recent arrivals are in the online store and there are several more books to be published in 2026 - [Books & Publications - Western Locomotive Association](#)

As I'm sure you'll agree, liveries are always a contentious subject among railway enthusiasts in general and it seems Western fans in particular, but I am delighted to be able to answer the question of which is the most popular colour after our experience with the Western badges which we introduced three years ago. First off, I ordered 100 badges - 50 blue and 50 maroon. When they were close to selling out I ordered another 100 - 40 blue, 40 green and 20 maroon. Finally, the last 100 was made up of 35 desert sand, 35 golden ochre and 30 blue and all bar a few remaining desert sand badges have been sold.

So, the final score is:

Blue	- 120
Maroon	- 70
Green	- 40
Golden Ochre	- 35
Desert Sand	- 29 (to date)

These badges have been an excellent fund raiser and the question came up, what next?

Our supplier came up with what I think is a worthy successor to the single loco badges featuring all three of our locos. Mindful of the livery question I ordered 50 with all three locos in blue and fifty with D1013 in maroon, D1048 in green and D1062 in blue. So, you can choose or you can have both. We took ten of each new badge on the Pathfinder Finale railtour on 20th December and sold out early on with several Sales Team members having to give their badges back to sell to customers.







Our calendars, in John Kite's fifteenth year as WLA Calendar supremo, are generally acknowledged to be among the best in Diesel Preservation. The themes for both the desktop and the wall calendar were Westerns off the Beaten Track. The A3 wall calendar includes a tribute to Steve Hampton, the former DTG Sales Officer who passed away early this year, and £1.50 from each calendar will be donated to the DTG in his memory. I'm afraid the desktop has sold out already and we only have thirteen of the wall calendars left so a great contribution to our sales figure for 2025.

The first WLA DVD was launched at the AGM and nearly fifty of the hundred copies produced have already sold already. It really is a superb production, produced for us by Hellfire TV, a preview can be seen at – [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6\\_9Rgzy2nU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_9Rgzy2nU)

You can order a DVD or Blu Ray from the online store - [General Merchandise - Western Locomotive Association](#)

So that's about it for 2025, it just remains to wish you all the very best for 2026 and to ask that you donate any diesel books, models and memorabilia that you no longer want to keep to the WLA to help us maintain our record of raising funds to keep us at the forefront of Diesel Preservation.

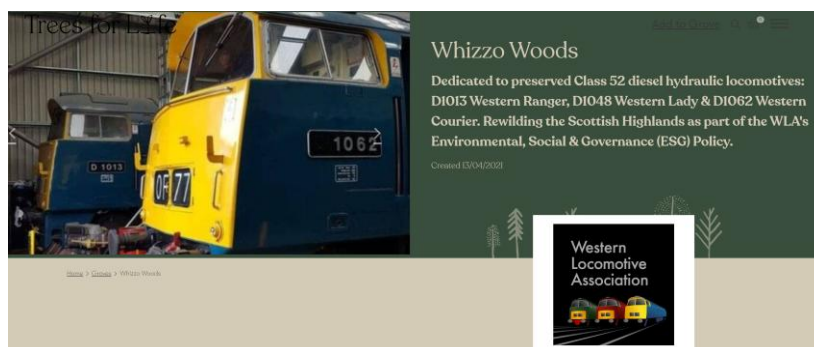
As for 2027, there is a significant anniversary coming up in just fourteen months' time and WLA intend to celebrate in style.

## Whizzo Woods

At the end of November, we have **531 trees** in Whizzo Woods, a great increase of nearly 20 trees from last month – but we still have a long way to go to achieve 1,000 trees but we will get there as we will be even more “enterprising” next year with our initiatives!

Thank you all for your continued support for Whizzo Woods.

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/>

## Membership News

Thank you to you all for your continued support. Please all remember to renew whenever you receive a reminder as your continued support makes it possible to do what we do.

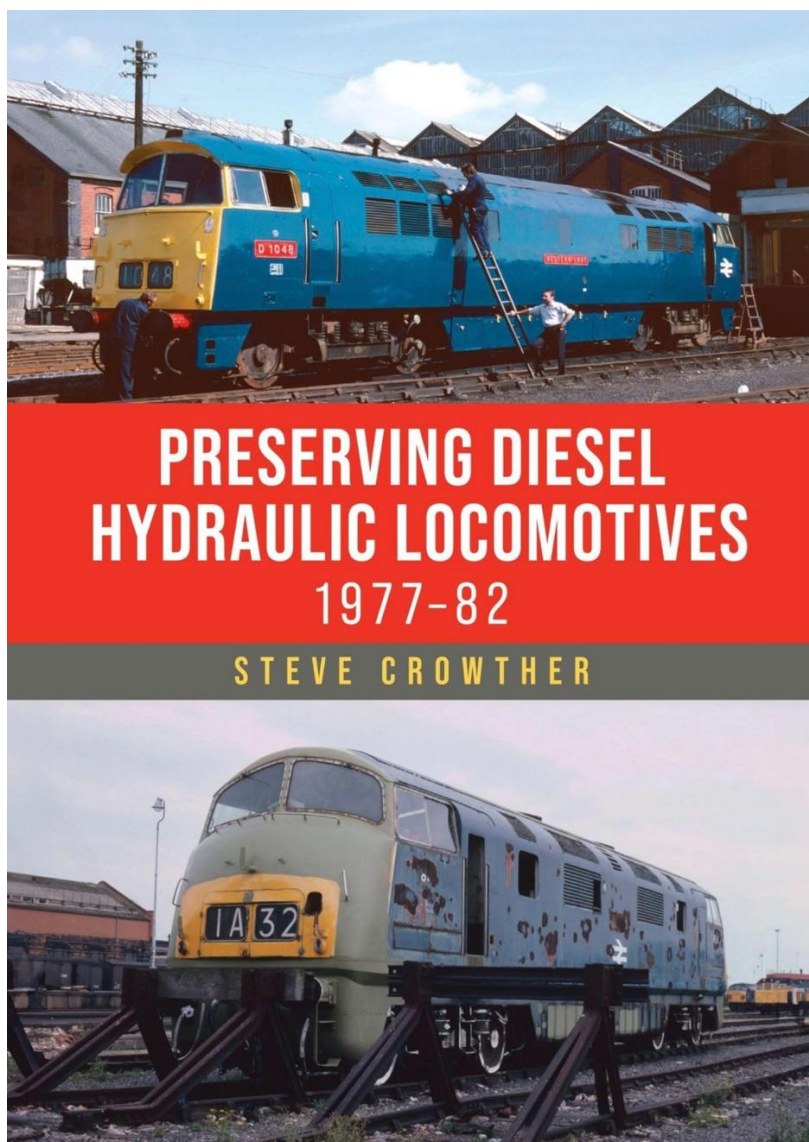
You can join the WLA, or renew your membership in three ways:

- Payment by Credit Card (via Stripe) from our website – [www.westernlocomotives.com](http://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](http://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 persuades one other person to join, we will double our membership! So, step up to the challenge and help us to achieve our objective of doubling our membership.**

We are also always looking for new “Working Members” to come and help us with our work on the locomotives, and with all of the other essential associated work carried out both 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](mailto:wp.finch@icloud.com)

## **Book of the Month**



In the 1970's, diesel locomotive preservation was very much in its infancy. With most of these locomotives having been built in the 1960's it seemed inconceivable that anyone would consider preserving one as they were so relatively young. However, despite steam having been phased out by 1968, the railways were rapidly changing and many of the early diesel classes were starting to be taken out of service due to dwindling work and line closures. Also, BR wanted to standardise the fleet.

The diesel hydraulic classes were one type of locomotive targeted for early withdrawal. The first ones were taken out of service in 1968 and the final ones in 1977.

In the last few years of their lives, they gained a tremendous following from enthusiasts which ignited a passion to try and preserve some before it was too late. As the movement gathered pace, more people became involved and one of these was author Steve Crowther.

In this book he details the ups and downs of saving not one but three of these iconic locomotives for prosperity.

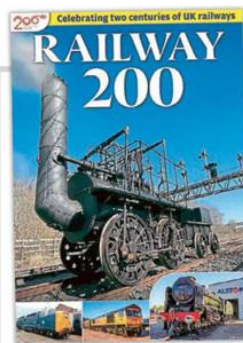
Available to purchase at [Preserving Diesel Hydraulic Locomotives 1977 to 1982 - Western Locomotive Association](#)



## Media Coverage

### Railway Magazine – January 2026

## REVIEWS



# Railway 200 keepsake

By Owen Hayward

THIS bookazine is a great way to remember the Railway 200 year, rounding up the key events that have taken place in the North East and across the country, from the 'Whistle-up' at the start of the year to the replica Locomotion No. 1 running on the main line. It includes a history of the

Stockton & Darlington Railway and the key people involved, the opening of the line in 1825 being the basis for this Railway 200 year. There is also a look back at major events like the Greatest gathering in Derby in August, and the launch of the exhibition train 'Inspiration', which is still touring the country into 2026. There is also a look at the many

events staged by heritage lines, not least the Ffestiniog Railway's 'Platinum Jubilee' weekend in June, which flew the flag for Railway 200 in Wales and featured the incredible '200 wheels on the Cob' event.

Published by Kelsey Media  
<https://shop.kelsey.co.uk>  
98 pages, bookazine. £9.99

### From Chocolate to Cider

By Paul Stanford

FIVE generations of Paul Stanford's family have been engaged in railway service since 1875 – a total of 186 years in all. This is no mean achievement when in 2025 we celebrate a mere 200 years of public railways in the UK.

This book takes the form of a lavishly illustrated chronological family history railway journey through time from the Birmingham area to Bristol and on to Devon and Cornwall – the location for the major part of the family's working lives on the railway. The Cadbury Bournville Railway featured prominently in the Stanford family for around 50 years and many superb images are included from that time.

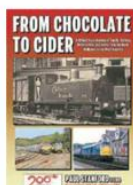
Divided into four main chapters the book is illustrated with an excellent selection of family-related railway colour and monochrome photographs with informative captions and anecdotes that help to carry the ongoing narrative. Because of the

family railway employment many of the images depict locations normally inaccessible to the public. Many of the images show railway scenes lost forever – even including early preservation scenes from the 1960s!

All author royalties from this book will be used to help the mental health charity 'Head-shunt' – founded by Paul Stanford and his wife Fiona for the benefit of railway staff.

This is a fascinating take on our railway history and well worth exploring and supporting. Recommended.

Published by Silver Link Books  
[www.mortonsbooks.co.uk](http://www.mortonsbooks.co.uk)  
128 pages, hardback. £25.00



### Rails around Manchester

By Mike Rhodes

MANCHESTER has nearly 200 years of railway history dating back to 1830, and Mike Rhodes has produced a useful volume to portray the variety to be found at work on this extensive railway scene. Indeed Manchester has the largest railway network in the UK after London.

The huge area covered by this photographic portrait roughly coincides with that included in the Wayfarer Ticket Boundary – thus covering 162 route miles and 130 stations! The photographs illustrate present day workings back as far as the end of the steam era.

All types of rail traffic are shown – from BR steam through modern electric and diesel traction to the Woodhead services, preservation railways and the Metro trams.

The vast majority of the 180 quality images are in colour and there is a succinct historical introduction dealing with the complex history of the Manchester rail operations.

A valuable addition to our railway history – recommended.

Published by Amberley Publishing  
[www.amberley-books.com](http://www.amberley-books.com)  
96 pages, paperback. £15.99

### British Railways Freight Terminals Since 1960

By Paul Shannon

THIS is a good quality and well-presented publication giving a pictorial overview of freight terminals spanning six decades.

It is separated into nine chapters, each opening with a potted history, covering one of the main types of traffic to have terminals dedicated to it. The photography (a mixture of black and white and colour shots) is excellent. As well as many pictures taken by the author, there are also a number of older archive images which offer additional interest for the reader and underline

the major investment and sense of pride in the modernisation of freight handling, although many new facilities would disappear altogether as the industry evolved even further.

The author has concentrated upon general goods, coal and biomass, aggregates, cement, metals, oil and chemicals and intermodal as his main subjects, with a final chapter combining other types of cargo. It could be argued that milk trains, timber, motor vehicles and nuclear traffic deserved greater prominence rather than sharing this last section, but the topic of freight terminals is so wide-ranging that it would be nigh-on impossible to give all of them equal balance.

I felt there was, however, definitely scope to give additional context, for example, a map or full list of the central freight depots and intermodal terminals established by BR. Likewise, at several points, the text opening the chapters lacked specifics regarding dates and locations which I felt would have been useful to the reader.

Published by Crécy Publishing  
<https://crecy.co.uk>  
215 pages, hardback. £25.00

Books, videos and other items for possible review should be sent to: The Railway Magazine, Media Centre, Morton Way, Horncastle, Lincs LN9 6JR



## 'Western' calendars

By WLA

THE Western Locomotive Association has again released calendars in two formats for 2026, one to hang on the wall and one to sit on a desktop.

The wall-hanging version is A3-size, with one month and a large photo of a 'Western' in action on each page. There is a good selection of images, taken across the country on the main line and heritage sites in British Rail days and preservation.

The desktop version is A5-size and stands as a triangle with the month's dates on one side and a photo of a 'Western' on the other. There is a different selection of images to the wall-hanging calendar, but they are again selected from the BR and preservation eras.

Profits go to the WLA and a donation to the Diesel Traction Group.

Published by the WLA  
<https://westernlocomotives.com>  
A3 size £16; A5 size £12



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## PRESERVATION

David Russell

# 'Chopper' re-enters preservation

Class 20 joins East Lancashire Railway fleet

THE East Lancashire Railway took delivery of No. D8069 (20069) on November 11, the Class 20 arriving from Worksop following its purchase from Harry Needle by a group of volunteers from the line. Its arrival fills a gap in the ELR-based collection of diesels which has been present since the departure of No. 20087, formerly

part of the Newton Heath Diesel Traction Group collection, in 2020. For No. D8069, it is a return to preservation. Originally saved in 1992, it was based at County School and then the Mid-Norfolk until it was acquired by Harry Needle in 2019. In June 2012, it was involved in a shunting collision with GWR Pannier Tank No. 9466,

and underwent repairs at Nemesis Rail, Burton the following year. Soon after, it was stopped pending overhaul, but the locomotive was sold before work began, and it moved to Worksop in 2020. It did not form part of sale of the HNRC business to Swietelsky earlier this year. Ironically, former ELR resident No. 20087, which was acquired by Harry Needle before it left Bury,

also re-entered preservation last year. Purchased by Steve Latham, it is now based at the Kent & East Sussex Railway and has been named *Reginald T. Latham 1933-2023*. ■ Another Class 20 owned by Harry Needle, No. 20056, is being reactivated at Worksop. Last used in industrial service by Corus at Scunthorpe around ten years ago, it was fired up on November 11.

### COACH NEWS

#### SUPER BG FOR PLYM VALLEY

A Mk.1 Super BG which had been dumped at Tavistock Yard, Plymouth for more than 20 years has been moved a short distance to the Plym Valley Railway for preservation. No. 94540 arrived at its new home on November 18, with 'Shark' brake No. DB993840 being moved at the same time. Both vehicles have been donated to the line.

#### MK.3 FINDS TEMPORARY BASE AT EAST KENT

FORMER 125 Group Mk.3a SO No. 12134 has been sold by Romic and departed Dereham for a temporary home at the East Kent Railway in advance of it moving to a permanent base in 2026. Its new owner intends to convert the vehicle into living accommodation.

#### ANOTHER SLEEPER FOR EMBAY

THE Embay & Bolton Abbey Railway took delivery of Mk.3a SLEP No. 10529, previously located at the East Lancashire Railway, on November 13.

#### WENSLEYDALE REPAIRS

THE Wensleydale Railway has outshopped three more coaches in blue/grey livery, giving it seven Mk.2 coaches in this colour scheme. Making their debut runs on 'Polar Express' trains following repainting were Mk.2a TSO Nos. 5279 and 5337, along with BSO No. 9417.

#### MK.2B SCRAPPED

LOCATED at the Mid Hants Railway for over 25 years, Mk.2b FK 13502 was scrapped on site at Medstead & Four Marks during November.



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## 125 Group acquires power car as spares donor

AS part of a deal with Romic, the 125 Group has taken delivery of its sixth HST power car, No. 43190. Its acquisition comes as part of an agreement which saw the group's loco-hauled Mk.3 coaches transfer to the rolling stock dealer and hire company earlier this year. The power car does not, however, have a long-term future as it is to be used as a

### 125 GROUP POWER CARS

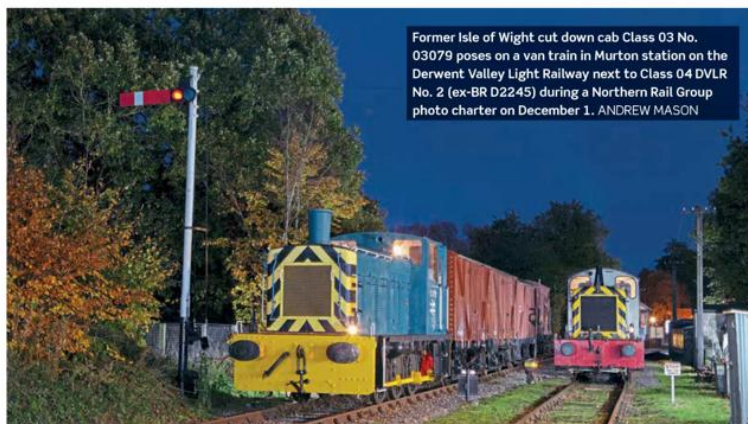
Number	Livery	Location	Status
43025	FGB	UKRL, Loughborough	Repairs (engine work)
43044	IC	Cockshute Sidings, Stoke	Valenta conversion
43048	EMT	UKRL, Loughborough	Repairs (traction motor change)
43089	EMT	East Lancashire Railway	Operational
43159	MML	East Lancashire Railway	Operational
43190	FGB	Cockshute Sidings, Stoke	Spares donor

Liveries: EMT – East Midlands Trains, FGB – First Group blue, IC – InterCity, MML – Midland Mainline

spares donor, providing components to keep its fleet operational in the future.

No. 43190 arrived at Cockshute Sidings, where it joins No. 43044,

from Nemesis Rail at Burton on November 28. It is devoid of a power unit and ATP (Automatic Train Protection) equipment but is substantially complete.



Former Isle of Wight cut down cab Class 03 No. 03079 poses on a van train in Merton station on the Derwent Valley Light Railway next to Class 04 DVLR No. 2 (ex-BR D2245) during a Northern Rail Group photo charter on December 1. ANDREW MASON

## Progress on Western Lady assessment

THE chance to temporarily fit a new set of batteries to No. D1048 *Western Lady* has enabled further steps forward to be made on the electrical assessment of the Western Locomotive Association's recent acquisition at Kidderminster. Testing of the electrical power circuits has taken place and, at the 'B' end of the locomotive, with the dynostarter having passed mega testing and found to be

free, it was successfully energised and turned over the transmission and engine, meaning that, on the electrical power side, the 'B' end engine is capable of being started. At the other end, more work is needed – two seized brushes on the dynostarter need to be freed and the engine filled with engine oil.

Also at the 'A' end, two major earth faults have been traced to the wires themselves and require further

investigation. A damaged overspeed unit has been replaced with a spare.

The batteries temporarily fitted to No. D1048 are destined for use in No. D1062 *Western Courier*, which ran for 50 days on the Severn Valley Railway during 2025, delivering 100% availability. Consideration is being given to replacing the auxiliary pump on the transmission at one end to see if this solves a low oil pressure issue.



## Heritage Railways – January 2026

We were featured in an article called “Happy Valley (with careful planning)” – an article in which Owen Hayward interviews Jonathan “Gus” Dunster.



On May 15, 2025, No. 50035 *Ark Royal*, one of the SVR's residing fleet of diesel locomotives, passes Orchard Crossing during the annual Spring Diesel Festival. KENNY FELSTEAD



The SVR is home to a plethora of diesel locomotive classes, ranging from early to late BR, and includes the likes of BR Class 52 D1048 *Western Lady* (left), which is currently awaiting restoration, and Class 20 No. 20048 (centre), along with several Class 50 locomotives such as that on the right. OWEN HAYWARD



Carrying a representation of its NCB Backworth livery, No. 813 (as NCB No. 11) heads a Highley shuttle away from Bewdley on September 20, 2025. As with No. 1450, this is another small locomotive with an interesting story that can help with the broader interpretation of railway history being told to visitors. OWEN HAYWARD



GWR 1400 0-4-2T No. 1450 propels its autococh out of Highley on September 18, 2025. While limited in operational suitability, its branch line connotations, including autotrain working, offers an interesting story to tell visitors and makes overhauling locomotives like it a viable decision in terms of interpreting the history of this former GWR branch. OWEN HAYWARD

they don't deteriorate. In some cases, these are locomotives that won't ever steam again, but they perform a really valuable function because people can get up close in a safe environment.

"That's probably quite an important thing. Some of us are at an age where we can remember walking around a locomotive yard unimpeded at a heritage railway – I certainly did – but we can't do that now. The way you address that appetite is to provide a safe space in which they can do so. This has the benefit of keep these locomotives in reasonable condition so that if and when the time ever comes when you do think it can be overhauled, you're not starting with basket case, which you would have been in the past, when they were all kept under in the rain for years on end.

"We saw this with locomotives such as No. 75069 and *Hagley Hall* – they were both massive rebuilds.

"We must be realistic beyond this, too – the number of serviceable locomotives in the sector will probably reduce and a core fleet of known condition will establish itself that will continue to be put through the works, because their ongoing overhauls will be quantifiable and affordable.

"We are coming to the end of a major restoration of large *Prairie* No. 4150, which will be the last ex-Barry locomotive we return to steam. It's in the final throes of work at the moment and we are looking forward to seeing it enter service next year, but we are unlikely to ever carry out something requiring that extent of work again.

"It's very clear to me that the cost of doing such things is disproportionate; you can't

recover your investment in these locomotives over the course of their 10-year cycle just from the farebox revenue. That is the stark reality of things at the moment, and we need to accept that there are probably locomotives that will never steam again – or if they do, it will only be because of a very generous bequest to finance it.

"That's not to say they won't prove useful in other ways – you can still use them positively for other means, such as education. Having steam locomotives you can get close to and that tell stories from the Industrial Revolution to the present day are all part of broadening our appeal, and we are very much starting to get our educational programme back up and running again. Schools and colleges are really looking for partnership organisations like us, where they can bring students to see things live and not just in textbooks."

### Future overhauls

With that in mind, what lies ahead for the SVR's steam fleet? While you might expect the choices to only fulfil the requirement of what meets the operational needs, the reality might be slightly more reassuring.

"You need some marquee locomotives that attract people," Jonathan pointed out, "and *Hagley Hall* is regarded as our flagship for a number of reasons, but we don't use it extensively so as not to flog it to death.

"We really majored on it in August when we reopened the railway in full; as the busiest time in terms of visitor numbers, that was the best time to make full use of it. You don't push it all of the time; otherwise, it's no longer special.

"We will probably do more to push that for the casual visitor in future.

"No. 7714 is currently nearing the end of its boiler ticket, so we are actively looking at No. 1501 coming back to replace it. That's had some preliminary work done already, which has been paused while we finish some of the other projects, but it will restart, and so that will be the next one to enter the workshops.

"*Taw Valley* is now partway through its overhaul and should be back in steam again; we have a great relationship with the owners, but obviously it's definitely a locomotive better suited to high days and events. It's good to have a locomotive which can wow people, but they all have their place. There's nothing in our collection which I don't think we couldn't really use, but the smaller locomotives are perhaps coming more into their own – for some of the reasons I've outlined.

"Then, of course, you've got the new-build 3MT No. 82045 which, one might say, is the perfect locomotive for any heritage railway. I'm really excited to see that; whenever I'm showing people around, I take them into the workshops and ask them how old they think it is. They're always amazed when you reveal it's actually brand-new and being built from scratch in our works by a team of volunteers.

"The 2857 Group are really pushing on with the overhaul of that 2-8-0; that's being partly done through subcontractors and our own internal resources. It's quite popular with our volunteers and, despite being a sizeable locomotive, it is very economical to run, perhaps on a par with a *Manor* if handled carefully. It ticks all those boxes; plus, for storytelling, it covers the movement of



# Severn Valley Railway News – Running Dates & Events

Something to look forward to....



[Home](#) / [Spring Diesel Festival](#)

## Thursday 14 – Sunday 17 May

The annual Spring Diesel Festival returns – the biggest diesel event around!

**What to expect at the Spring Diesel Festival?** Our four day diesel festival will feature both guest and home-fleet locomotives operating a busy timetable between Kidderminster and Bridgnorth. If you love diesel, this is the place to be! Ride behind every locomotive, visit The Engine House at Highley to break your day, or sample the finest real-ales in our pubs, as you experience the Severn Valley at its loudest!

We'll be updating this page with more detailed information a bit closer to the date.



● ○ ○ ○ ○

 Dates from 14–17 May

### Prices:

Adult, from	£40.50
Child (4-17), from	£27.00
Small Family, from	£67.50
Large Family, from	£108.00
SVR Member, from	£27.00

[BUY TICKETS](#)

### Important Information:

- One, two, three and four day rover tickets available.
- Tickets can be purchased in advance, saving 10%, or on the day from station Booking Offices.
- Day Rovers are the only ticket type available, short journey and single tickets are not available.
- Passengers can occupy 1st class seats without being charged a supplement.
- SVR Shareholder and working members passes – valid.

## **Member's Forum & Gallery**

### **"Memories"**

We start this month with this great memory from Jeremy Vanes of D1062 in 1974 in her last days in service, thanks for sharing.

"

Hello Paul

I'm a regular TTI on the SVR, living all my life in the Black Country but in 1970's childhood had close family in Cornwall so on holidays I grew up seeing the locomotives in your care. It's great to see them and work behind D1062 and quite remarkable they're still here and on my doorstep.

I'm a sleepy WLA member but spent over 30 years as a company secretary of medium sized charities and just wanted to say I do read the WLA newsletters, and find the mix of images, facts, costs, humour and explanations to be very generously provided.

Well done to all of you and when I eventually retire I'd be happy to see if any of my skills could help you.

Finally, the picture of D1062's clean roof in the e-newsletter triggered my memory of the very last time I saw her working, in Truro yard early in 1974, I think it was March. The locos roof was so coated in soot it looked like a unique black roof livery.

I never saw her again and assumed that she'd been scrapped with some kind of mechanical failure.

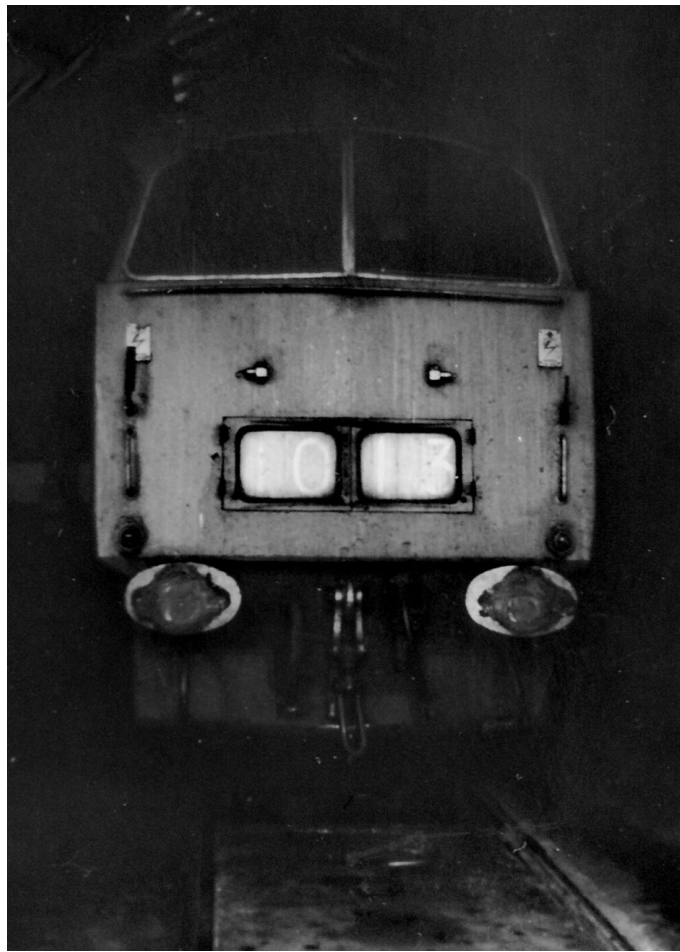
I have some 1974 pictures and a couple are attached. The first couple relate to my story above, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> shows D1013 Western Ranger crammed into the tiny Roundhouse at St Blazey in August 1976. There seemed to be a small job underway, but I have never seen such a big locomotive squeezed into such a tiny space. It was almost impossible to photograph as it was so dark.

Cheers to you all.

Jeremy Vanes

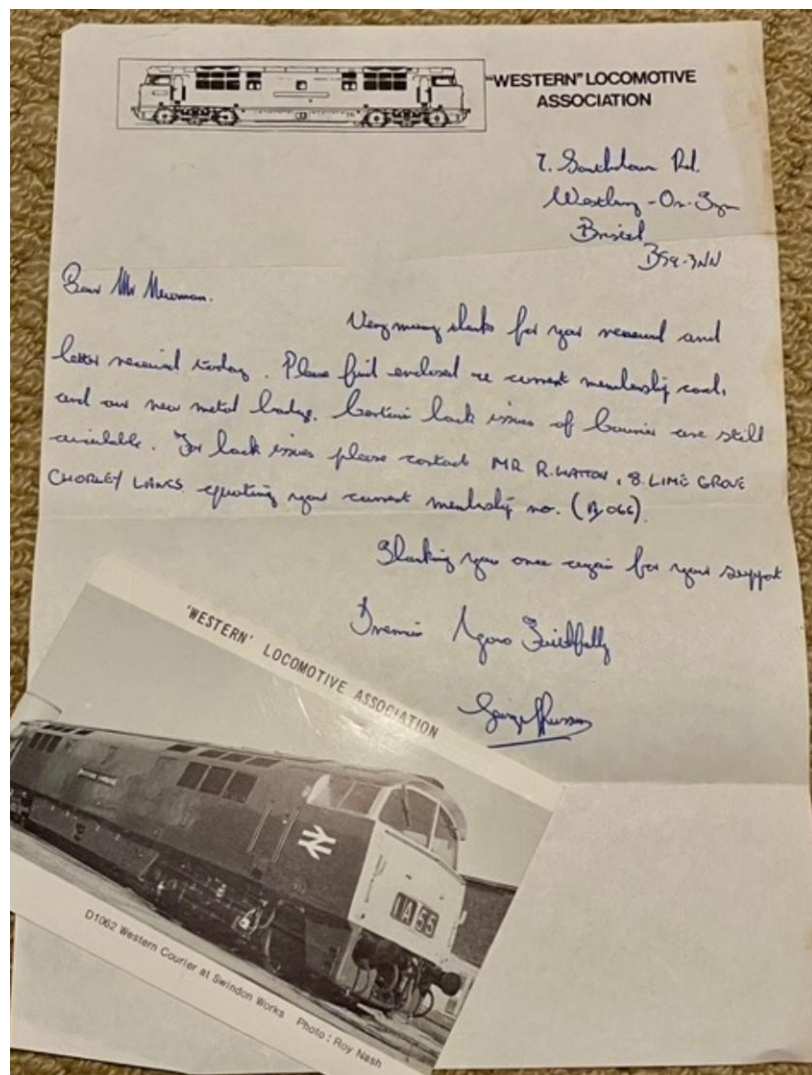
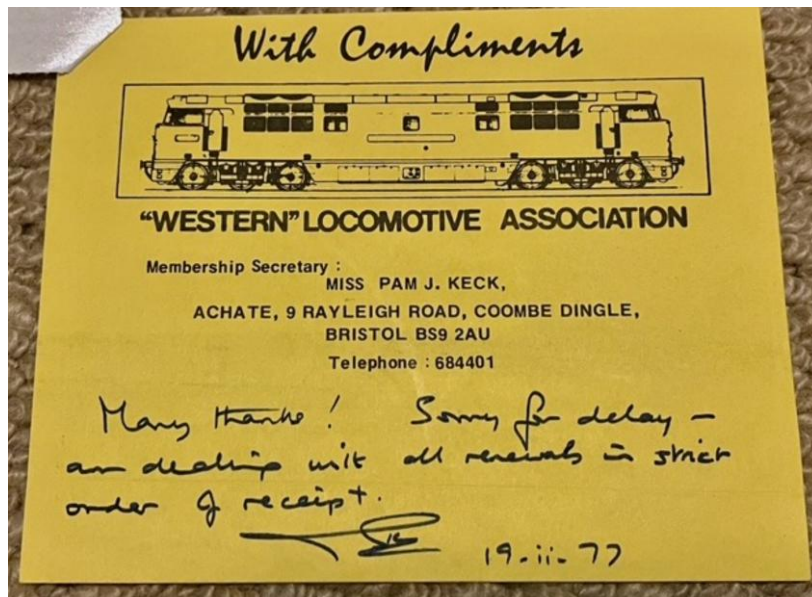
"

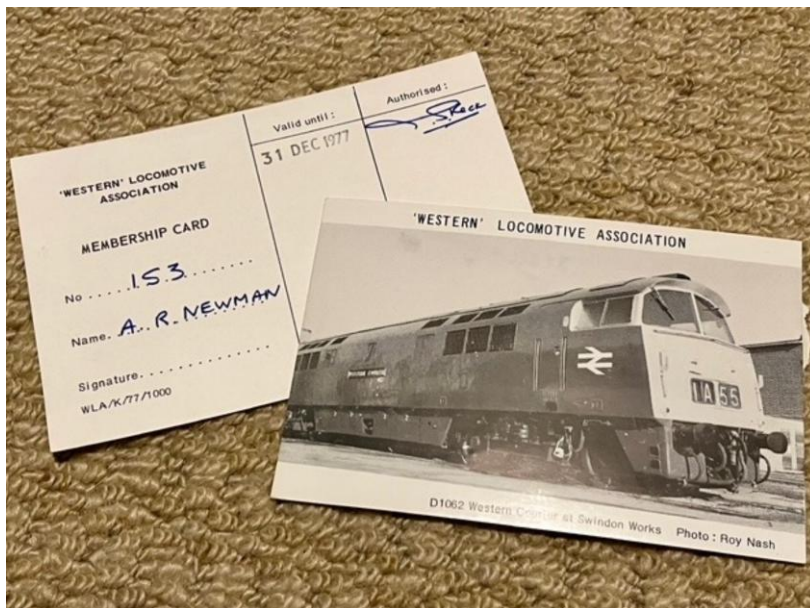






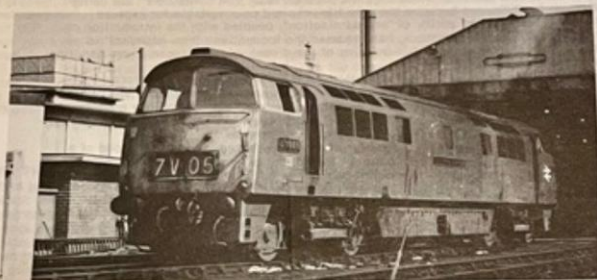
An email and memories have also been shared by Andrew Newman, who has been clearing out a rake of "precious archive material" and has unearthed some paperwork from the early days of his WLA membership. I am sure that these will bring back some memories, from the days when subscriptions were 5p a month!







D1008 "Western Harrier" (since withdrawn), Bristol (Bath Road) depot. Courtesy : P. Roynon.



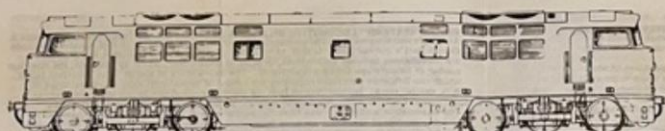
THE CHOICE IS YOURS .....

## PRESERVATION.....OR EXTINCTION

PLEASE SUPPORT THE W.L.A. .... NOW !



Gutted shell of D1002 "Western Explorer" at Swindon works scrapyards. Courtesy : S. Kelsey.



BRITISH RAIL CLASS 52 "WESTERN" DIESEL - HYDRAULIC LOCOMOTIVE, WITH ILLUSTRATION AND INFORMATION BY COURTESY OF BRITISH RAIL ENGINEERING LTD.

## "WESTERN" LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION

D1000 WESTERN ENTERPRISE \*  
D1001 WESTERN PATHFINDER  
D1002 WESTERN EXPLORER \*  
D1003 WESTERN PIONEER \*  
D1004 WESTERN CRUSADER \*  
D1005 WESTERN VENTURER  
D1006 WESTERN STALWART  
D1007 WESTERN TALISMAN \*  
D1008 WESTERN HARRIER \*  
D1009 WESTERN INVADER  
D1010 WESTERN CAMPAIGNER  
D1011 WESTERN THUNDERER  
D1012 WESTERN FIREBRAND  
D1013 WESTERN RANGER  
D1014 WESTERN LEVIATHAN \*  
D1015 WESTERN CHAMPION  
D1016 WESTERN GLADIATOR  
D1017 WESTERN WARRIOR \*  
D1018 WESTERN BUCCANEER \*  
D1019 WESTERN CHALLENGER \*  
D1020 WESTERN HERO \*  
D1021 WESTERN CAVALIER  
D1022 WESTERN SENTINEL  
D1023 WESTERN FUGILIER  
D1024 WESTERN HUNTSMAN \*  
D1025 WESTERN GUARDSMAN  
D1026 WESTERN CENTURION  
D1027 WESTERN LANCER  
D1028 WESTERN HUSSAR  
D1029 WESTERN LEGIONNAIRE \*  
D1030 WESTERN MUSKETEER  
D1031 WESTERN RIFLEMAN \*  
D1032 WESTERN MARKSMAN \*

D1033 WESTERN TROOPER  
D1034 WESTERN DRAGON  
D1035 WESTERN YEOMAN \*  
D1036 WESTERN EMPEROR  
D1037 WESTERN EMPRESS  
D1038 WESTERN SOVEREIGN \*  
D1039 WESTERN KING \*  
D1040 WESTERN QUEEN  
D1041 WESTERN PRINCE  
D1042 WESTERN PRINCESS \*  
D1043 WESTERN DUKE  
D1044 WESTERN DUCHESS \*  
D1045 WESTERN VISCOUNT \*  
D1046 WESTERN MARQUIS  
D1047 WESTERN LORD  
D1048 WESTERN LADY  
D1049 WESTERN MONARCH  
D1050 WESTERN RULER  
D1051 WESTERN AMBASSADOR  
D1052 WESTERN VICEROY  
D1053 WESTERN PATRIARCH  
D1054 WESTERN GOVERNOR  
D1055 WESTERN ADVOCATE  
D1056 WESTERN SULTAN  
D1057 WESTERN CHIEFTAIN  
D1058 WESTERN NOBLEMAN  
D1059 WESTERN EMPIRE  
D1060 WESTERN DOMINION \*  
D1061 WESTERN ENVOY \*  
D1062 WESTERN COURIER \*  
D1063 WESTERN MONITOR  
D1064 WESTERN REGENT  
D1065 WESTERN CONSORT

\* Indicates locomotive withdrawn from service.

INTRODUCED : 1961 - 64

MANUFACTURERS : British Rail workshops, Swindon & Crewe.  
D1000-D1029 at Swindon.  
D1030-D1073 at Crewe.

WEIGHT : 108 Tons.

WHEEL ARRANGEMENT : C-C

TOTAL b.h.p. : 2700

LOCOMOTIVE CLASSIFICATION : Type 4

### LEADING PARTICULARS OF LOCOMOTIVES D1000 - D1073.

ENGINE	No. make & type. No. cyls. & cycle. Max. cont. rated output.	Two Maybach type M.D.655 12 cyls. 4 strokes 1350 H.P. at 1500 R.P.M.
HYDRAULIC TRANSMISSION	Two Voith-North British L6-30 RV hydraulic transmissions, each containing three torque converters, oil filled.	
PERFORMANCE	Rated tractive effort. Max. tractive effort. Cont. tractive effort.	72600 lb. 66700 lb. at 27.5% adhesion. 45200 lb. at 14.5 m.p.h.
BRAKING	For locomotive. For train.	Air. Vacuum, subseq. dual air/vacuum.
BRAKE FORCE	% of loco-weight in working order.	76.58 %.
DRIVING WHEEL DIAMETER		3' 7"
SPEED	Max. perm. service speed.	90 m.p.h.
CURVE	Min. rad. curve at dead slow speed.	4% Chords.
TRAIN HEATING BOILER	Make & type. Steaming capacity.	Spanner swirlflow, MK. III A. 2000 lb./hour.
TANK CAPACITIES	Engine & boiler fuel. Boiler water.	850 Gallons. 980 Gallons.
DE-RATION		D1023 temporarily de-rated to 2300 H.P., but subsequently restored to 2700 H.P..



33 Sefton Park Road,  
St. Andrew's Park,  
Bristol.  
BS7 9AN.

Dear Andrew,

Many thanks for your support of the  
"Western" Locomotive Association - enclosed please  
find your Membership Card, together with Receipt.

I must apologise for not having written  
earlier, but I have only just "returned" from a  
period of sickness.

Our next Newsletter is due out towards  
the end of this month, and I hope some will be of  
interest to you.

We are continually striving to increase our  
membership - do you know of any other enthusiasts,  
or friends, who might be interested in becoming  
Members?

Best Wishes,

Stephen Kelsoy

Hon. General Secretary.

"WESTERN" LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM : YEAR 1974

1. The Association's financial year is from 1st January - 31st December inclusive, and Membership Applications can only be accepted for any period within this current financial year.
2. The current Membership Subscription rate is 5 p. per calendar month, the minimum period being 3 months.
3. When using this form to RENEW your Membership, it is important that you SEND YOUR MEMBERSHIP CARD, in order that this may be endorsed, and subsequently returned to you.
4. The completion and signing of this Membership Application form shall automatically imply that the applicant, (and parent/guardian when applicable to persons under 18 yrs.), agrees complete acceptance of the Association's Rules & Constitution, (as approved by the most recent Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting), together with all rules, regulations, and instructions derived therefrom.

DETAILS TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT

Please enrol me as a Member of the "Western" Locomotive Assoc.  
from the first day of: SEPTEMBER (month), until the last day  
of: DECEMBER (month), inclusive, @ the current Membership  
Subscription rate of 5 p. per calendar month. ....

I would also like to make an OPTIONAL DONATION towards the  
Administrative Expenses of the Association. ....

I would also like to make an OPTIONAL DONATION towards the  
"CLASS 52" LOCOMOTIVE APPEAL, and understand that if such a  
locomotive is not successfully acquired by the Association, this  
amount will be refunded to me in full.

MY TOTAL REMITTANCE IS ..... 20

Enclosed please find my CHEQUE/POSTAL ORDER/CASH, to the value of  
my total remittance, as indicated above.

Usual signature:- A. Newman Date:- 12/9/74

All cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed, endorsed "A/C. Payee  
only", and made payable to "WESTERN LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION."

ASSOCIATION USE ONLY

Membership Subscription  
for \_\_\_\_\_ months @ \_\_\_\_\_ p.  
per calendar month.

(ACCOUNT \_\_\_\_\_).

Donation towards Admin.  
Expenses of Association.  
(ACCOUNT \_\_\_\_\_).

Donation towards "CLASS  
52" LOCOMOTIVE APPEAL.  
(ACCOUNT \_\_\_\_\_).

TOTAL AMOUNT RECEIVED .....

Date Application received:- \_\_\_\_\_

Date on which Cheque/  
Postal Order Banked:- \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

"WESTERN" LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION



D1047 'WESTERN LORD' on Laira shed.

"WESTERN" LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP CARD No. 153.

VALID UNTIL	AUTHORISED
<del>31 DEC 1974</del>	<del>S. P. Kelsey.</del>
31 DEC 1975	S. P. Kelsey.
31 DEC 1976	<del>S. P. Kelsey.</del>

NAME A. R. NEWMAN.

SIGNATURE Andrew Newman.

& last month we shared the below from Ian Marshall, read again as an update has now been provided:

"I am currently sorting through my late father Brian's colour slide collection which includes a lot of railway subjects. For most of his working life, he was a relief signaller, initially in the Exeter area and then from 1966 in the Chichester area so was often "in the know" regarding any special or unusual workings and able to take shots both sides "of the fence."

I was aware from a friend who has now passed that a Western had worked to Brighton on a BR special in the 70s and have come across the attached slide in my father's collection. Unfortunately, no details of the working or locomotive are noted, just a date of June 1972. The shot is of the train eastbound passing Chichester "B" Box. I have always understood that the locomotive didn't work the return train, instead being left in the siding between Platforms 2 and 3 at Brighton, the unconfirmed reason being given as lack of driver hours to cover the return working. I do not know how or when it did return home.

I have searched the internet for further information without success (including Six Bells Junction and Track Record Press / Western Research.)

Please could you publish the shot and enquire whether any member has any further details.

Kind regards

Ian"

**The response from our "Historian" – "Regards the special working to Brighton in 1972, I believe that the locomotive was D1073 Western Bulwark – there is a photograph of it at Brighton and the reason it didn't return was because it apparently failed and so remained at Brighton for the next few days."**

Thanks to John Kite for this update.





## Closing Notes and Book Ends

Loving the REFLECTION



And The Three Amigos – we end as we started.



A “proud” Chairman following a hard day’s work in the TMD – as reported earlier.



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](mailto:info@westernlocomotives.com) or contact me at [wp.finch@icloud.com](mailto: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 on or around 1<sup>st</sup> February

<https://westernlocomotives.com/>

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