



Western Locomotive Association e-Newsletter – March 2026

We have Double Front Pages this month – this first Front Page needs no more words!





Western Locomotive Association e-Newsletter – March 2026

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

The big day arrived, on Wednesday 11th February, and having travelled around the world from India, our two MTU 538 engines arrived at Kidderminster and were unloaded and positioned in their temporary storage locations by the turntable at the north end of the TMD.

A very happy looking Darren is seen in front of the two MTU Power Unites with a big smile, both were successfully barred over and sounded good.



Another big event this month was the decision made at the Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 11th February to proceed with an order for a new set of cardan shafts, as reported below:-

Following a recent Committee Meeting, unanimous approval was given to purchase a new set of cardan shafts. The purchase will allow a set of cardan shafts earmarked for D1013 to be used on the "A" end bogie of D1062, which is shortly to be lifted at Kidderminster TMD to replace an equalising beam, whilst the new shafts will be placed in stock, once manufactured ready for D1013 in approximately 4 months' time.

In effect, the purchase will allow both D1013 and D1062 to have new sets of shafts fitted to all four bogies, whilst allowing a "half decent" ex BR set to be placed into stores as spares.

The purchase has been made with Waltersheid (formerly GKN) at a cost of just over £28,000 (excluding VAT) and will help to extend the operating life of both locomotives. In addition, the purchase was made whilst the parts can still be obtained!



And is if all of that wasn't enough, reports started coming in on Saturday 21st of a lift taking place ! Thanks to Mr Hewell for this first picture of D1013 back in the air and bogies being swapped around – read on for the full details.



Back to the big expenditure on a new set of cardan shafts – this will certainly eat into our funds, so what better time to remind you that the Western Lottery is currently close to being drawn – at the end of March, so this is your last chance “ To be in it to win it”

– so PLEASE purchase your tickets NOW and be in with a chance to win up to 50% of the pot - [Fundraising & Lottery - Western Locomotive Association](#)

WESTERN LOTTERY

WESTERN LOTTERY 2026.

[See page 7/8 of this e-Newsletter for more details](#)

There is a bumper collection of “Member Memories” this month – read on to see Wilfred Rikard’s memories which include –

- On approaching Paddington on 3rd April 1970, there was always plenty of interest at Ranelagh Bridge.
- A quick visit to Laira in July 1970 with D1010 Western Campaigner & D1001 Western Pathfinder.
- D1056 Western Sultan arriving at Plymouth from Paddington in May 1971.
- D1037 Western Empress with a freight from Temple Mills for St Blazey passing Newbury on 7th August 1974.
- D1068 Western Reliance with an up train for Paddington at Reading Southcote Junction in the evening sunset on 25th April 1975.
- D1010 Western Campaigner again, but in the wars at Plymouth North Road on 20th June 1975.



Ending this month's welcome with a capture on "our latest locomotive" - Kyrstian is seen at the controls!
Certainly, a great labour-saving machine, for moving heavy items around the TMD, but how long before it gets a set of Full Yellow ends and a coat of blue, or maybe even maroon, or can I say green!



I am also delighted to report that Courier's 50th Anniversary Headboard was successfully sold at auction in the middle of the month, the headboard was wood, rather than alloy, this was corrected on the auction website and some additional funds were raised.

Lot
Number
310:



Alloy Locomotive Headboard
1963-2013 50 YEARS WESTERN
COURIER. As manufactured for
the Western Locomotive
Association to celebrate half a
century of preservation in 2013.
Cleaned condition.

In this e-Newsletter

Features in this e-Newsletter include the following:

- News from The Chair.
- The Western Lottery
- D1013 – A Progress Update (covered this month in the Monthly News Updates)
- D1048 – A Progress Update (when available)
- 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

First of all, I think everyone will join me in thanking the Working Members for the amazing amount of effort made during the month, especially where the bogie swap took place on D1013, so we now have “B” end back underneath and “A” end bogie out for overhaul. Not only that, just as soon as the bogie was out, work commenced on scraping the bogie where over 50 years off accumulated dirt, brake dust, crud, call it what you will, needs to be removed! Make no mistake, this was no simple task of swapping over a bogie, there was a huge amount of logistics involved – a mega shunt if ever there was, so a big thanks to all those involved!

You may have read elsewhere, that Laura legend - Mike Woodhouse gave us a useful insight into what went on at Laura with D1013's bogies as Mike recalled that both Intermediate gearboxes were in need of replacement back in 1975 due to bearing failures, but it so happened that Swindon Works had two in stock, which were despatched to Laura Depot. At the time, any bogie overhauls were completely out of the question, but replacement of the intermediate gearboxes (with the floats rectified) was a reasonable cost-effective solution to keep the locomotive in traffic. It's a sobering thought that had Swindon not had the intermediate gearboxes available, D1013 would have been withdrawn from traffic and scrapped!

The full story can be seen from the following link: <https://d1013bogieappeal.uk/d1013-intermediate-gearbox-information/>

Earlier in February, our two MTU 538 engines arrived at Kidderminster TMD after their epic trip from India which were safely off-loaded and now stored by the turntable under tarpaulins. Again, many thanks to Darren and the team who helped off-load the engines, which, I understand are in good condition and were both barred over, without any problem. I've lost count of the number of 65 litre V12's we have in stock or in use, but I think it's at least 11!

And then, another major purchase took place in February for a new set of cardan shafts, which will allow a new set currently in stock, to be fitted to “A” end of D1062. These aren't cheap at £28k but basically, we'll end up with both D1013 and D1062 with new cardan shafts on both bogies, plus a half decent set ex BR, placed into stock!

On the admin side, a Management Committee was held by Zoom on 11th February and a Board Meeting is due to be held shortly on 3rd March. A fair bit of work is being done behind the scenes to produce the Courier magazine which should be out in time for the Spring Gala. Our membership numbers are holding up reasonably well, although I noticed a slight drop in numbers which is not unusual for this time of year. The actual number is 13, so we all know that this is actually a big number, so if you haven't renewed your membership for the year, please do so, if you can!

What with all the maintenance the work to be done on D1062, the overhaul to finish off on D1013, preservation work on D1048, some big-ticket items purchased for the overhaul and preservation of our locomotives, we need your support in whichever way you choose, more than ever. Thank you!

See you on the Valley!

Roger Smith
Chairman



The Western Lottery

WESTERN LOTTERY

WESTERN LOTTERY 2026.

The lottery is held once each year, our first lottery in January 2025 raised a total of £2,650 with £1,325 going to the winners & £1,325 to our locomotives.

1st prize was £795.00 2nd prize was £331.25 3rd prize was £198.75

The 2026 LOTTERY IS OPEN FOR ENTRIES FROM FEBRUARY 1st.
The draw will take place early March.

Just go to the Lottery Page on the WLA website & purchase your £25 ticket -
[Fundraising & Lottery - Western Locomotive Association](#)

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 the 1st, 2nd & 3rd prize winners.

So, as an example if we have 100 entries, we raise £2,500

£1,250 goes to D1013, D1048 & D1062.

£1,250 to be won by members in Prizes, split as follows:

60% for the 1st prize - £750.00
25% for the 2nd prize - £312.50.
15% for the 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 for your continuing support
Mike Tromans - Fund Raising officer.

News Update – February 2026 (All pictures supplied by Working Members)

Wednesday 4th February

Wednesday seems to have become the new Saturday, with many Working Members in attendance on most Wednesdays. Mark P is seen cleaning and preparing the boiler room window frame from D1013 in the 1st picture below.

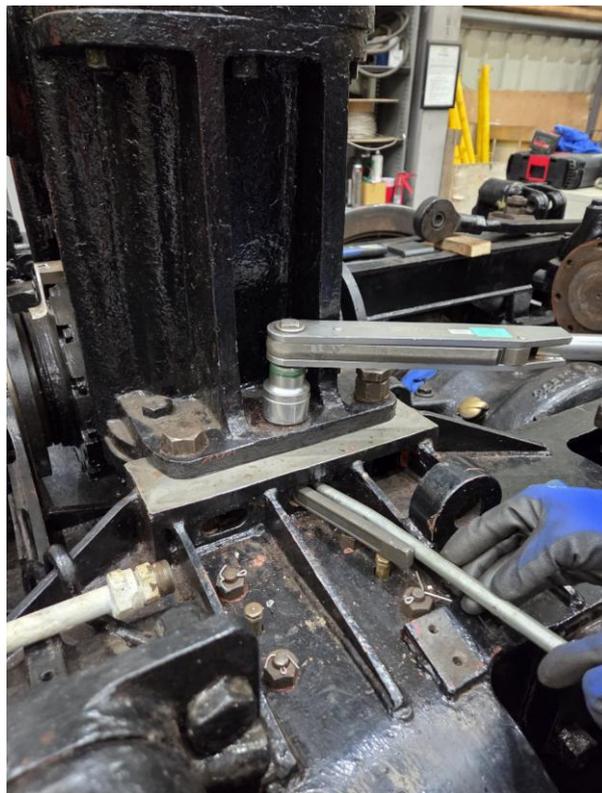


And the “Bogie Men” and “Lady Lyn” are seen busy with the last jobs and the refitting of the Intermediate Gear Box / Drive on D1013’s “B” end bogie, with only the cardan shafts still to be fitted (at a later date.)





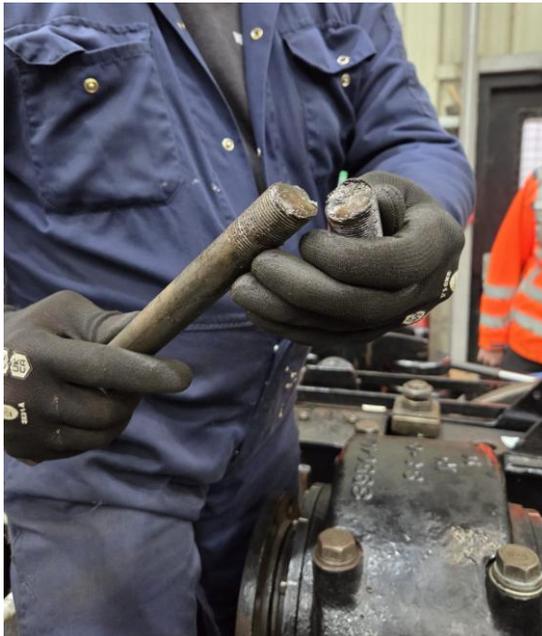
The Intermediate Gear Box / Drive was drained of oil – no debris was noted and all seemed well. It was then refitted to the bogie and torqued down, before being filled with new oil. The flanges were turned by hand (as the cardan shafts are not yet connected) and oil was seen to be circulating. The oil used was the last of the Omala 150 in stock, and so more has been ordered.





A close call was had when tightening one of the bolts on one of the final drives. One of the bolts, whilst being tightened felt like it was going to strip the thread, so it was removed and it was noted that the end was close to shearing and came apart in Darren's hand. This appeared to be a result of fatigue as discolouration as noted on the two halves. With two bolts having now failed, a decision was made to obtain a supply of new bolts with a view to replacing all of the bolts on the final drives.







Remaining bolts from D1013's Boiler Room roof panels were also removed – WITH A LITTLE BIT OF PERSUAISION and the areas where they were located were cleaned and painted with red oxide and then cream. Again, new bolts will be purchased and used when refitting the roof panels to the locomotive.

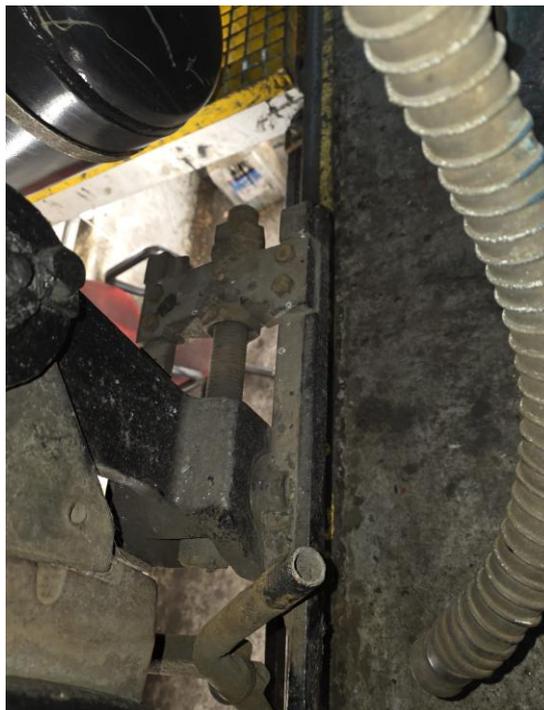


On D1062, the Preheater Motor at "B" end was tested following its recent failure. Voltage was recorded in the motor, and it did run, but not well, with the suspicion being that the brushes are sticking – do the com and the brushes will be cleaned and then the motor retested.

Next big job is the disconnecting of "A" end bogie – as part of this work, the sanding pipes and speedo drive were disconnected.



Jobs to be addresses ASAP are the securing of the speedo drive to the body of the locomotive, slacken brake adjusters, disconnect the hand brake linkage (at the locomotive end) and disconnect the AWS cable and secure.

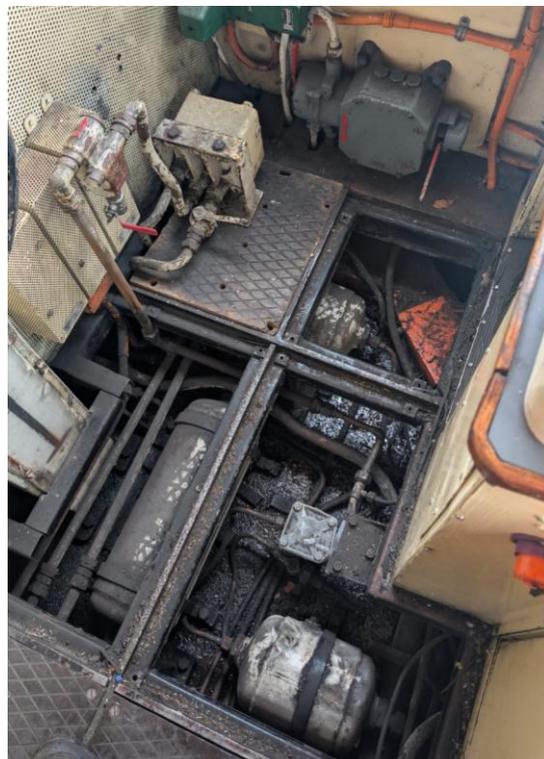


Also, disconnect the two thrust brackets and lower onto the bogie, noting that one of the lateral dampers needs to be removed first in order to gain access to the bolts for the thrust brackets.



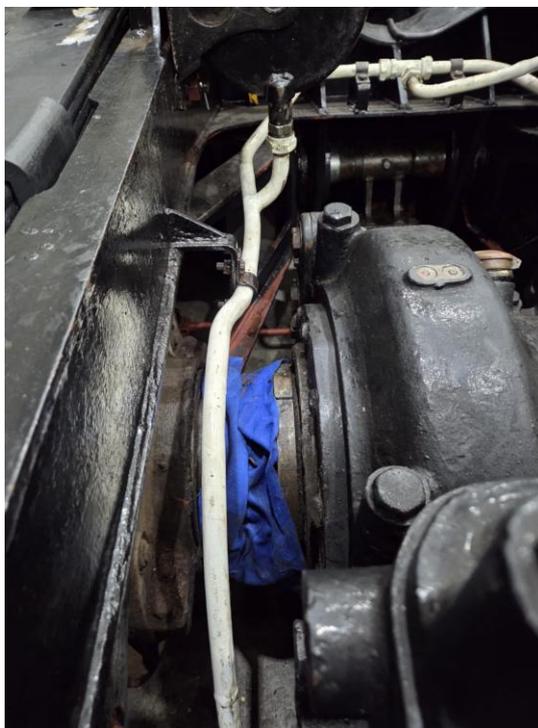
Saturday 7th February

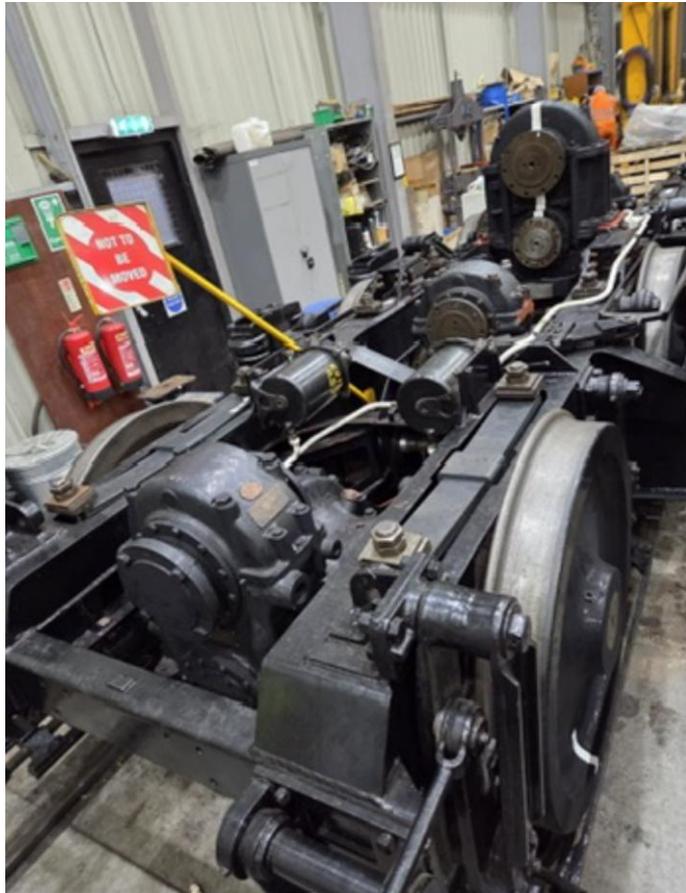
Jack & Krystian made a great start on the removal of the air tanks from Courier for testing and certification. All 4 were removed from under the cab floors (and stored in the cabs), as were the large tanks from the walkway sides in the engine room (now stored in the boiler room.)





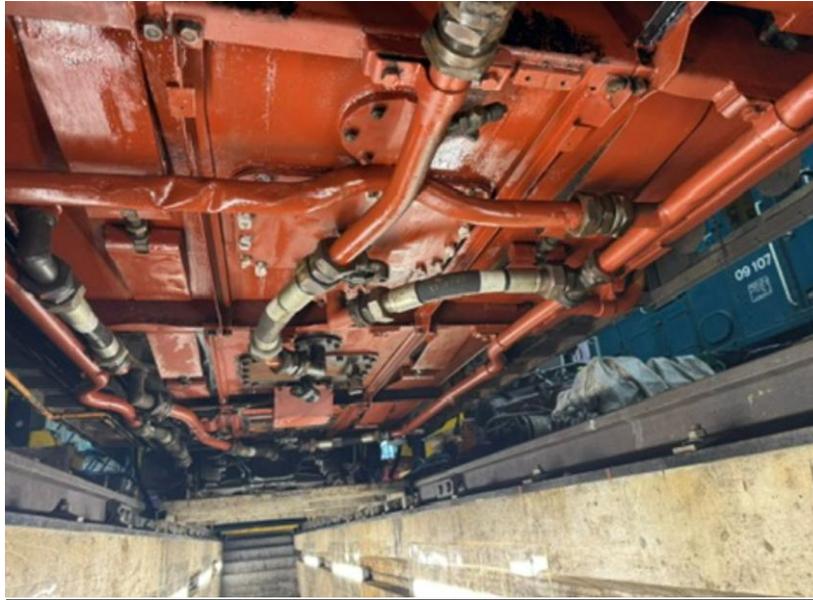
The end result of a busy day, with all pipes finally connected, "B" end bogie ready to go back under D1013, so that we can start all over again with "A" end.





Monday 9th February

Paul N was busy under D1013 with more prep work and priming – as there an end to this work – estimates are 2/3 complete.



Tuesday 10th February

A presentation was made to the Dorking Branch of The Locomotive Club of Great Britain – a little bit of promotion in The Railway Magazine meant a good turn out !

MEETINGS

Compiled by **Jon Longman**

Please check with organisers before travelling to events.

WEDS, FEBRUARY 4

Bradford Rly Circ. Bradford Mechanics' Institute Library BD1 1SZ. 14.00. 'British Rail 1984': Robert Clarke.
RCTS. Royal Station Hotel, Camforth. 19.30. 'Diesels and Electrics in the Blue Era': Roger Sutcliffe.
RCTS. Haig House Social Club, Garston L19 5NQ. 13.30. 'A Miscellany of Railways': Jon Penn.
Talking of Trains. Library Hall, Surbiton KT6 6AG. 19.00. 'My travels in the early 2000s': Adrian Palmer.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 5

Bath Rly Soc. Museum of Bath at Work BA2 4EB. 19.30. 'Industrial Steam in South Wales': Peter Brabham.
Chwyd Rly Circ. Harwarden Institute CH5 3NS. 10.30. 'Rails to Bala': David Jones and Dave Southern.
GCR Society. Farm Road Sports & Social Club, Sheffield S2 2TP. 19.30. 'Settle & Carlisle Line in the 1980s': Keith Marshall.
Lutterworth Rly Soc. The Pavilion, Lutterworth LE17 4RB. 19.30. 'Bring a Transport Related Thing and Talk About It': LRS members.
Norfolk Rly Soc. United Reformed Church Hall, Norwich NR4 6QR. 19.30. 'Review of 2025': Robert Pritchard on Zoom.
Nuneaton Rly Circ. Chilvers Coton Conservative Club CV11 5UD. 19.45. 'Construction of the new P2 – 2007 Prince of Wales': Andrew Taylor.
RCTS. Open day. Leatherhead Station, Surrey KT22 7EQ.

Meon Valley Locomotive Society.

St Peter's Church Hall, Bishop's Waltham SO32 1EE. 19.30. 'Trains and Mountains in the 21st Century': Ian Francis.
Pewsey Vale Rly Soc. Woodborough Social Club SN9 5PL. 14.45. 'Family on the S&D Line': Mike Beale.
RCTS. St Mark's Church, Hitchin SG5 1UR. 14.00. 'The Last Years of Steam 1966-67': Michael Smyth.
RCTS. The Swifts, Fulbourn, Cambridge CB21 5HD. 19.30. 'A further evening with father's slides': David Cross.

RCTS. Croydon branch meeting on Zoom via Croydon.web@rcs.org.uk. 19.30. 'Railways 1952-53 from the Sutton Coldfield Railway Society's Moseley Collection': Robin Mathams.

RCTS. Farm Road Sports & Social Club, Sheffield S2 2TP. 14.00. 'X Marks the Spot': Paul Beardsley and Don Wainman.
LCGB. St Michael's Church, Wood Green, London N22 8HE. 14.00. 'Classic Traction and Preservation Scene from the 1980s': Terry Bagworth.
LCGB. Friends' Meeting House, Dorking RH4 2LE. 14.00. 'Western Locomotive Association': Paul Finch and Peter Bamber.
The 8E Railway Association. Gladstone Club, Northwich CW9 5RB. 'A Railway Miscellany': John Hooley.
Wells Railway Fraternity. Wells Town Hall. 19.30. 'HSTs at 50': Roy Kethro.

19.00. Video evening.
RCTS. St Luke's Church, Peterborough PE3 6EZ. 19.00. 'Every Picture Tells a Story': John Baxter.
Shropshire Rly Soc. Gateway Education and Arts Centre, Shrewsbury SY1 1NB. 19.00. 'Swansea and Mumbles Railway': Paul Barker.
SLS. Conference Room, Newcastle Arts Centre NE1 1SG. 13.30. Centre annual meeting and members' presentations.
South East Essex Rly Soc. Friends' Meeting House, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 1NB. 19.00. Track night.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13

Altrincham ERPS. Altrincham Methodist Hall WA14 1HF. 19.30. 'People and places 8': Paul Shackcloth.
SWRS. The Manor, Slough station SL1 1FQ. 19.30. TBA.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14

RCTS. Mint Methodist Church, Exeter. 19.00. 'Culm Valley 150 and Devon Diesels': Amyas Crump.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16

RCTS. Shenfield Parish Hall CM15 8LP. 19.30. 'Peterborough to Beijing – the story of a journey': Nick Gamman.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17

Leicester Rly Soc. Braunstone Civic Centre, Leicester LE3 2PP. 19.30. TBA.
RCTS. Open day. Leatherhead Station, Surrey KT22 7EQ.

years: 1993': Ian Hastie.
Barrow Hill Roundhouse. Campbell Drive, Chesterfield S43 2PR. 19.30. 'Doug Copley's Lineside Images': David Sharpe and 'The David Odd Collection': Roger Hallatt.
Lutterworth Rly Soc. The Pavilion, Lutterworth LE17 4RB. 19.30. 'Exploring Mongolian Railways': Steve Morris.
Marlow & District Rly Soc. Bourne End Community Centre SL8 5SX or on Zoom. 19.30. 'The Story of China Clay and the Railways': Mike Walker.
Norfolk Rly Soc. United Reformed Church Hall, Norwich NR4 6QR. 19.30. 'From Banker to Train Driver': Tom Ward.

Nuneaton Rly Circ. Chilvers Coton Conservative Club, Nuneaton CV11 5UD. 19.45. 'Signalling on the Great Central Railway': Tom Ingall.
RCTS. Victory Club, Burlington House, Cheltenham GL50 2SY. 19.00. '50 Years of the High Speed Train': Alex Wood.
RCTS. Bassil Shippam Centre, Chichester PO19 7LG. 14.00. 'Lance King in Ulster 1957-1970: The NCC in Action': Leslie McAllister.
RCTS. Darlington Cricket Club DL1 5JD. 19.00. 'Producing the Railway Observer' and 'A Few of His Travels': Mike Robinson.
RCTS. Woking United Reformed Church GU22 7HA. 19.15. 'In search of Narrow Gauge Steam: From Damascus to Dunedin': James Waite.
RCTS. Saltire Methodist Church

WEDS, FEBRUARY 25

Giggleswick Rly Circ. Victoria Hall, Settle BD2 9DZ. 10.30. 'Treasures of a Trainspotter: Part 3': Glenn Clarkson.
RCTS. Bassil Shippam Centre, Chichester PO19 7LG. 19.15 on Zoom. 'Stratford Upon Avon to Cheltenham 1904-1979': Tony Bowles.
SCRS. St James' Church Centre, Sutton Coldfield B75 5BW. 19.30. 'Something a Little More Contemporary': Bill Gibbs.
Talking of Trains. Library Hall, Surbiton KT6 6AG. 19.00. 'Sheffield to Manchester – take two': Dick Crane.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Matlock Railway Club. Duke William, Matlock DE4 3BZ. 15.30. 'Members' Topics - 'Duchess of Hamilton' and 'Duke of Gloucester':
Shropshire Rly Soc. Gateway Education and Arts Centre, Shrewsbury SY1 1NB. 19.00. 'Shrewsbury Photographic Society railway competition'.
South East Essex Rly Soc. Friends' Meeting House, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 1NB. 19.00. 'Great Western Rapid Charge train': Dan Fosdike.
Stevenson Locomotive Society. Community Arts Centre, Roaring Meg Retail Park, Stevenage. 19.30. 'The Midland to Swansea part one: Hereford to Brecon': Chris Jones.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27

Railway Club of the New



Wednesday 11th February

The big day – the arrival of our two MTU 538 engines, having travelled all of the way from India.

In a change to the original plan, they will now be stored in the short term in the in the yard adjacent to the turntable and next to the Class 50 power unit – it will be an interesting comparison on engine sizes and wrapped in heavy duty tarpaulins.

Initial work in the stripping of these engines will be possible in this location with the help of the Rapier Crane.

Darren had arrived at Kidderminster on Tuesday 10th to assist Roland, TMD Manager with the cleaning and the preparation of the site.

The first arrival on the day was the HIAB from Clamp Brothers, who came recommended as did a great job on the day. The day was a little gloomy and so apologies for the light.



Soon spotted, having been sent the wrong was the container lorry with our two power units, but we soon managed to get the drivers attention and guide him to where we were located in the station car park.



Both lorries were soon lined up for the lifting to begin – it almost looks like the container has been lifted onto the HIAB lorry.



Darren and Sally were soon busy removing the tarpaulin from the roof of the open top container.



And our first sight of the first power unit...



With tarpaulins removed, it was soon time to start lifting out the first engine.





& then onto the 2nd...



For a moment, it looked like both were going to be loaded onto the truck, but with 7+ tons each, the sensible decision was to transport them one at a time down into the yard, one being temporarily left in the car park.



An interesting comparison was soon to be made in engine sizes – light weight and powerful power units for a Western, with two per locomotive, versus the single and much heavier English Electric power unit from a Class 50.



Soon the second to last lift was in progress...



And safe in position.



And the final lift...





Both lined up, side by side.



Plates from both engines revealing their 1995 heritage.



At the end of the day, with the sun starting to come out, both engines are wrapped in temporary tarps – and have since been covered in more heavy-duty tarpaulins.



Something to look forward to – Darren has put together an article detailing the history of these engines and our plans for them, which will be published in the Spring Edition of our Western Courier magazine. This will be posted out to you all in late April / early May, ahead of the Severn Valley Railway Spring Diesel Festival which starts on Thursday 14th May.

The same day, a Western Locomotive Association Committee Meeting was held by Zoom in the evening, and so a busy day all around. Minutes are still to be made available from the Committee Meeting, although I share with you a news update sent around to our Working Members the day following the Committee Meeting.

- First of all, the two MTU 538 V12 engines arrived safely at Kidderminster yesterday, having travelled all the way from India and have been safely stored next to the turntable. Both engines appear to be in good condition and were both barred over, without any problem. They will shortly be protected by heavier duty tarpaulins and inhibited with oils to prevent corrosion whilst in storage. Thanks to Daren and to all those who were on site to receive our valuable future assets, to be converted to MD655 specs!
- Following a Management Committee meeting last night, approval has been given to purchase a new set of cardan shafts (6 in total) from Waltersheid Services (previously GKN). This purchase at £28k will enable the WLA to use a set of shafts earmarked for D1013, to be used on “A” end of D1062, for when the locomotive is lifted to replace the faulty equalising beam. Ultimately then, both D1013 and D1062 will end up with new sets of cardan shafts on all four bogies which, I’m sure you’ll agree, will help provide many more years of service! Delivery is 4 months and shouldn’t affect our aim to return D1062 back to service in 2027, hopefully to celebrate 50 years for the last run of Westerns on BR with the Western Tribute Rail tour on 26th February 1977!
- Good news with the bogie overhaul of “B” end of D1013 as this has virtually been completed, which will allow “A” end bogie to be removed, ready for overhaul, which is expected to take place within a shorter timescale. However, make no mistake, it is still a major undertaking and will require as much hands-on help as possible. If nothing else, there will be a huge amount of scraping crud off the underneath of D1013, so plenty of work for volunteers with little or no engineering experience!
- Whilst talking about hands-on help, please remember to put all tools back where you found them, tidy up after you and make sure tools, paint brushes etc are looked after, and properly cleaned after use. Always remember that it takes a great deal of effort to raise funds to purchase these items and there’s nothing more sole destroying finding that the storage cupboard in a mess, tools missing or not in fit state to use!

And I almost forgot, whilst the focus was on the delivery on the engines, Alan wasn't distracted by such events and was busy fitting the final overhauled wiper motors to D1062's "A" end.



Saturday 14th February

The job list for Saturday 14th included the covering of the engines with the new heavy-duty tarpaulins, & thanks to Jack, Krystian & Angad for doing this; and at the "A" of D1013, the disconnection and careful lowering of the thrust brackets onto the bogie, with a warning that these brackets are heavy and so care is needed.





Also successfully removed was the opaque boiler room window (which has now been offered to the Sales Team as a 10,000-piece jigsaw – difficulty “almost impossible!”

The outer frame was removed and progress made on the inner frame.

Tuesday 17th February

Sally was busy recreating a bit of history!





Friday 20th February

With a busy couple of days planned – read on to hear all about what took place – it was reported that the Thrust Brackets were successfully disconnected and lowered into the bogie over the weekend. One bolt proved to be troublesome and would not budge, probably as a result of debris build up, but luckily the bracket could still be lowered. Once the bogie is out, the bolt can be revisited.

Now onto the bogie swap, the PLAN is to lift Ranger on Saturday 21st and remove the “A” end bogie, to also remove the “Accommodation Bogie” at “B end” and place at “A” end and refit the completed “B” end bogie back at “B” end. A major shunt will be required to achieve all of this. The process can then start again on “A” end ! As we have now completed “B” end, we have a good idea of what is required and what to expect, and confidence is high that we can complete the work in a much shorter time frame.

The following pictures were recorded when the Thrust Brackets were being disconnected.





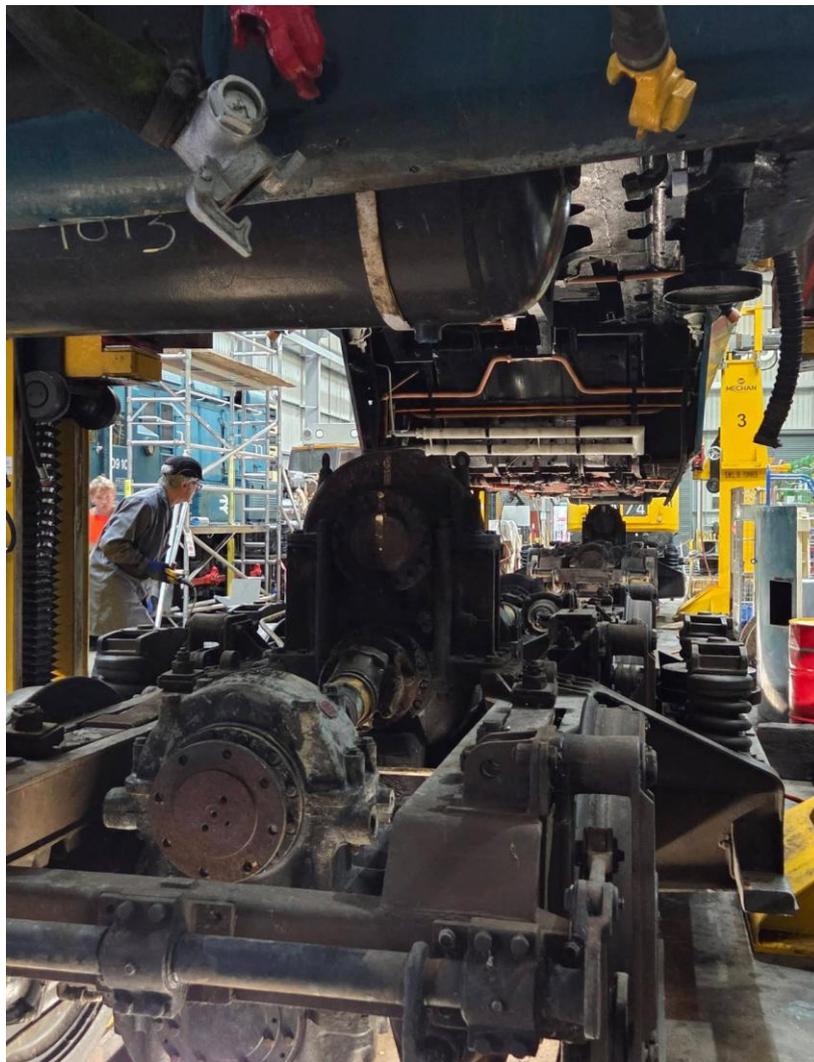
Saturday 21st February

What a day, D1013 is lifted off both bogies and a mammoth shunt to make it all happen. Once lifted, the accommodation bogie is hand pushed into the turntable and turned. The "A" end bogie is taken out of the TMD at the other end of the shed and put aside, whilst the overhauled "B" end bogie is shunted back under D1013. This was achieved by bringing the accommodation bogie back under D1013 and reconnecting the locomotive body to it and then lifting D1013 and bogie so that that the overhauled bogie could then be pushed back under to "B" end. And whilst all this was happening, another team started the "crud" removal process on "A" end.

A massive thanks to Alan and Harry for leading the shunting and making all of this possible.

And now the pictures.

D1013 is lifted, and "A" end bogie and the accommodation bogie ready for removal.



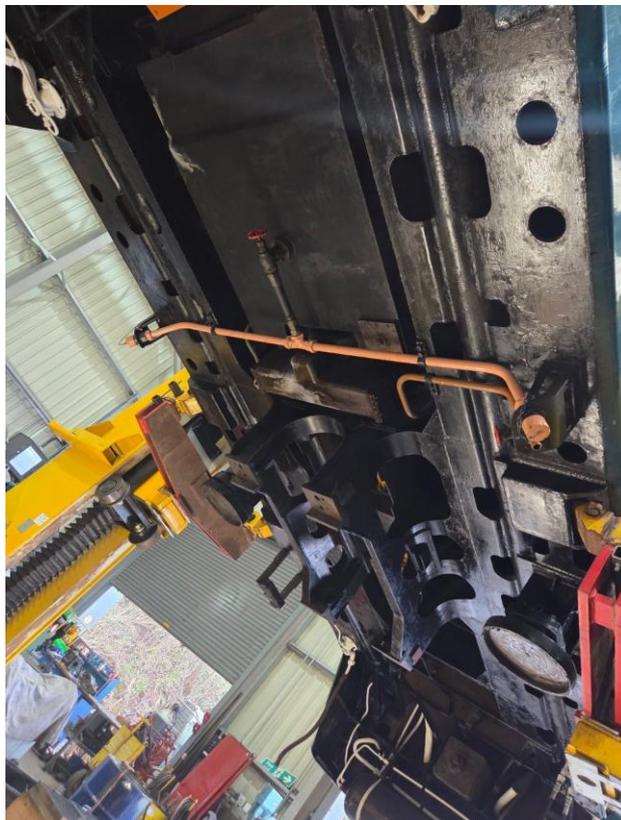
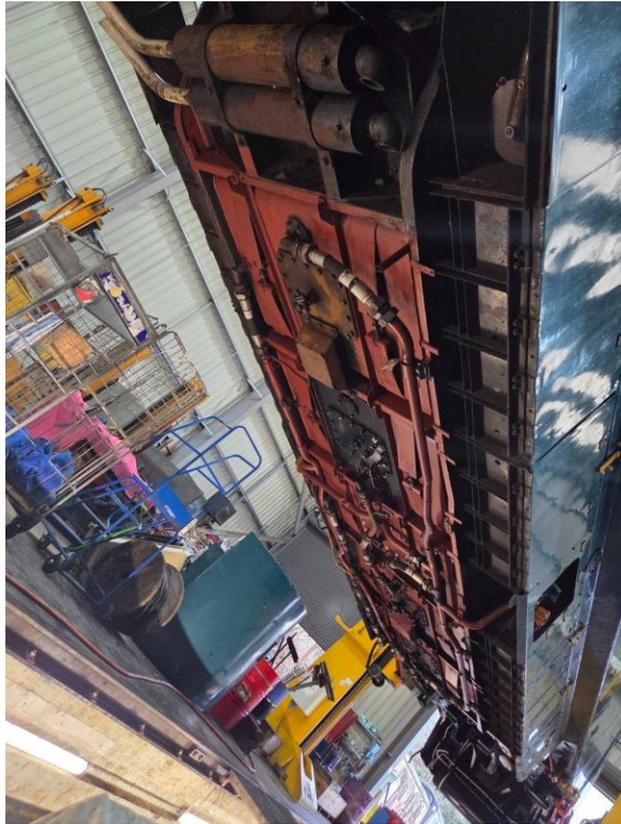
The accommodation bogie is removed.



Quickly followed by "A" end bogie.



You don't see these angles / views too often.



“B” end ready to be returned.



The Accommodation Bogie on the turntable.



“A” end out in the yard, and the work ahead starting to be seen.





There is certainly some cleaning required.





A request was made that historical records such as these are not removed / cleaned / painted over.



The above was discussed amongst Working Members – as D1013 was last in Swindon in 1972 but probably needed replacement bogies around 1974 / 1975. A question was asked of Mike Woodhouse who worked at Laira at the time and it was probable that D1013 had bogies fitted from a withdrawn locomotive due to it having either suspect or worn out axles, and no budget being available for repairs at Swindon, it is possible that this bogie was one of the last to be swapped and repaired at Laira!

Read on for more detail later.

“B” end is returned underneath the locomotive.



And despite all of the excitement, other equally important activities carried on and 4 overhauled windscreen wiper motors were stored in the containers, requiring testing head of refitting to D1013.



Back to the questions around Flood Rectification and the following information was shared.

During the bogie overhaul for D1013, you may have noticed that each of the two intermediate gear boxes (one on each bogie) has a date for "float rectified" 11/74 and 9/75, which suggests that the last time D1013 received any major attention on the bogies was shortly after September 1975.

Mike Woodhouse, who was a fitter at the time at Laira has confirmed to the WLA that D1013's final overhaul was at Swindon Works in January 1972, which saw it leaving with bogies A85 and B73 (both Crewe built). In mid-1975 at Laira, Mike recalls that they were experiencing intermediate gearbox failures on examinations, where metal bearing debris was being picked up on the magnetic filters.

It was thought that D1013 suffered the same double-trouble and because there were new overhauled units available at Swindon Works Stores, two intermediated gearbox units were transported to Laira for D1013 in 1975. By this time, all double bogie changes had ceased, and none were overhauled after the early 1970's; in fact, it was a scramble to get a bogie assembled for D1023 Western Fusilier, following the Oxford axle derailment failure. It was only the fact that Swindon Works had two intermediate gearboxes in stock that saved D1013 from being withdrawn from traffic.

Mike goes on to say that the senior management at Paddington CM&EE department were told to curb the finance spending on the Class 52's, even a double bogie change with other members of the class was out the question, with staffing restraints, not to mention valuable time spent on the jacks.

With regard to the intermediate gear boxes themselves, these were originally water cooled which was a problem as the water hoses were prone to failing. It was eventually realised that water-cooling had over-engineered the problem and it was possible that Swindon Works had decided to use a different bearing with different "float" or at least had altered the float to prevent the gearbox failures, from around 1962/63. Once modified, the intermediate gearboxes would have a white line painted across the top and down the front and rear sides, along with added wording for the actual date modified eg "Float Rectified 9-75".

The "float" refers to the lengthwise movement of a rotating shaft or bearing assembly along its axis to ensure that bearing isn't too tight to cause excessive heat, wear and failure.

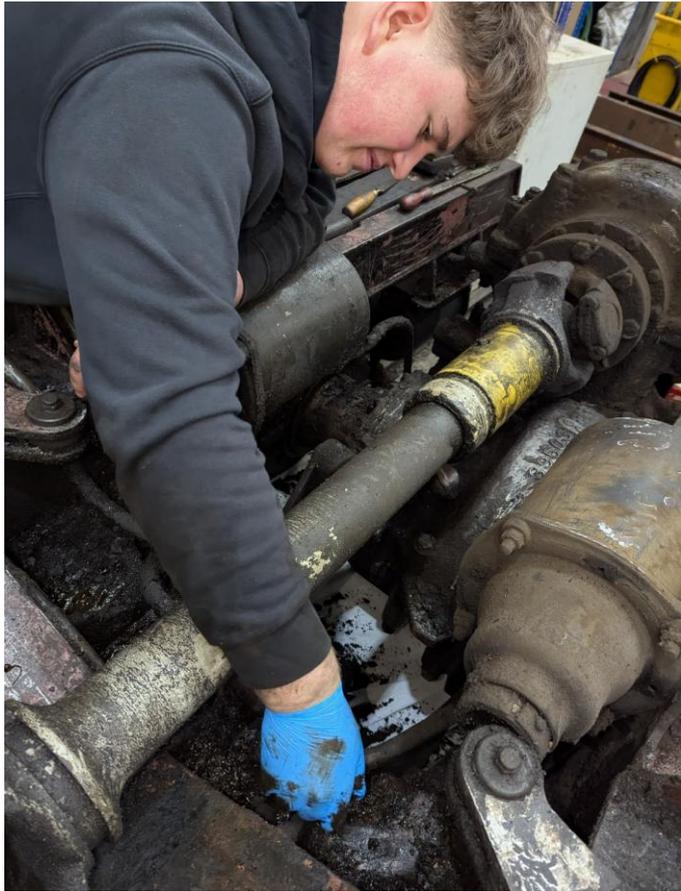
Wednesday 25th February

The 1st find in "A" end bogie – when were these pliers lost?

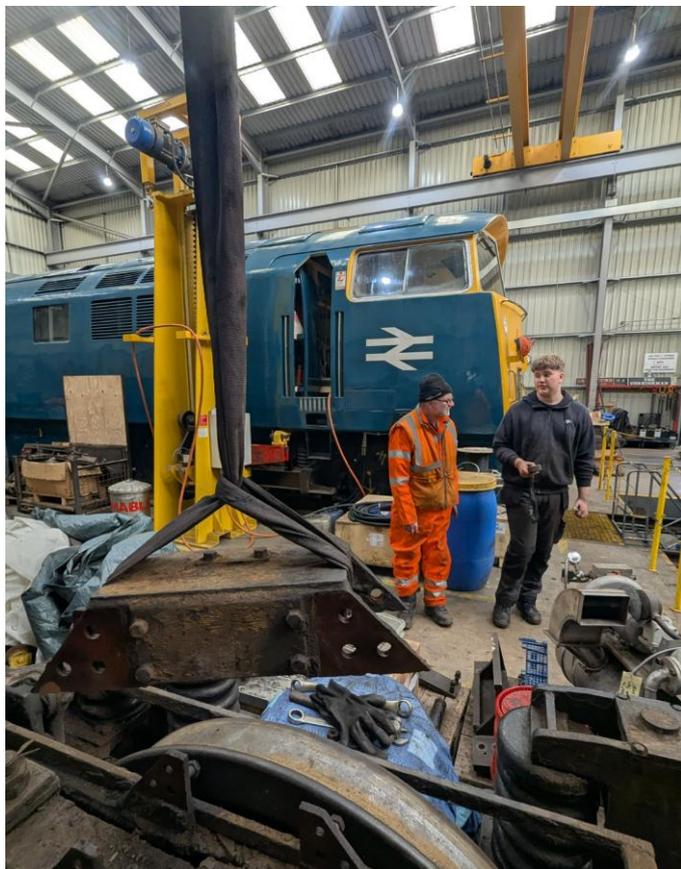


Back to work and it can be a dirty job!

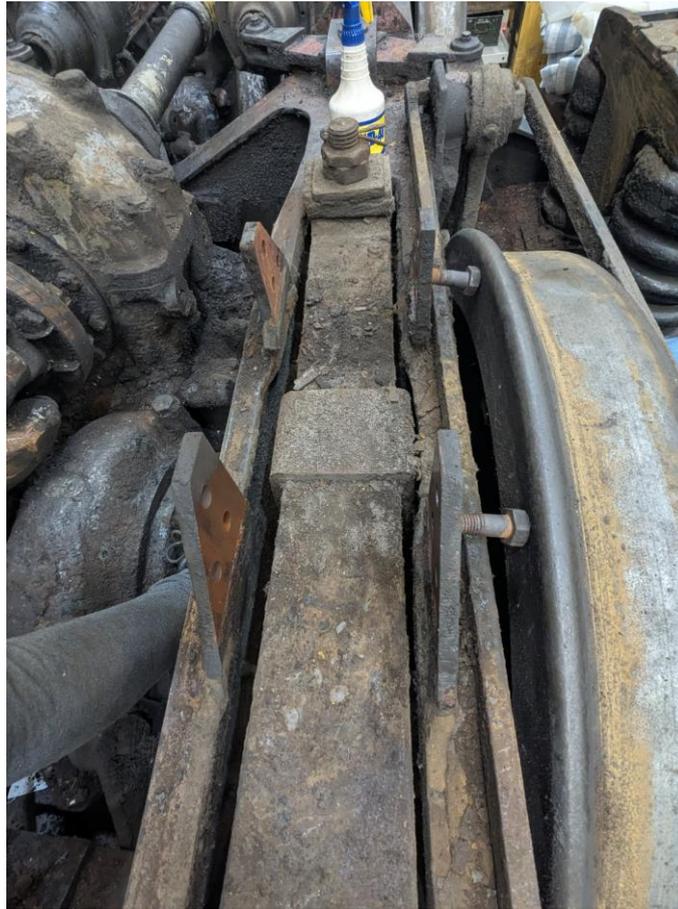




Parts removal commences....



And cleaning carries on...



Another question asked was regarding the numbers found on the axles – which are as follows:

The date of manufacture – 18-06-1965



100T is the amount of pressure that was required to press the wheel into the axle



W2414 is the axle number



The last UAT was at Laira in January 1977

Thanks to Mike Woodhouse for sharing this invaluable information with the teams.

In the week, work continued on the bogie, and progress can be seen to be made.



Thursday 26th February

On such a significant date, thoughts turned to Thursday 26th February 2027, in just one year's time, and the 50th anniversary of the final "Western Tribute" Railtour and the end of diesel hydraulics on the mainline in day to day service.

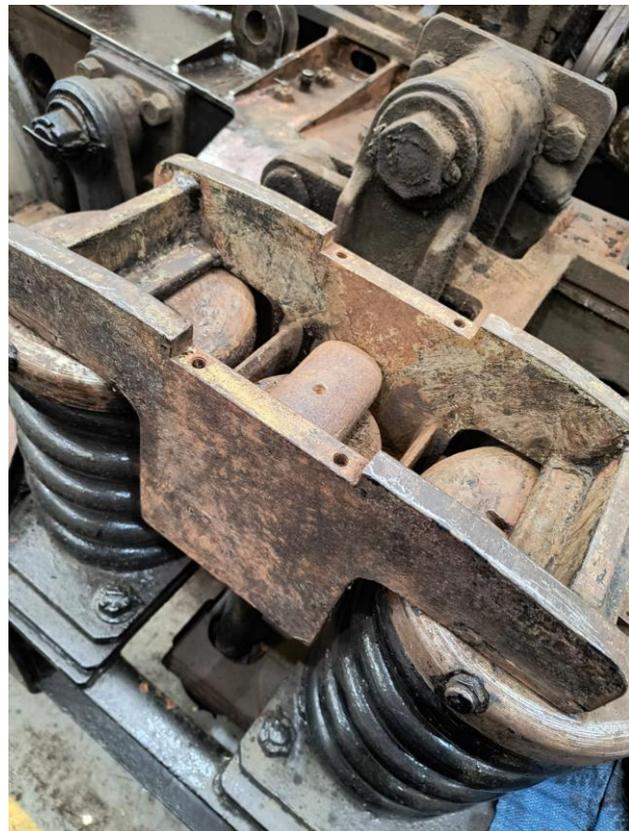
Darren summed up our feelings perfectly with his message – "Just think, in 12 months time, the pre- heaters will be warming Ranger's engines ready for a return to service and to celebrate 50 years since the Western Tribute Railtour. With the bogie swap completed, a fantastic start has already been made on cleaning "A" end bogie. Working as a team over the next 12 months, I am sure we can complete Ranger. Thanks to everyone for all of their efforts so far, let's make this happen."

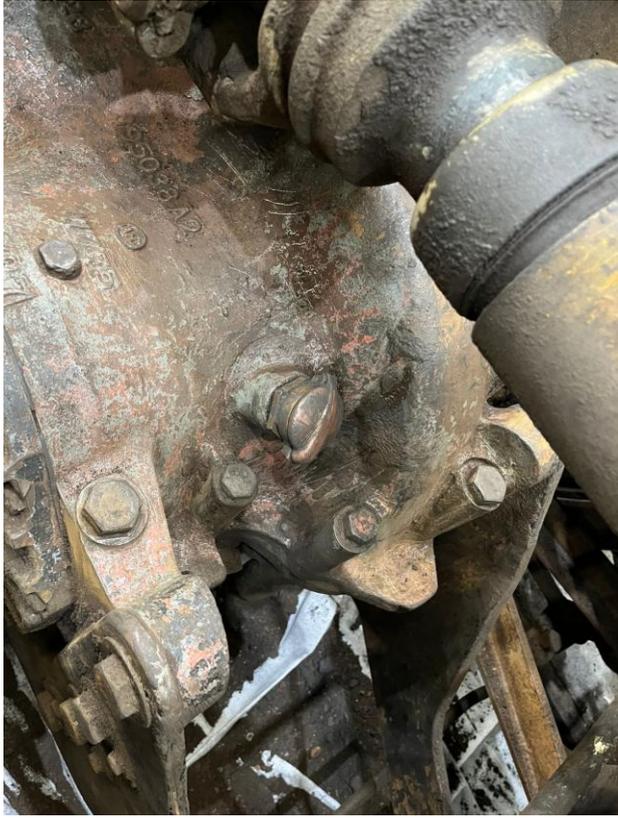
And of course, the headboard for the day!



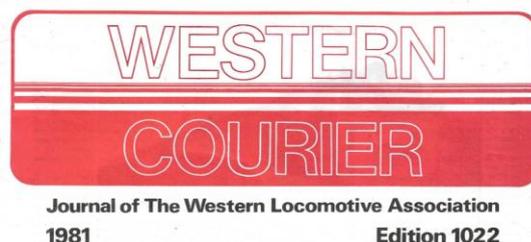
Saturday 28th February

The work continues...





Western Courier



"WESTERN POPULARITY POLL"

"FIX ALLEGATIONS HOTLY DENIED AS "ED'S" MACHINE POWERS TO EASY POLL VICTORY!"

Well, here it is at last, the long-awaited result of the recently held "Western Popularity Poll".

During the last few months, the eventual winner of the poll had been kept a closely guarded secret, known only to a few select Members and of course the Management Committee. Despite many exhaustive and very tempting corruptive efforts by other Members to prize the name of the locomotive from the Editor's lips. I have genuinely resisted all such attempts to divulge the information.

I am pleased to inform you that until this all revealing moment the "most popular "52" of all time" has been the subject of some intense and frustrating discussions, almost bordering on the "who shot J.R." scale of bewilderment and intrigue.

After a very close fight between D1048 "Western Lady" and our own D1013 "Western Ranger", it proved to be the former of these two fine locomotives which finally managed to pull away and quite surprisingly chalk up a substantial and may I add thoroughly deserved lead. But "Ranger and Lady" did not command all the early running, on the contrary, during the first few weeks of the poll, D1011 "Western Thunderer" held the lead along with the "expected winner" D1041 "Western Prince".

But gradually votes for these two began to decline in favour of the four major leaders, D1009 "Western Invader", D1010 "Western Campaigner", D1013 "Western Ranger" & D1048 "Western Lady", with D1072 "Western Glory" and D1070 "Western Gauntlet" also providing some tough opposition. Quite a few examples of the fleet which were withdrawn at a relatively early stage did very well indeed, D1000 "Western Enterprise" in particular doing remarkably well to attain a very creditable 13th place.

Our own D1062 "Western Courier" finished in a most disappointing 12th position, whilst an equally surprising finisher proved to be "York" engine D1023 "Western Fusilier" which could only manage to achieve a meagre 18th place.

As listed in the October "Lineside" twenty-three members of the class failed to poll any votes at all and several others as you will note from the table below managed only one vote!

The eventual competition winner was Member No. XXX who quite correctly forecast that D1048 would win the poll, one of only two Members to do so. Overall, most entrants plumed for D1041 or D1013 (including myself) to finish the poll in front.

Whilst the majority of Members gave top votes for "Lady", they declined to nominate her for the title of "**The most popular "52" of all times**".

As his prize for predicting the winner, Mr XXX received a 'footplate ride' upon D1013 'Western Ranger' at the recent successful October "Weekend".

The full league table of final placings reads as follows:-

1 st	D1048 Western Lady
2 nd	D1013 western Ranger
3 rd	D1010 Western Campaigner
4 th	D1009 Western Invader
5 th	D1041 Western Prince
6 th	D1072 Western Glory
7 th	D1070 Western Gauntlet
8 th	D1011 Western Thunderer
9 th	D1015 Western Champion
10 th	D1056 Western Sultan
11 th	D1001 Western Pathfinder
12 th	D1062 Western Courier
13 th	D1000 Western Enterprise
14 th	D1071 Western Renown
15 th	D1058 Western Nobleman
16 th	D1068 Western Reliance
17 th	D1033 Western Trooper
18 th	D1023 Western Fusilier
19 th	D1051 Western Ambassador
20 th	D1012 Western Firebrand
21 st	D1063 Western Monitor
22 nd	D1022 Western Sentinel
23 rd	D1028 Western Hussar
24 th	D1065 Western Consort
25 th	D1057 Western Chieftain
26 th	D1007 Western Talisman
27 th	D1053 Western Patriarch
28 th	D1036 Western Emperor
29 th	D1047 Western Lord
30 th	D1067 Western Druid
31 st	D1004 Western Crusader
32 nd	D1069 Western Vanguard
33 rd	D1030 Western Musketeer
34 th	D1042 Western Princess
35 th	D1046 Western Marquis
36 th	D1054 Western Governor
37 th	D1005 Western Venturer
38 th	D1018 Western Challenger
39 th	D1040 Western Queen
40 th	D1066 Western Prefect
41 st	D1035 Western Yeoman

The following locomotives all polled one vote only

D1002 Western Explorer
D1003 Western Pioneer
D1021 Western Cavalier
D1026 Western Centurion
D1027 Western Lancer
D1043 Western Duke
D1052 Western Viceroy
D1064 Western Regent

One final controversial topic which has emerged from the running of the "Western Popularity Poll" which had a very fair turnout of votes from the Members is that had the poll been held say six years ago, the final outcome would have been very different from that which is listed above — I wonder?

"Viva Lady".

THE OCTOBER 314th "WESTERN WEEKEND"

by Tony Willmore

Well, another Western Weekend, the sixth on the S.V.R., has come and gone.

This is what happened:-

For Greg Heathcliffe and I, the weekend began at 09.00 on Friday 2nd October.

Our first job was to tidy the interior of D1062 as it was planned that the locomotive would be on display and open to visitors in the yard at Bridgnorth. The removal of "B" end engine and cooler group dictated that we could not really open that end of the locomotive to the public due to the large number of engine parts and pipework that is stored in the locomotive. So, we decided to clear the "A" end walkway, moving one of the large air intake manifolds into the boiler room, and removing accumulated "junk" from the "A" end cab.

With this job complete, we turned our attentions to the star of the show - Western Ranger. D1013's painters had advised that the best way to preserve the new paintwork would be to clean it using car shampoo in hot water, rather than the oily rags used in the past. So, Greg and I set to work with Greg tackling the lower half of the body while I cleaned the top half. After a short while Neil Parsons, Martin Searle and Graham Gant, our Assistant Mechanical Engineer, arrived. Graham immediately commenced checking the oil levels in the engines compressors and exhausters and looked over the two engines. Neil and Martin meanwhile assisted Greg and I with D1013's cleaning. The locomotive was not too dirty as it had been cleaned only three weeks previously for its two appearances at the S.V.R. Enthusiast's Weekend.

Early in the afternoon Derek Wright arrived and D1013 was shunted onto the inspection pit by D2961 so that the oil levels in the intermediate gearboxes and final drives could be checked.

Hugh Searle was the next arrival and after joining Graham in repairing some minor pre-heater faults, the two Watchman pre-heaters coughed into life.

An hour or so later and the cleaning was complete. Western Ranger's engines were started, and the loco was moved up and down the yard a few times to ensure all was well. Fortunately, it was.

At about six o'clock we adjourned to the Railwayman's Arms for a well-earned drink! By the way, the painting of D1062 entering Hampton Loade which you may have seen at the A.G.M. last year is now hanging in the bar at Bridgnorth. The "O" Gauge model of D1062 is on display at the South Devon Railway Museum, Dawlish Warren Station.

Anyway, back to the Western Weekend. Saturday dawned grey and very cold. D1013 was pre-heated, run-up and placed on the front of its train. Meanwhile D1062 had been moved out to the yard and Nick Beck commenced his residence in the "A" cab. We charged 5p per person to inspect D1062's interior, with WLA Members, of course, not being charged. At the end of the "Weekend" Nick had collected over £ 15, that's a lot of 5p's! The money will go towards D1062's forthcoming repaint.

Western Ranger powered three return trips on each day and on several occasions the driver and second man were joined by various WLA Members. First on the 11.20 departure, Greg Heathcliffe had a ride ' 'up front" as a token of our thanks to Greg for his support over the years.

On the return trip, Alan Clarke the winner of the Popularity Poll competition had a cab ride.

Earlier in the morning the four membership numbers for the cab ride scheme had been drawn. The numbers drawn were A/006, A/108, D/005 and D/041. Jerry De Souza (A/006) claimed his ride and he travelled on the 14.20 ex-Bridgnorth. K. Fenton and his better half (family Member D/041) travelled on the 11.20 departure on the Sunday morning. Where were you A/ 108 and D/005?

A very popular event on the Saturday evening was the film show in Bridgnorth Station buffet. Keith Bullock of the Diesel Traction Group brought five films from his collection, and these were - "Blue Pullman" (describing the development and introduction of these luxurious trains), "Snow", ' The Fell Locomotive" (detailing the design and internal workings of No. 10100 — with sound!). "The Ninth Rail Report" (featuring seven consecutive pairs of D800 Warships and several Westerns — magic — Ed), and "The North Eastern Region Looks Forward" (which included brand new Deltics, Class 40's and Class 24's).

Sunday also dawned grey but a good deal warmer than Saturday & D1013 again performed faultlessly on its three return trips, except for one minor electrical hitch on the second trip.

The 18.30 departure from Bewdley was booked non-stop from Arley on both days.

On Saturday all went "to plan" but on Sunday problems arose. When running non-stop through Highley, the tokens for the Bewdley to Highley to Bridgnorth sections have to be deposited and collected respectively — on the move. Nick Townsend, second man on the trip, left the Bewdley to Highley section on the token changer but there was no token to collect! Driver Hugh Searle and Nick Townsend adjourned to the signal box for a consultation with the signalman to discover that a token could not be released because a Member of the S&T department had travelled down to Bridgnorth outer home to check it. We were held at Highley for over fifteen minutes before continuing on our way.

Once again the Association owes a great deal of thanks to the Members that made the October 1981 Western Weekend a success:-

The Engineers:- Derek Wright, Graham Gant, Hugh Searle and Nick Townsend.

The Cleaners:- Neil Parsons, Martin Searle and Greg Heathcliffe.

Special thanks to Nick Beck for looking after D1062 and boosting WLA funds

And to all the Members that assisted with the running of the Sales/Membership stand during the Weekend.

Thanks also to all of the WLA Members who attended the event.

Sales Team Update

We launched this year's WLA 2026 Lottery at the beginning of February, and the response has I am sorry to say been extremely lukewarm.

Last year we raised a magnificent £2,625 with £1,312.50 going to support our three locos and the same amount shared between our three prize winners.

So far this year we have raised only £775, just 30% of last year's total. Perhaps we are experiencing a certain element of "donor fatigue". Rest assured that our locos continue to need substantial investment as you have seen recently with the purchase of two MTU 538 engines and new cardan shafts.

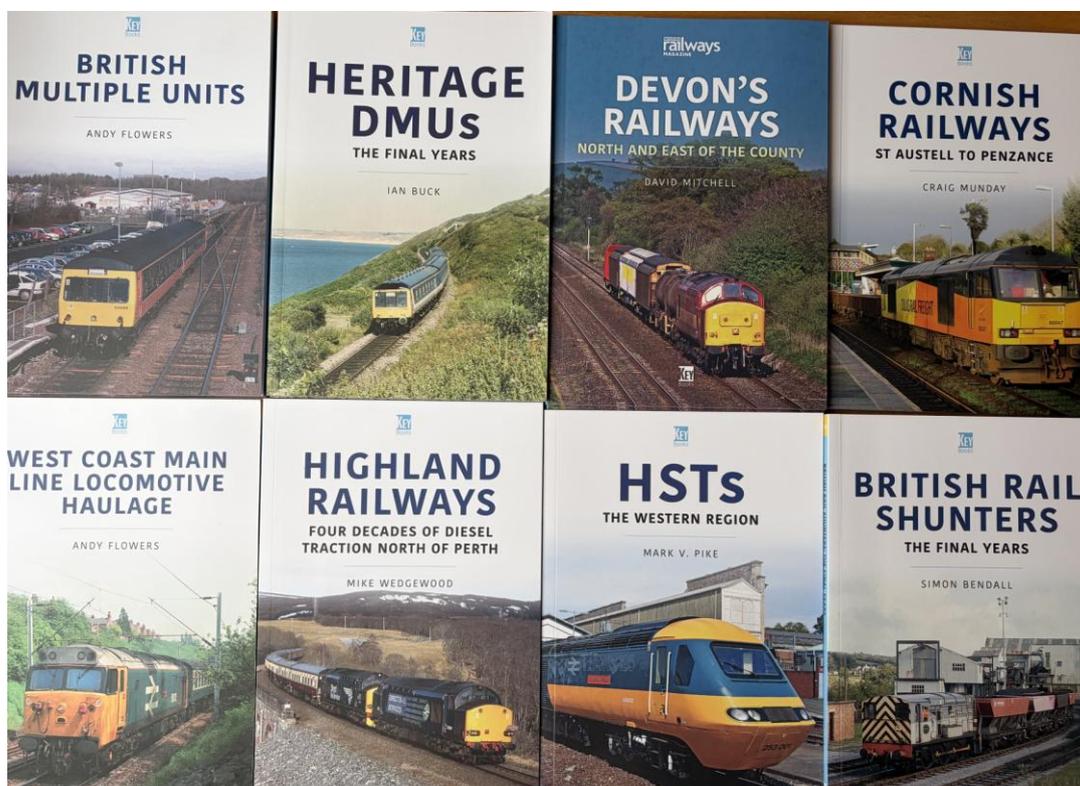
The intention was to just run the lottery for a month, but it will now remain open until the end of March. Please do consider buying a ticket as this makes a big difference to us.

The rate of publication of new Western and hydraulic related books has been quite incredible over the last few months so please have a look at <https://westernlocomotives.com/product-category/books-publications/> feast your eyes and place an order.

There are also more in the pipeline with the late Steve Marshalls book on the final years of the hydraulics being completed by Roger Geach for publication in the Spring .

And our very own Roger Smith has produced an excellent A5 booklet "WLA Driver's Manual", copies of which will be available at the Spring Gala.

We did take the opportunity recently to purchase copies of eight different remaindered books from Key Publishing which are shown below and we are offering them to WLA members at just £7.50 each including P&P. First come first served - just email sales@westernlocomotives.com if interested.



Finally, we have a new Banner, designed to attract attention and pull you into the Sales Stand, with wallets at the ready 😊



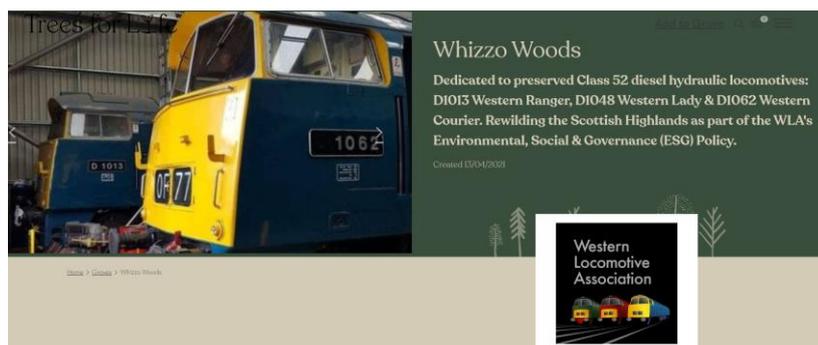
As always we would welcome donations of diesel books, models and memorabilia for the Sales Stand as our stock is running low and if you have any ideas for new merchandise then please let us know at the email above.

Whizzo Woods

At the end of January, we have **549 trees** in Whizzo Woods, another great increase over last month – but we still have a long way to go to achieve 1,000 trees. We are determined to get there and we will be even more “enterprising” this 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
- 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 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/ or contact me at wp.finch@icloud.com

Book of the Month

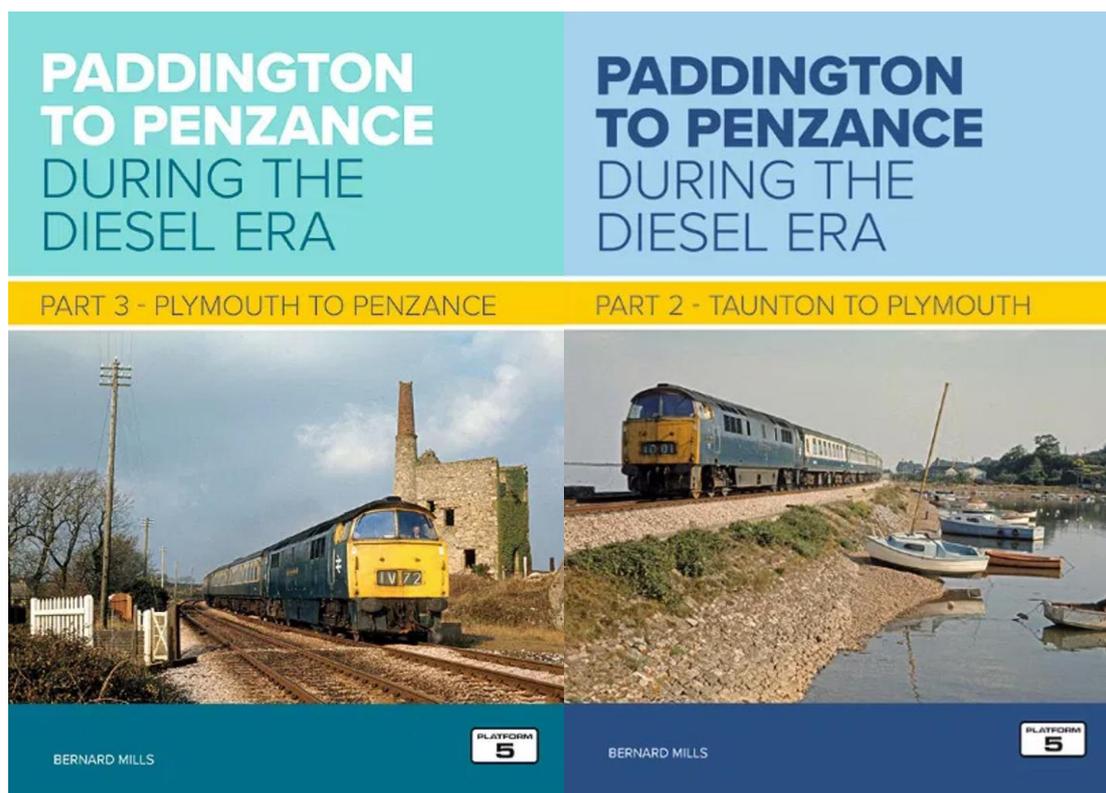
Last month we provided of several new books which are NOW available - the second and third volumes of the "Paddington to Penzance" trilogy by Bernard Mills.

All three books in the series are now available from the online store with a special offer for anyone buying all three.

Paddington to Penzance during the Diesel Era follows the course of the Great Western Railway's main line from London Paddington to Penzance through a wonderful selection of colour images from the renowned railway photographer Bernard Mills. The images cover a period of more than 50 years and date back to the mid-1960s, with the primary focus being the diesel-hydraulic era of the 1970s.

The second book in the trilogy explores the GWR's route from Taunton to Plymouth. From Taunton, the line heads south to Exeter, before hugging the Exe estuary and running along Dawlish sea wall. The line turn turns inland to pass through Totnes and Ivybridge, before arriving into Plymouth.

The third book explores the GWR's Cornish Mail Line from Plymouth to Penzance. Leaving Plymouth, the line crosses Brunel's spectacular Royal Albert Bridge and enters Cornwall. Passing through pastoral farmland, the line reaches Cornwall's only city, Truro, before passing through former mining country to reach the coast at Penzance.



Media Coverage

Trackside – March 2026

▶ RUNNING LINES

be a good decision as 19 out of 28 rivet holes were found to be cracked, something only discovered when the old firehole ring was removed.

NORTH TYNESIDE STEAM RAILWAY

◊ Sentinel 4WBT No. 9559 has had its piston guides and cylinder bores polished, valves re-faced and new cylinder cladding fabricated. The reversing mechanism is being refurbished while the supports for the gear-changing mechanism and drive chain oil reservoir are being painted.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE IRONSTONE RAILWAY

◊ Class 02 No. D2867 has been fitted with new brake blocks and successfully tested.
◊ YEC 'Half Janus' 0-6-0DE No. 1382 arrived in late 2025 from the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre. Driver training has commenced.
◊ A temporary shelter has been ordered for additional undercover protection for two locomotives. Delivery is due in February/March.

PEAK RAIL

◊ Quarrying company Longcliffe has donated enough limestone to help the railway extend the platform at Rowsley and to provide the foundations for the reconstruction of the footbridge at Darley Dale.

PERRYGROVE RAILWAY ADVENTURE

◊ Five locomotives were planned to be in steam for its 17/18 January 'Winter Steam Up'. These included Exmoor Steam Railway-built 0-4-2T Ruby, which has been on loan from the Lappa Valley Railway. The event marked the locomotive's last appearance on UK soil; it has been sold overseas to an undisclosed buyer. The event also marked the last appearance of Perrygrove's Annie before withdrawal for ten-year overhaul.

PRESTONGRANGE MUSEUM

◊ Ruston & Hornsby '48DS' No. 33 has been given a thorough clean in readiness for repaint in early 2026.
◊ Andrew Barclay 0-4-0ST No. 17 is to also be repainted. Tracing of its existing lettering will ensure that replacement signwriting will be to the correct size.

PUGNEYS LIGHT RAILWAY

◊ Vandals targeted the 7.25in-gauge line on three separate occasions in December and January. The 750-yard-long miniature railway in Pugneys Country Park, Wakefield,

says that public support in the wake of the incidents has "left us completely overwhelmed in the best possible way".

Criminals broke windows, stole safety radios and wrecked solar panels (the latter used to charge some of the resident locomotives).

RILEY & SON (E) LTD

◊ 'Black Five' No. 45163's new expansion link has been ground, following hardening and tempering. Attention has switched to manufacturing a new set of die blocks.

ROCKS BY RAIL

◊ Peckett 'R2' 0-4-0ST Uppingham is set to be cosmetically restored and an appeal has been launched to raise the £4,000 needed. The locomotive was built in 1912 for James Pain Ltd's Uppingham quarry and thus became the first standard-gauge steam locomotive to operate in a Rutland ironstone quarry. It arrived at Cottesmore in 1979 and while now on display in the Simon Layfield Exhibition Centre, years of open storage have taken its toll on the platework. The museum plans to return Uppingham to its original condition, albeit as a static exhibit.

ROMNEY HYPHE & DYMCHECH RAILWAY

◊ Design work for an all-new replica of a Second World War armoured wagon is nearly complete. A 1990s replica, built using an original armoured wagon underframe with a wooden body, was deemed life expired. Local vehicle restoration specialists Armoured Engineering is working on the design and will make the new vehicle from metal.

RUDYARD LAKE RAILWAY

◊ All six former Isle of Moll Railway 10.25in-gauge locomotives have been reunited for the first time in 15 years at the Staffordshire line with the arrival of Roger Marsh, 1981-built 2-6-4T *Lady of the Isles*. The Inner Hebrides line closed in 2011.

RUISLIP LIDO RAILWAY

◊ The line's society has purchased 1970-built Severn Lamb 0-6-2T+T *Dougal*, which has spent the last 21 years hauling trains at the Valley Railway Adventure (formerly the Evesham Vale Light Railway). It has been moved to a contractor where it will be regauged from 15in to the Ruislip Lido's unusual 12in gauge. It is expected to enter service this summer, thereby doubling the line's available steam power.

SEVERN VALLEY RAILWAY

WESTERN LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION

◊ The WLA aims to have 'Western' No. D1013 *Western Ranger* operational to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the 'Western Tribute' railtour on 26 February 2027. Class 52 No. D1013 hauled the London Paddington – Swansea – Plymouth – London train with classmate No. D1023 *Western Fusilier*, marking the end of the class and of the Western Region diesel hydraulics. The latter is now part of the National Collection and based at Didcot.

SOUTHWOLD RAILWAY

◊ Following a steam test and remedial work at its Steamworks site in Southwold during the autumn, the Southwold Railway Trust plans to have its replica Sharp, Stewart 2-4-0T *Blyth* in operation during 2026. It hasn't been publicly steamed since being launched in 2022.

◊ Steamworks is also planning to build a matching 12ft-long passenger carriage (with balcony) in the style of original SR stock (wheelchair accessible), but approximately three times shorter as part of its Heritage Train Project. The trust says that to build a full-length carriage "would be overkill" for the 80-yard running line.

SPA VALLEY RAILWAY

◊ The railway is just £20,000 shy of the £125,000 it needs to replace Broom Lane Bridge, between Tunbridge Wells West and Groombridge. Work is scheduled to take place this March. Over the festive period, one benefactor gave £4,850 to the appeal, while the 7.25in Swanley New Barn Railway's New Year's Day running raised an additional £1,100.

◊ 'Battle of Britain' No. 34053 *Sir Keith Park* was failed on 20 December 2025 with a broken bogie spring. BR '4MT' 2-6-4T No. 80078 was lit up to provide cover for 'Polar Express' services but staff at Tunbridge Wells West shed had the spring replaced within 90 minutes, the 'Bulleid' only missing the first train of the day.
◊ Caledonian Railway 0-6-0 No. 828 has passed its annual cold exam. The washout plugs are being re-assembled. Two volunteers have stripped, cleaned and inspected the rear axleboxes. They've also replaced the life-expired underkeep pads. It's hoped that the locomotive will return to service in mid-January.

ST GERMANS, CORNWALL

◊ Railholiday won the Regenerative Tourism Award category at the Cornwall Tourism Awards 2025-26, held at Truro cathedral in November. The company, next to St Germans station, offers self-catering holiday accommodation in five historic railway coaches. Restoration initiatives include using glass reinforced plastic panels rather than fresh wood, complementing reclaimed wood and chestnut wood harvested from the company's own woodland.

STAINMORE RAILWAY COMPANY

◊ Approximately 3,000 bricks are being removed from the foundations of Kirkby Stephen East's Junction signalbox. This will allow core samples of the original footings to be taken to establish if they can be used as part of the plans to rebuild the 'box. The bricks will be re-used, albeit with modern mortar.

◊ New North Eastern Railway signal arms are being made from Tricoya, a version of medium density fibreboard designed for exterior use.

◊ Tricoya is also being used to make new body panels for NER Passenger Brake No. 131. The body has been fitted to the restored underframe, which means that a new floor can be made.

LOCOMOTIVE CONSERVATION & LEARNING TRUST

◊ Part of 'J21' No. 65033 now carries the 'C' class number 876 for the first time since it was painted BR black in 2003, to match North Norfolk Railway-based 'J15' No. 65462 (now 'Y14' No. 564). The 'C' number, by which the locomotive will be known (T47), has been applied as part of the programme to paint the tender in lined North Eastern Railway green.

SWANAGE RAILWAY

◊ Despite the dry weather last summer, the railway's five stations picked up ten awards from South & South East in Bloom for "floral and neighbourhood excellence" during 2025. Swanage station won the Silver and Neighbourhood Awards; Herston Halt won the Silver Gilt Award as well as the 'Thriving' category in the Neighbourhood Award; Harman's Cross station won Gold Award and the Neighbourhood Award (level five, Outstanding);
◊ Corfe Castle station also won the Silver Gilt Award as well as the 'Thriving' category in the Neighbourhood Award; Norden station won the Gold Award and Neighbourhood Award (Level four, Thriving).

◊ Two steam-hauled carol concert trains ran on 11 and 18 December. Trains brought concertgoers to Corfe Castle, to enjoy a choir, a brass quartet and bagpipers, performed in the station's goods shed.

◊ A 'Model Railway Weekend' features for the first time in the railway's calendar. The 11/12 April event will feature around 20 layouts including a true-to-scale '00' re-creation of Bournemouth West, and will be exhibited at Swanage station, Harman's Cross station and village hall, Corfe Castle station and Norden station.

Children's author Christopher Awdry, son of the Reverend W Awdry, will be selling and signing copies of his 20th anniversary re-release of *Sodor: Reading Between the Lines*. He will be at Swanage between 11.30-12.30 and 14.00-15.00 both days.

Pre-booked Class 08 driver experiences in Swanage station limits will also be offered.

563 LOCOMOTIVE GROUP

◊ Investigations into why London South Western Railway 'T3' No. 563 is "chewing through its fire grate" are taking place. Initial thoughts are that the Adams 4-4-0 has a plain firebar carrier rather than the "combed" version as fitted to LSWR contemporaries 'M7' No. 30053 and 'T9' No. 30120 where the firebars sit in multiple slots. With a pattern for the 'M7's' to hand, a new one might be cast for No. 563; in the meantime, analysis of the firebar material is to take place.

◊ The 563 Locomotive Group is planning a mid-term overhaul on No. 563 in 2027; however, 2-6-4T No. 80104, 'M7' No. 30053 and 'BB' No. 34070 *Manston* are due to visit Herston Works before then and "the railway cannot afford to release [No.] 563 for this works visit".

The work is expected to take place sometime in 2027.
◊ 'T9' No. 30120 has been completely stripped down at Herston Works for a comprehensive assessment ahead of its planned overhaul to take place. Formal sign-off is still awaited from the National Railway Museum.

SWINDON

◊ A blue plaque has been fixed to the wall of Swindon's Health Hydrants, once the headquarters of the GWR's Medical Fund. The plaque commemorates the fact that the GWR's healthcare system provided the inspiration for the National Health Service. The Hydrant is undergoing a £1.5 million revamp and should re-open this year.

'WESTERN' FUTURE SECURED WITH REPLACEMENT ENGINES

Christmas came early for the Western Locomotive Association (WLA), but it'll take a while for the 'present' to be delivered...

The group has bought two MTU 538 V12 engines, the successor to the 65-year-old Maybach MD655 power units fitted in the WLA's three Severn Valley-based Class 52s, Nos. D1013 *Western Ranger* (under major overhaul), D1048 *Western Lady* (a future restoration) and D1062 *Western Courier* (operational).

The engines 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", says WLA Chairman Roger Smith.

With each 'Western' having two power units, they are critical for the locomotives' long-term operational future. However, the WLA will only make use of the engine from the heads of the block downwards, converting the engine to MD655 specification with replacement cam boxes, intercoolers and turbo charger – thereby keeping the same power output and the classic Maybach noise.

Bought from Narayan Marine Tech in India, the WLA's engines are expected to reach Kidderminster Traction & Maintenance Depot in the New Year. They will initially be stored.

The WLA already has a '538' engine in store, ready to be converted for the 'A' end of No. D1013. "These two '538s' added to our collection, will ultimately end up in our locomotives keeping the Maybach music alive for many more years to come," adds Mr Smith.



▲ Ready to be wrapped in protective enclosures, before shipping from India, the two secondhand MTU 538 engines that will 'keep the music alive' in the WLA's 'Westerns'. Photo: WLA

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.



Class 52 between Bridgnorth and Hampton Loade



 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"

Steve Bartlett has found this shot that he took in the early seventies, but unfortunately can't identify which locomotive it is, although it is working 1M14 Paddington to Birmingham New St and approaching Banbury. Over to you to identify! (Crewe build / no headboard clips!)



Thanks again to Stephen Taverner for sharing another photograph - this time of D1055 Western Advocate at Penzance on 6th July 1975. As you will know, D1055 was written off some 6 months later as a result of an accident at Worcester Tunnel Junction on 3rd January 1976.



Next, some more memories from **Jeremy Vanes** - both of D1048 Western Lady in the long summer of 1976.

Firstly, slowed to a complete standstill at Aller junction gantry with a lengthy summer extra train, meaning she had to climb Dainton without any run up. The restart was noisy to say the least.



Secondly (on a different day) moving ballast at Newton Abbot in front of the old LNER coaches (today also on the SVR) but then used by the publishers David & Charles.



And a big thank you to **Wilfred Rickard** for sharing the following:-

On approaching Paddington, there was always a point of interest at Ranelagh Bridge stabling point. This one on 3rd April 1970.



A quick visit to Laira with D1010 & D1001.
Note D1010 with an unfortunate "scrape" along its side. This was in July 1970.



D1056 on arrival at Plymouth from Paddington.
Note that platform 2 was a complete platform to accommodate a full length train. May 1971.



D1037 with a freight from Temple Mills for St Blazey passing Newbury 7th August 1974.



D1068 with an up train for Paddington from the West Country at Reading Southcote Junction in the evening sunset 25th April 1975.



D1010 in the wars again, at Plymouth North Road, seems to have fancied a bit of off roading. 20th June 1975.



And finally, this month, thanks to Andy Calett for the following :-

Continuing the theme of remembering this month 52 years ago, here are three photos of Class 52s, all taken around my hometown of Swindon in March 1974.

- D1003 Western Pioneer with a train of vans heading east from Swindon on 16th March 1974



- D1022 Western Sentinel at Swindon Station arriving from the west on 30th March 1974

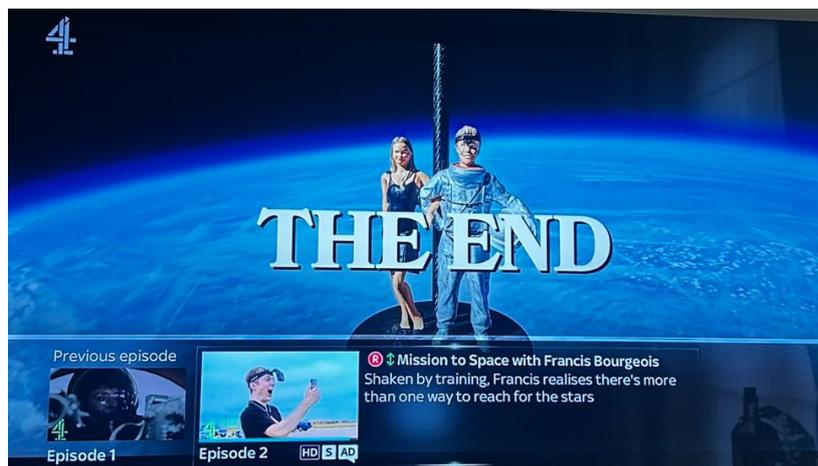


- D1037 Western Empress travelling westbound about to pass under Green Bridge Swindon on 16th March 1974



Closing Notes and Book Ends

I hope that some of you spotted this on Francis Bourgeois's Channel 4 TV Documentary "Mission to Space" – essential head wear spotted on his hotel bedroom bed!

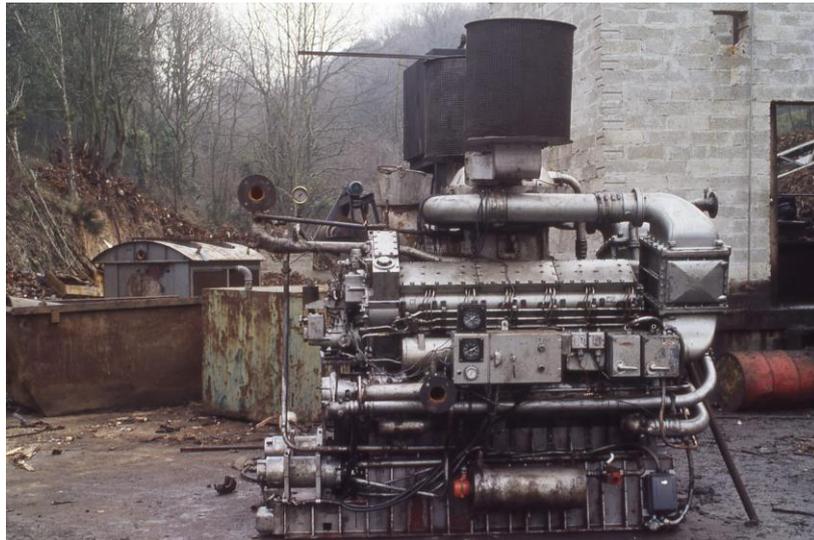


Posted this month on social media, and “on the topic of engines!, Paul Mick shared his recollections that in the WLA’s newsletters back in the mid/late 1980’s, it was reported that the WLA had acquired a spare engine from a Jersey Scrapyard – which was then referred to as the “Jersey Engine.” Paul then enquired about what had happened to that engine and where it is today.

Social Media can be a wonderful thing as see what was shared next.

Thanks to Hugh Serle who shared the following...

The engine in March 1984 in Jersey.



And a wider view of the Jersey Scrapyard – again with the engine.



A Cooler Group was also present.



The MD 655 engine and cooler group on arrival at Bridgnorth and ready for restoration in April 1984.



And CONFIRMATION that this “Jersey Engine”, well it’s block, currently resides in D1013 Weestern Ranger at “A” end.

This engine block will be used when we return D1013 to traffic as it was last overhauled in the late 1990s / early 2000s.

It is likely to eventually be replaced with a one of the MTU 538 blocks that we will be converting to 655 specification.

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 on or around 1st April

<https://westernlocomotives.com/>

The Western Locomotive Association is a Company Limited by Guarantee – Company Registration Number 3873466

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