



Western Locomotive Association e-Newsletter – May 2026

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

Firstly, I must apologize for the lateness of this month's e-Newsletter but I was away for most of April on a Himalayan Adventure and have only just returned to the UK, but pleased to report that it was a successful trip and I trekked up to Everest Base Camp at 18,500 feet and got some great photographs of the mountain from the summit of Gokyo Ri!

But now it's back to all things Diesel Hydraulic.....

Unfortunately, I start with the news that following so much hard work on D1062 over the winter period, it is with regret that we have had to withdraw Western Courier from participating in the Severn Valley Railway Spring Diesel Gala. The organisers of the Gala needed to know the WLA's position and with things not going quite to plan, having to wait for some essential equipment to be delivered, and the amount of work still outstanding and the time on the pit required, I was agreed that the best decision was to pull the locomotive from the Gala and concentrate on having the locomotive ready for our first running week – from Sunday 24th May.

We know that this will be disappointing news but we do aim to get D1062 back in service the week after the Gala.

On to happier stories, and more "Memories" are shared this month, so read on to find out more – but here is our own D1013 Western Ranger seen waiting at Penzance with the overnight non-sleeper for Paddington on 22nd February 1977, just 4 days from the end, thanks again to Wilfred Rikard.



WESTERN LOTTERY

The Western Lottery Draw took place on Saturday 4th April, and I am delighted to share with you the winners:-

- The 1st Prize of £465.00 went to Mark Simmons Jenkins
- The 2nd Prize of £193.75 went to Chris Warner
- The 3rd Prize of £116.25 went to Caroline Norledge

Congratulations to the winners, and of course £775 went to D1013 Western Ranger, D1048 Western Lady and D1062 Western Courier.

We will repeat the Lottery in 2027 and a massive thank you to all who took part for your support.

And let's not forget, it is Spring Raffle Time, with a fantastic 1st Prize of £500 CASH! The 2nd Prize is also a great £250 and even the 3rd Prize of £100 is not to be sneered at.

So, get your tickets now at [WLA SPRING RAFFLE 2026 - single ticket - Western Locomotive Association](#)

WLA SPRING RAFFLE 2026 0001



Cash Prizes as follows

1st Prize - £500

2nd Prize - £250

3rd Prize - £100

Draw will take place at the SVR Spring Diesel Gala on Sunday 17th May 2026 at Middy

Promoter: WLA, c/o 54 West Street, Oldland Common, Bristol, BS30 9QS

Registered with Derby City Council, reg. no. 1206

Printed by www.raffleticketsonline.co.uk

Ticket Price £5.00

You will remember that last month we featured some more of Wilfred Rikard's Memories and feedback received gives me the perfect opportunity show some of his fabulous pictures again. And of course, see this month's "Memories" for the next instalment.

Firstly, we shared last month a shot of what was thought to be D1013 Western Ranger with empty stock passing through the wash plant at Lanhydrock Road, Laira on 7th September 1975.



Our own Roger Fry has pointed out that in fact the locomotive is D1065 Western Consort, identifiable by the damaged warning horn cowl and yellow window rubber in the driver's side head-code box.

Also, the warning flashes are in the "Crewe position" rather than "Swindon" and the two chipped paint marks above and to the left of the head-code boxes also identify the locomotive as Consort.

The head-code of 4A13 was the 15.22 Penzance to Paddington perishables, perhaps the 13 in the head-code caused the confusion in identification?

The second picture to generate some feedback, again from Mr Fry, was the one of D1010 Western Campaigner arriving at Plymouth from Penzance on 14th February 1976.



This is a nice shot of D1010 from the office block at North Road station. Assuming the date of 14th February 1976 to be correct, then D1010 is on the 1M85 07:40 Penzance to Liverpool.

My notes show that I also saw D1010 earlier at Truro on that Saturday morning on that working!

This turned out to be a good day for 1000's in west Cornwall as I saw the following at Truro on that day:-

D1010 Western Campaigner - 1M85 07:40 Penzance to Liverpool
D1005 Western Venturer, ballast working heading west at 10:25
D1071 Western Renown, 4B08 Plymouth to Penzance parcels
D1005 Western Venturer, returning east, light engine at 11.51
D1030 Western Musketeer, 1B81 08:00 Bristol to Penzance
D1058 Western Nobleman, 1B25 09:30 Paddington to Penzance
D1037 Western Empress, 1V71 Leeds to Penzance, "The Cornishman"
D1068 Western Reliance, 1B45 11:30 Paddington to Penzance, "The Cornish Riviera"
D1058 Western Nobleman, 1A09 16:10 Penzance to Paddington

Out of all those Westerns, I only bothered to photograph D1068 - I must have been short of film and pocket money then!!

Thanks for the memories.

Dave Lamond has shared with us the news that I am sure many of you are already aware of from the railway press and social media that today – “Friday 3rd April” (as I am typing) marks the first operation of the China Clay service into Cliffe Vale, Stoke on Trent by GBRf.

I’m here learning the yard this morning as hopefully I’ll be driving the next service 🙌 .

China Clay services have always been of interest to Western enthusiasts.

I grew up in Stoke on Trent in the 60/70’s and have fond memories of seeing Classes 37,45 and 47 working from Bescot to Stoke, mainly in 1978/9.

My question to our fabulous and knowledgeable membership is, did a Class 52 ever work this service as far as Stoke?

If so, is there any photographic evidence?



And to finish this month's introduction, here is another special picture from Andy Collett and my "last" Class 52!



A big thanks to Andy who sends me monthly his pictures from 52 years ago – and in this month of May, we find D1053 Western Patriarch passing Acorn Bridge , Shrivenham, just east of Swindon in the late afternoon sunshine on 19th May 1974.

If you have some pictures that you would like to share with your fellow members, then I am very happy to use them in this Newsletter, so please email them to me at wp.finch@icloud.com.

And to end, just released by the Severn Valley Railway, their latest You Tube Video Update, which focuses exclusively on the work of the WLA, and was produced as a promotional tool for the Spring Diesel Gala, which unfortunately D1062 will not be featuring at, but can be viewed at :-

<https://youtu.be/DoGLhdbb43w?si=kxoNsiRGOfx8Deel>



In this e-Newsletter

Features in this e-Newsletter include the following:

- News from The Chair.
- D1013 Western Ranger – A Progress Update
- D1048 Western Lady – A Progress Update
- D1029 Western Legionnaire...
- 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

It's not often I start with some disappointing news but as you may have heard, D062 Western Courier has been withdrawn from operating at the Severn Valley Railway Spring Diesel Festival, taking place from 14th to 17th May. As always with such events, there is much planning to be done in advance, especially with the crew and locomotive rosters and so it's no surprise that the organisers required a clear position from the WLA on whether or not D1062 would be available.

With progress not going entirely as planned due to some further repairs being required, the extent of the additional work and the time needed on the pit, it was felt best to withdraw from the event in order to focus on having the locomotive ready for our running week, commencing Sunday 24th May 2026.

Thanks to the engineering team, the locomotive has received an exceptional amount of TLC lately, including the fitting of a new set of cardan shafts on the "A" end bogie and currently, work is ongoing to complete the torque settings for the thrust brackets and the transmission to intermediate gearbox cardan shafts. In the meantime, D1062 is being prepared for the season ahead, including the refitting of air receivers followed by full system testing.

Judging by the comments received on social media, everyone has been supportive of the need to ensure that the work is completed properly within the time we have available and thoroughly checked to ensure that the loco is safe to operate.

It's also worthwhile remembering that although D1062 may have had a temporary setback not appearing at the gala, "a setback is a set up for a comeback" and with all the work carried out, the loco should return to traffic, stronger than ever!

During the month, in addition to the many hours of work from the engineering teams, the sales team have been out in force at the Great Central Railway Diesel Gala selling our wares, including our new Class 52 Driver's Manual which has now already covered its cost of production – an excellent result.

Another great edition of the Courier magazine has been sent out by post, so hopefully, as long as The Royal Mail have done their job, you will have received your copy by now, or more likely, are about to receive your copy!

From a personal point of view, I've just enjoyed some time at the SVR where I was able to spend a couple of days finishing off repainting the cab at "A" end of D1062, followed by signing on at Bewdley for my first drive of the year on a Western engine – 4930 Hagley Hall! The following day, I was "Spare Driver" at Bridgnorth MPD where I spent most of a glorious day inside the shed cleaning up wash-out plugs on the steam side!

Anyway, at risk of boring you any further, there's much to look forward to as the operating season begins after the Gala....

See you on the Valley!

Roger Smith
Chairman



D1013 Western Ranger Progress Update

See Monthly News Updates this month.

D1048 Western Lady Progress Update

See Monthly News Updates this month.

An update on D1048 Western Lady Locomotive Appeal.

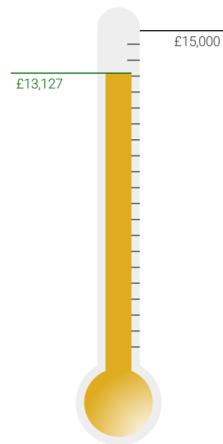
D1048 WESTERN LADY Locomotive Appeal



D1048 WESTERN LADY

The Western Locomotive Association became the proud owner of Class 52 D1048 Western Lady in 2023 when the locomotive was kindly gifted to the WLA. This was following a move from the Midlands Railway Centre to the Severn Valley Railway to take part in the SVR's Autumn Diesel Gala event as a static exhibit.

The locomotive is currently going through an encouraging electrical assessment and programme of fault finding, to be followed by a mechanical assessment.



D1029 Western Legionnaire...

My thanks to Mike Woodhouse for the detailed description about the early life of the locomotive...

My recollections of the misspelt nameplate go back to when the locomotive came to the works for its dual brake conversion.

I recall quite clearly the nameplates being taken off the bodysides and being sent to the 'W' shop where all the nameplates were put together.

On a Western this was quite a task as each number and letter are individually cast, polished, drilled and then screwed to the steel backplate.

To explain a little on the designation of 'W' shop. All of the workshops on what was collectively known as loco side were given letters. 'A' shop was split into several different sections. AE shop was loco erecting, AM shop was machining and some other ancillary functions such as cardan shaft repairs, transmission overhauls. AW shop was where the wheels were overhauled, new tyres etc.

Whereas the carriage side of the works were designated with numbers to each workshop. 15 shop for instance was the machining shop.

In later years the 'A' shop was designated number 5 shop just to confuse you, but this was only done when the carriage works closed and all the carriage activities came to the loco side of the works.

So, back to D1029. After the plates were corrected and repainted, chargeman Bill Pobjoy and one of his team refitted the plates back onto the loco. I can recall this clearly as I worked with Bill roughly at the same time. Both of these men then went on to work with us during the time D1062 was in the works prior to moving to the Torbay Railway. See the below photo of some of the men with D1062 outside the works in 1977. Bill is forth from the left and his brother Wally is fifth from the left. Wally for instance was one of the team who refitted the engines and bogies.



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

Wednesday 1st April

Following a busy weekend the previous weekend, when as well as the Pedestal and Equalising Beam along with the Springs being re-fitted to D1062's "A" end bogie, other work carried out included the greasing of the bogie and yet more scraping and cleaning of the bogie area at "A" end. In addition, the cardan shaft bolts were cleaned and adapted ready for final fitting.

The "To Do" list for Wednesday 1st focussed on the setting up of the Primary Springs, fitting the remaining Cardan Shaft Bolts and then Torquing Up! Hopefully, if there's enough time, the rolling of the bogie back under the locomotive.

And if that is not enough, the greasing of "B" end Bogie in readiness for returning to traffic!

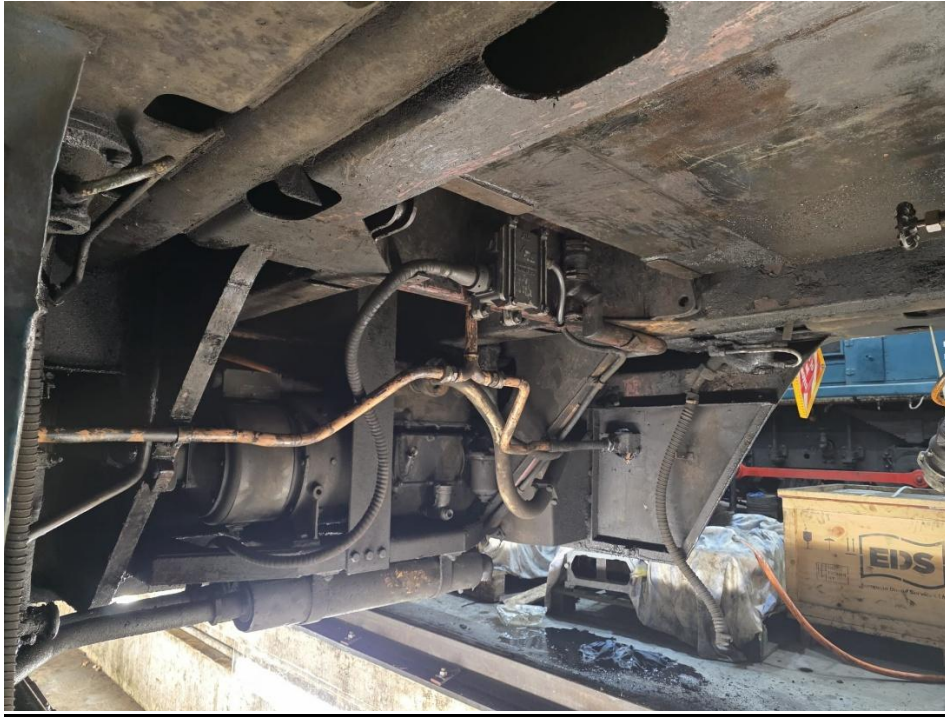
"A" end bogie, the object of so much attention is seen below.



Some nice close ups of the newly installed and new cardan shafts.



The results of the cleaning of the bogie area at "A" end.



Feedback from one of the Working Members present – “How many volunteers does it take to fit three cardan shafts ?” Answers on a postcard please.



Overall, a successful day, with the main job completed – the setting up of the bogie suspension and the fitting of and torquing up of the cardan shaft bolts.

And at the end of the day, D1062 was lifted and the bogie repositioned underneath.

An issue with the hand brake linkage not aligning correctly means that the locomotive needs to be lifted again in order to get the linkage in the exact position before D1062 is taken off the jacks.

Other tasks successfully completed – cleaning of the bogie area, some attention to the transmission sump panel which was nipped up, the greasing of “B” end bogie, some attention to an oil drain that has been noticed to have been weeping, and the completion of the painting of new battery boxes.

A Windscreen Wiper Motor Workshop Update

After successfully servicing 10 motors, we have had our first complete failure! As you can see, the inside bearing has completely disintegrated. Interestingly, the piston was completely dry. This will now be cleaned and stored, ready as a donor to others.

(I am not sure that Prince William & children will approve of their picture being used as a backdrop to this work!)



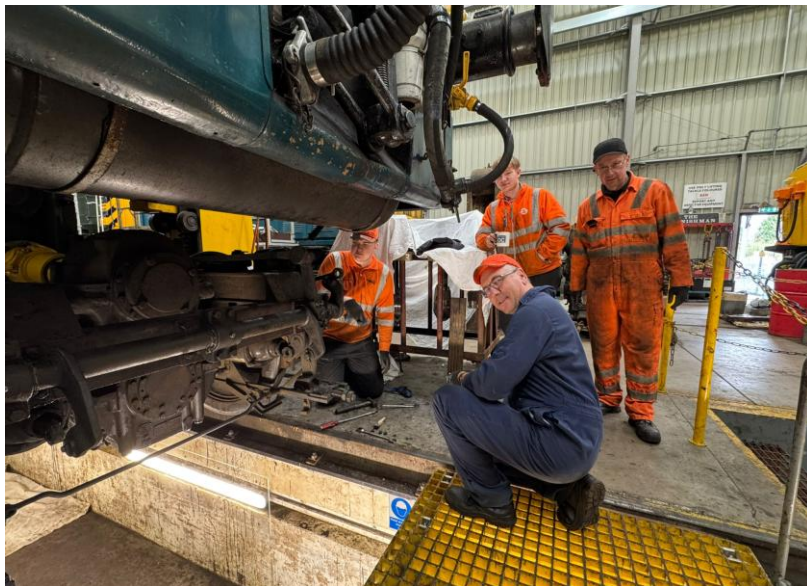
Friday 3rd April

The objectives for Friday 3rd – to lift D1062 and to try and sort out the handbrake linkage, and then when completed and the locomotive lowered, get the thrust brackets back in place, allowing the locomotive to be moved again. If time allows, further connecting up work will take place.

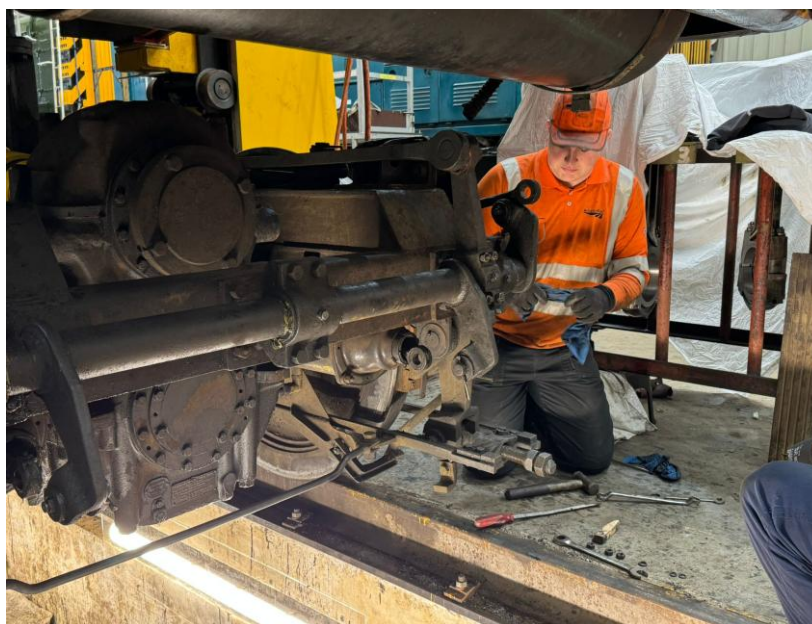
And after a bit of persuasion, the hand brake linkage was successfully refitted, allowing Courier to be lowered back onto its bogies and the weight taken off the jacks.

Following this, the links between the body and “B” bogie were removed and the reconnecting of “A” end commenced.

Trying to reconnect the rear thrust bracket turned out to be a challenge and a rethink was required. The thrust brackets were left positioned so that the locomotive can be moved at walking pace.



Working on the hand brake linkage...



Trying to work on the thrust brackets...



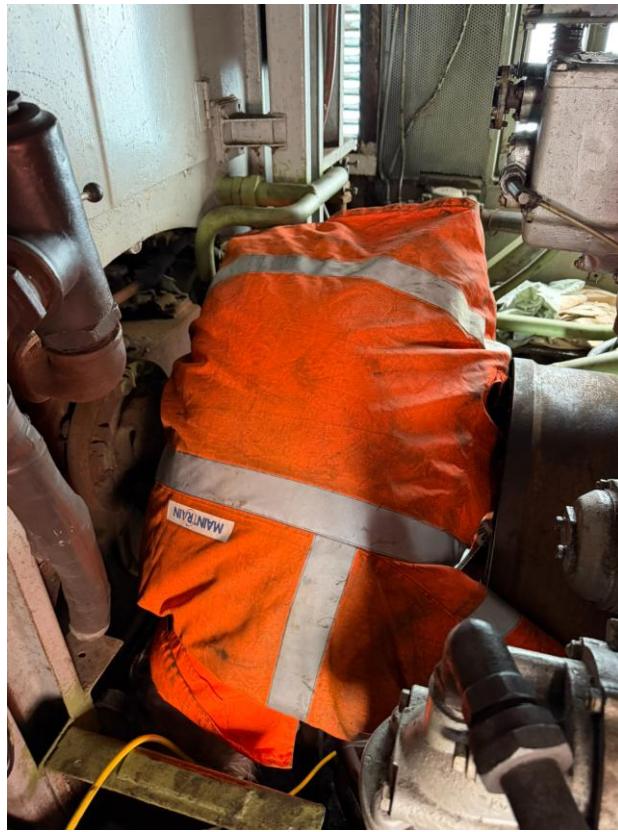
Saturday 4th April

The main objectives for Saturday 4th – the removal of the lifting brackets with continued connecting up, ahead of Sunday's shunt, along with some filming activity with the Severn Valley Team, recording the work that the WLA does in getting Courier ready for the up-and-coming Diesel Gala.

Whilst walking past D1013, Coop was seen busy working in new batter boxes, and an ingenious tool for lifting the individual batteries...



Mike T was busy inside D1048 trying to remove a rather important oil feeder hose that had split.



With some help from Marty.



Success !



Later, whilst removing the lifting brackets from D1062, the removed cardan shafts were prepared for storage.



A final picture to share, and another of Coop's ingenious ideas, Shaft Skates, to make moving around long & heavy cardan shafts much easier.



The end of day report from Darren – after a bit of persuasion, we managed to get the hand brake linkage back together again, allowing us to finally lower D1062 back onto its bogies and take the weight off the jacks. Following this, the links between the body and “B” bogie were removed and the connecting up of “A” end commenced.

We attempted to connect the rear thrust bracket, but this didn’t go according to plan, and a rethink is required on its refitting. The thrust brackets are positioned so that D1062 can be moved at walking pace. Also, when moved, the locomotive needs to be positioned at the far end of the consist, or on its own. It should not be shunted with any other vehicles in front of it. (This restriction also applies to D1013 at the moment also.)

D1062 is due off the pit tomorrow and so will be booked to be repositioned over the pit in a few weeks time.

Wednesday 8th April

To kick off, Phil Hiscocks has had a number of brake cylinder covers refurbished , and it looks like a great job has been done on them.



And Mike Tromand and Coop have been busy on the last batch of 16 battery boxes – and another great job done.



Saturday 11th April

Dave Hewell had a busy day transporting two turbo rotors from Bridgnorth to Intertek in Derby for NDT assessment – it helps that Dave lives near Derby 😊



Tuesday 14th April

Phil spend a few hours cleaning up the two window frames from D1013 and they are looking a lot better. The frames have now been sent away for repair – it is believed that they can be saved!



Wednesday 15th April

Coop and Krystian fitted 12 batteries back into D1013 – all that is needed now is some paint for the pluses and minuses.



Thursday 16th April

It was reported that D1062 is due to be shunted back into the TMD on Friday afternoon 17th with the plan being that on Saturday 18th the thrust brackets would be refitted. Some new equipment has been purchased and been delivered to help with this task. The other main outstanding task is the finishing off of the disconnecting of the air receivers – confirmation is still outstanding as to whether they need to be fully removed from the locomotive.

Saturday 18th April

Air cylinders were successfully removed, or made accessible, and those removed were wiped down and made ready for testing.



One of the thrust brackets was successfully refitted, following a small battle –this one be the less accessible of the two. The other is due to be refitted on Monday 20th and in theory should be easier!
The statistics – the first took one and a half days to refit, the second one took ten minutes to refit, plus about an hour to get the bolts in place.





Friday 24th April

The Weekly Report confirmed that that the thrust brackets had been successfully refitted, and that the Transmission to Intermediate Gear Box cardan shaft had also been reconnected. The shaft is tight enough for the locomotive to be able to be moved, following a rotational test, but the delivery of a new torque wrench is still outstanding for final torquing to be carried out.

It is also planned that on Saturday 25th, Paul M will visit the TMD to carry out the annual electrical checks on the locomotive.

Saturday 25th April

Our chairman has spent two days at Kidderminster painting the inside of "A" end cab of D1062 – great work inside, glorious weather outside – enjoy the work done and the views !

Let's start with D1062 and D1013 side by side in the sunshine.



And a nice general view of the driver's desk at "A" end.



Getting down to the detail...





A bit of both here, inside and outside interest.



And now looking outside...



A less than usual line up – Class 52, Clayton and Deltic!



Wednesday 29th April

Testing took place today of the air reservoirs – photographs by Paul Northcott.





Saturday 1st May (getting ahead with a sneak preview of next month!)

Successful Pre Heater Testing being carried out at Bridgnorth



Also on Saturday, D1013 received some further attention, and the bogie primary leaf springs were removed – exposing more areas for cleaning 😊

There are still four brake cylinders to remove plus one thrust bracket damper.

Momentum returns to Ranger's Bogie Overhaul.





Western Courier



New Years Day – Plymouth 1977

Nigel Painter

Nobody but a “Western” enthusiast can understand why we went to such extraordinary lengths to photograph, record and generally note the running of our favourite class of locomotive. Before the train-spotting bug really hit me in 1974, I nonchalantly rode behind the “Westerns” and the “Warships” without a second thought to the journeys to and from school between Exeter and Reading. However, well and truly bitten, on 1st January 1977 I found myself on the Paddington to Penzance Sleeper at 01.28 am at Swindon behind 50 041 bound for Plymouth. The reason behind this journey was to photograph the only two remaining running “Westerns” that had so far eluded me. One of these was “Prince” which continued to elude me until the final day of “Western” haulage, the other being our own “Western Ranger”. I arrived at Plymouth having spend and uncomfortable night being thrown out of my seat every time the train came to a stop. I keenly observed Laira in the pre-dawn and noted two “Western” silhouettes. This bodied well for my expedition.

After five hours and no sign of a “52”, I visited the Station Manager’s office in the hope of visiting Laira, but I was turned down because a minority of ill- behaved spotters had been found clambering all over the locomotives. He did tell me however that “Fusilier” and “Ranger” would be taking trains to Penzance. At about 14.00, the familiar sound of “Maybachs” filled the air and “Western Ranger” pulled into the central line between Platforms 4 and 5 and then shut down. I made my way across and took several photos.

The 07.00 Bradford Exchange to Penzance train arrived, hauled by 45 029 which was then replaced by “Ranger”. I set myself up for recording and shooting and waited for her to pull out. When she had departed, I got talking to another spotter, when he informed me that “Lady” had run through light engine earlier that morning. I had almost certainly been in the waiting room trying to keep warm.

Time passed slowly until “Fusilier” brought in the 17.45 Plymouth to Penzance stock. I proceeded to take photographs and then asked the driver if he could give me a warning when he was about to pull out as I

wished to record the event. As I was setting up everything ready, the news came through that "Lady" was to haul the 17.50 Plymouth to Cardiff train. I was going to make sure that I was on that! The distinctive shape of a "52" loomed out of the dark, but the head-code panel showed not "Lady" but "Sentinel". I was in the wrong place for a photograph of them side-by-side, but I didn't let that worry me and I waited for "Fusilier" to pull out. A short burst on the horn let me know and "Fusilier" blasted out of Plymouth so hard the driver had to brake to take the curve onto Saltash Bridge. I then dashed to the front of the Cardiff train and settled into the front compartment, quickly setting up my recording equipment.

At exactly 17.50, "Western Sentinel" opened up her engines, and we slowly pulled out of Plymouth, gradually increasing in speed and on towards Hemerdon. The throttle was suddenly opened right up and with sparks flying from one of the exhausts, we breasted the summit and cruised into Totnes.

We left three minutes late and D1022 hammered her way up Dainton as if it wasn't there, filling the air with the sound of MD655, and then into Newton Abbot. We had lost another minute by the time we left but by Dawlish we had gained half of it back.

Between Dawlish and Exeter, another minute and a half was made up and on departure from here, we were only a minute behind the scheduled time. Exeter was left behind as we crested the top of Whiteball and down past Wellington. The ride was so bad at this point that I am convinced the "magical" tonne if not reached was not very far away.

On arrival in Taunton, a companion who was leaving the train at this point asked the driver what speed we had been doing but he would only admit to a modest "80".

After 5½ minutes, dead on time, the train pulled out of Taunton on the non-stop journey to Bristol Temple Meads, which proved to be a bit of an anticlimax after the previous excitement, and yet the whole journey was remarkable in that D1022's last intermediate repair had been in December 1972.

The arrival at Bristol was 2 minutes early, a quite remarkable and unforgettable run. It was also unforgettable in another way. I was so busy photographing "Sentinel" that I missed my connection back to Swindon and had to wait another three hours for a train.

All in all, it was a great day.

After this, "Sentinel" was often seen hammering through Swindon in a Sunday with the 14.30 Paddington to Penzance train, with me, camera on tripod, praying for the light to stay just a little longer. I miss those days when total strangers would meet me on a station platform and discuss where they had seen their last "Western".

My hearty thanks to all at the SVR and the WLA for keeping the "Westerns" rolling and not letting them become a thing of the past.

Sales Team Update

First of all, the results of the 2026 WLA Lottery...

Sixty-two tickets were sold, generating receipts of £1,550 of which 50% / £775 goes towards the upkeep of our three locomotives and £775 being shared between our three winners who were:-

- First prize of £465 to Mark Simmons Jenkins
- Second prize of £193.75 to Christopher Warner
- Third Prize of £116.25 to Caroline Norledge

Congratulations to our winners and commiserations if you were unlucky.

We took the Sales stand to the recent Great Central Railway Spring Diesel Gala and enjoyed good weather and hydraulic action from Hymek D7018 which went right by the stand several times. The event was extremely successful with takings of £1,148 for the one day we were in attendance, and we will certainly attend again next year.

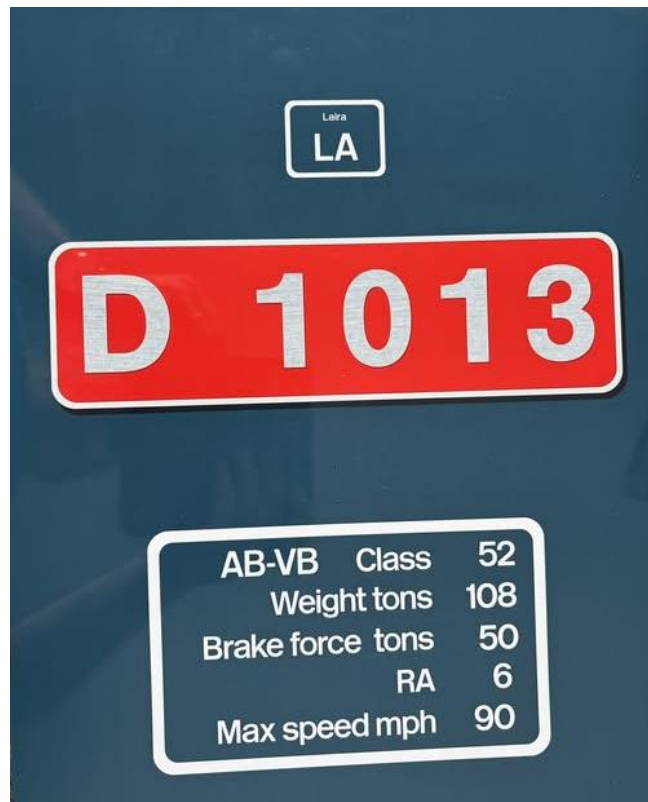
The GCR is looking forward to having a Western visit when they join up with the Northern section so let's make sure it's one of ours!

As you all know, next year marks 50 years since the end of Western operation on BR and thanks to a kind donation, we now have two Dapol OO-gauge models of the locomotives used on the Final Western Tribute railtour on 26th February 1977. D1013 Western Ranger and D1023 Western Fusilier are in the liveries they carried for this last railtour, as shown in the pictures and will be the first prize in our Autumn Raffle. Unless that is one of our members wants to grab them first. In an auction restricted to WLA members, these two superb models could be yours. Please send your bid to sales@westernlocomotives.com by Wednesday 13th May and if successful you could pick them up at the SVR Spring Diesel Gala. There is a reserve of £500 on the two locos which is the notional value as the raffle prize.





Talking of the Western Tribute Railtour reminds me that it is already fifty years since Ranger was smartened up to become the official railtour loco including the unique red backed name and numberplates. So, we will be launching a range of merchandise at the Gala to celebrate this livery. There are data panels and name and numberplate fridge magnets which are pictured and there will also be mugs. If you can't make it to the Gala these items will be added to the online store.





We have already sold fifty copies of the late Steve Marshall's book *The Demise of the Diesel Hydraulics* and copies will be available at the Gala along with a wide selection of Western and Hydraulic books plus second hand books if you're looking for a bargain.

Talking of second hand books reminds me that, as always, we would be delighted to receive any diesel books, models or memorabilia that you no longer want to keep and as you know all of the profit from our Sales activities goes towards our three locos. Look forward to seeing many of you at the Gala and thanks for your support.

And let's not forget, it is Spring Raffle Time, with a fantastic 1st Prize of £500 CASH! Get your tickets now at [WLA SPRING RAFFLE 2026 - single ticket - Western Locomotive Association](#)

WLA SPRING RAFFLE 2026 0001



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Promoter: WLA, c/o 54 West Street, Oldland Common, Bristol, BS30 9QS

Registered with Derby City Council, reg. no. 1206

Printed by www.raffleticketsonline.co.uk

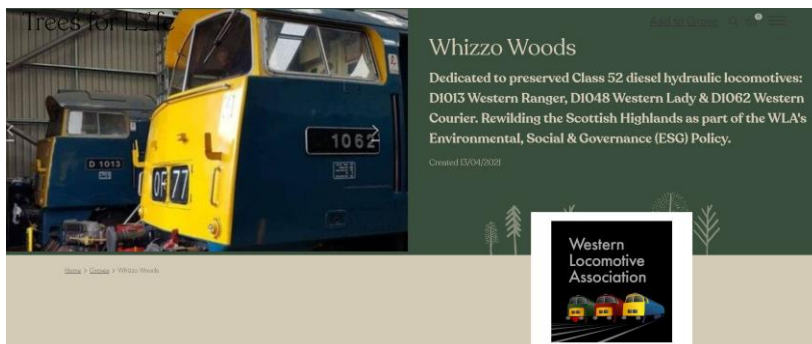
Ticket Price £5.00

Whizzo Woods

At the end of January, we have **565 trees** in Whizzo Woods, another small 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.**

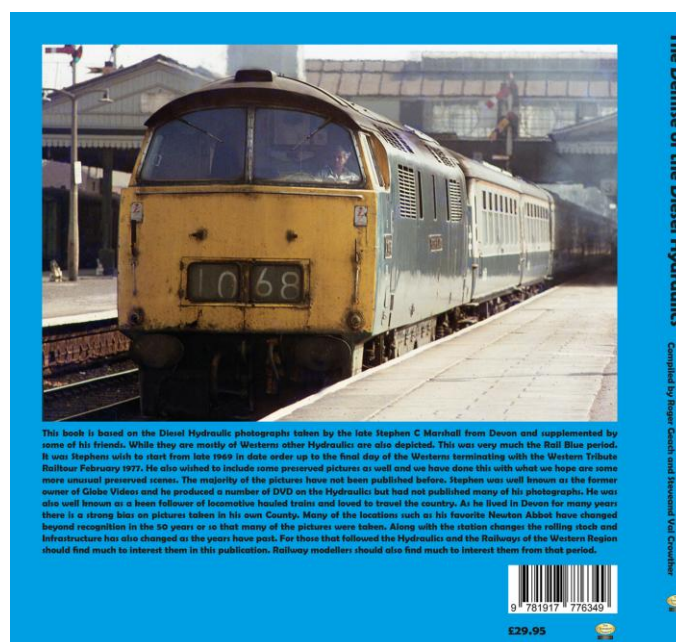
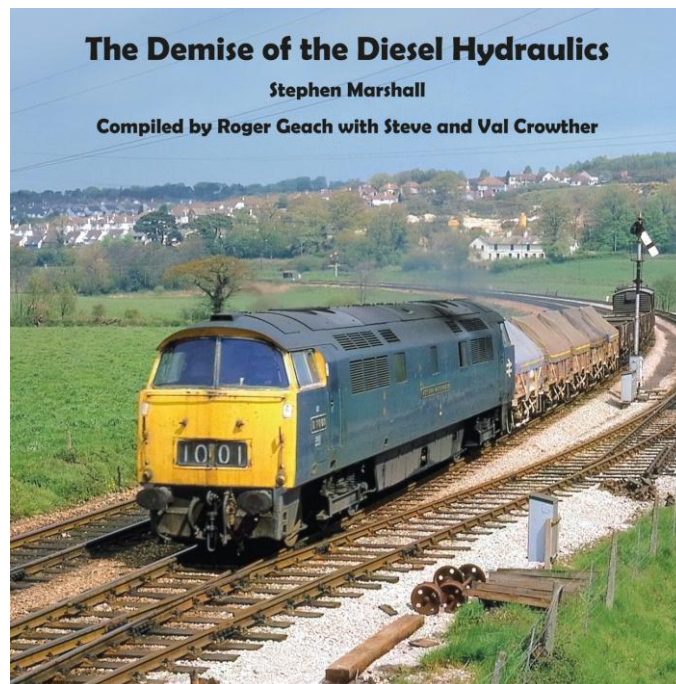
We are also always looking for new “Working Members” to come and help us with our work on the locomotives, and with all of the other essential associated work carried out both Bridgnorth and Kidderminster – no specific skills are required to help, just enthusiasm and a good sense of humour. Of course,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

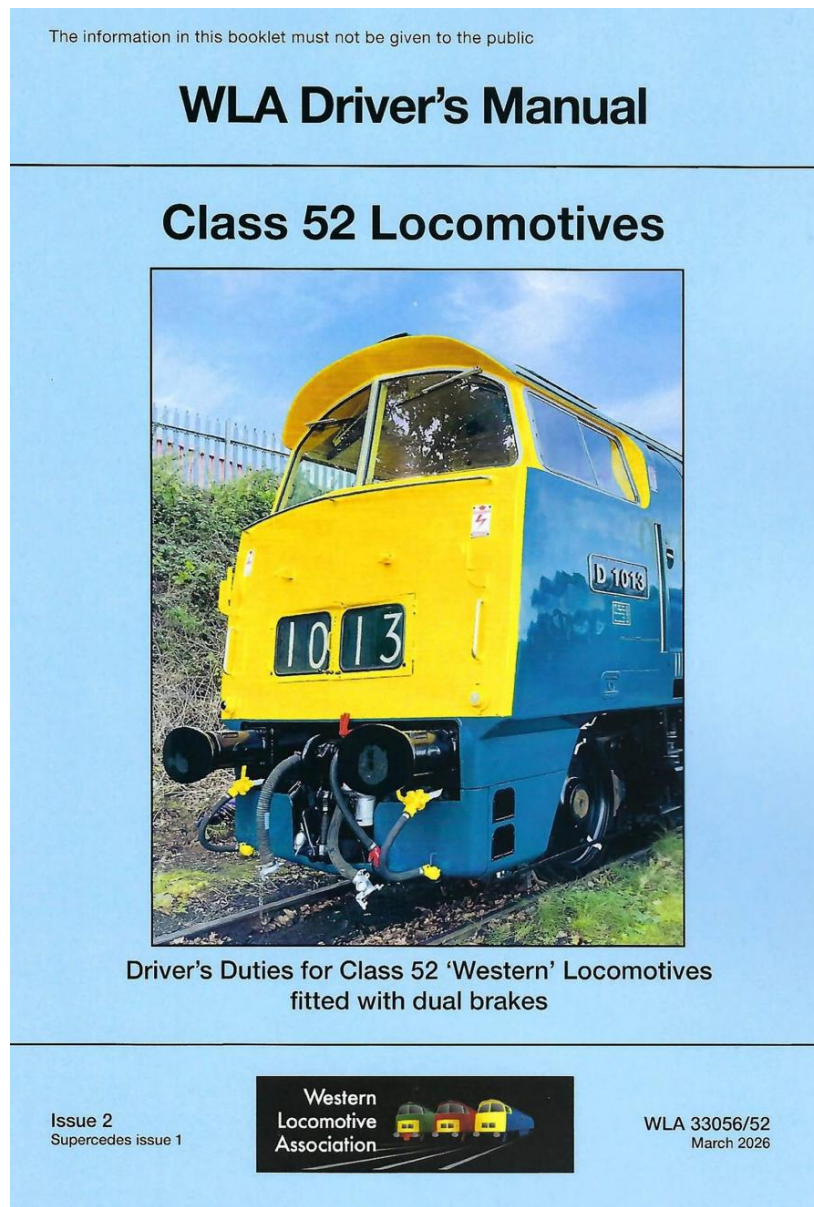
Available now, and flying off the shelves, and available at [The Demise of the Diesel Hydraulics by Stephen Marshall - Western Locomotive Association](#)

The Demise of the Diesel Hydraulics by Steve Marshall.

Sadly, Steve recently passed away before completing his book and publishing, so the book has been completed by Roger Geach & Steve and Val Crowther and is now a must have for your collection. Steve's favourite Western was D1048 Western Lady and was planning to donate the proceeds of the book to Lady's Bodywork Restoration Appeal, however, Steve's wife Hilda has already made a substantial donation to the appeal in Steve's memory for which we are so grateful.



If you haven't purchased yours yet...



Based on the original British rail Driver's Guide, and updated for modern day operation, this A5 size comprehensive booklet is a must-have for any Class 52 enthusiast seeking a deeper understanding of these iconic diesel hydraulic locomotives.

Providing a fascinating insight into the duties and responsibilities of a Class 52 driver, the guide explains the procedures, systems and operational practices associated with these powerful machines.

Far more than just an enthusiast's handbook, this publication also serves as the official manual for the Class 52 Driver, Secondman or Trainee, making it an invaluable reference for those involved in operating or studying the locomotive.

With 48 pages packed full of detailed information, illustrations and photographs, this booklet offers both technical knowledge and historical interest in one compact volume.

Now available from [WLA Driver's Manual for Class 52 Locomotives - Western Locomotive Association](#)

Media Coverage

Trackside – May 2026

Why I volunteer...

Paul Finch, Vice Chairman, Western Locomotive Association

It was the mid-1970s and I was heading home from school one day when our car was stopped at the Swindon Lane level crossing in Cheltenham. I jumped out to see what was about to go past.

The rails began to hum and whistle and then a 'Western' diesel hydraulic roared past, heading south with a very late running train of china clay empties.

What a sound! What a magnificent looking machine! And what a superb name it had: *Western Glory*!

It was the first 'Western' I'd seen and, in that instant, I was hooked.

Then, a week later, as my DMU pulled into Gloucester Eastgate station, there, waiting to leave, was my second 'Western'. *Western Queen's* departure was 'spirited' to say the least.

I was determined from that point to see all remaining operational 'Westerns'. But their demise was already well underway. I made several visits to Swindon Works where they were being dismantled but this was not the way to see them and it isn't a memory to dwell on.

Monday 14 July 1975 was a 'hobby day', a school-approved day to pursue our passions and one that set the seed for why I volunteer today. Together with a group of likeminded friends, I went to Didcot, then Paddington ('copping' *Western Pathfinder* and *Western Sultan*) before heading on a spotting jaunt across London. Returning to Paddington at rush hour, there were *Western Hussar*, *Western Prince*, *Western Sultan* and *Western Renown*. The journey home also yielded *Western Cavalier*, *Western Lancer* and *Western Duke*. Now that was a memorable day.

Soon it was all over: the final 'Western Tribute' tour ran on 26 February 1977.

The class had gone after just 15 years of service, but I did manage to clear them all – No. D1053 *Western Patriarch* was my last.

Life – a career and raising a family – took over and railways took a back seat. But the hydraulics were never forgotten.

Interest was gradually reignited, culminating in a 'Driver Footplate Experience' at the Severn Valley Railway with No. D1062 *Western Courier* in 2018. I was hooked... again!

I quickly became an SVR volunteer and then started my support of the Western Locomotive Association, by helping out on the sales stands at galas and whenever the WLA went on its travels.

The WLA not only owns No. D1062 but No. D1013 *Western Ranger* and, since 2023, No. D1048 *Western Lady*.

For an IT professional used to working in clinical computer-based environments, getting to know the insides of these



locomotives has been great fun. I've learnt all about Maybach MD655 V12 diesel engines and Voith hydraulic transmission. Our maintenance schedules mean that there are plenty of opportunities to work on these locomotives and it continues to be an incredible experience.

Such was my urge to tell everybody about the WLA that, since 2020, I've been its Publicity Officer. Along with getting my hands dirty, I actively record all that we do and share this in our twice-yearly

🔊 What a sound! What a magnificent looking machine! And what a superb name 🗣️

Western Courier magazine, in our monthly e-newsletters for members, and to the wider railway press as well. If that wasn't enough, I've since joined the Board of Directors as Vice Chairman.

Every week, we descend on Kidderminster and Bridgnorth to work on our locomotives, overhauling parts and spares as well as, during the operating season, manning and supporting the locomotives as they go about their duties.

We also talk to the public about what we do, sharing our passion for 'Westerns', while doing all we can to raise funds.

After all, it's the money that we raise that enables us to keep the 'Western' dream alive! ■

WESTERN LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION

◆ More than £28,000 is being invested in manufacturing new Cardan shafts for No. D1013 *Western Ranger*. The shafts will allow a set earmarked for No. D1013 to be fitted to No. D1062 *Western Courier*'s 'A-end' bogie, which is to be lifted at Kidderminster. *Western Ranger* is to receive its new shafts in approximately four months' time.

Severn Valley Railway News – Running Dates & Events

Our Operating Days for the 2026 Operating Season are published as follows:-

Sunday	24-May	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Monday	25-May	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Tuesday	26-May	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Wednesday	27-May	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Thursday	28-May	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Friday	29-May	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Friday	05-Jun	Private Diesel Footplate Experience
Saturday	13-Jun	Table C- S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Sunday	14-Jun	Table B S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Friday	26-Jun	Diesel Footplate Experience
Friday	03-Jul	Diesel Footplate Experience
Tuesday	21-Jul	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Wednesday	22-Jul	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Thursday	23-Jul	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Saturday	25-Jul	Table D S3 Diagram (Two Return Trips)
Sunday	26-Jul	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Tuesday	11-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Wednesday	12-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Thursday	13-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Friday	14-Aug	Diesel Footplate Experience
Saturday	15-Aug	Table D S3 Diagram (Two Return Trips)
Sunday	16-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Tuesday	25-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Wednesday	26-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Thursday	27-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Saturday	29-Aug	Table D S3 Diagram (Two Return Trips)
Sunday	30-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Monday	31-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)
Thursday	01-Oct	Autumn Diesel Festival
Friday	02-Oct	Autumn Diesel Festival
Saturday	03-Oct	Autumn Diesel Festival
Sunday	04-Oct	Autumn Diesel Festival

Member's Forum & Gallery

"Memories"

Thanks to Peter Stokes for sharing his archive memories of our locomotives, and others, in BR days and in the early days of preservation.

Starting with D1022 Western Sentinel, seen at Swindon in May of 1977 😞 and our own Western Ranger at Kingswear also in May of 1977.



A sad picture of D1056 Western Sultan at Swindon...



And happier days, D1013 Western Ranger at Bewdley with Derek Wright seen in the centre of the three.



D1062 Western Courier is seen at Hampton Loade, a location very close to Peter's heart.



D1013 western Ranger is seen entering Hampton Loade, deputising for a failed Black 5.



And I am delighted to be able to share some more of Wilfred Rikard's memories, and I will continue to do so over the next few months.

D1002 Western Explorer is seen powering through Tavistock Junction with a morning train Plymouth to Liverpool in June 1969.



D1048 Western Lady is seen descending Hemerdon Bank towards Tavistock Junction with an engineer's train in July 1969.



D1037 Western Empress is seen ascending Hemerdon Bank with a train for Liverpool from Plymouth in September 1969.



D1038 Western Sovereign is seen on the jacks at Laira TMD in August 1970.



5695 is hauling withdrawn locos 4007, D1018 Western Buccaneer & D1019 Western Challenger past Crabtree, Plymouth enroute to Swindon on 28th July 1973.



In Totnes, 1821 is waiting at the platform with an unidentified Western on the Kensington Olympia Motorail for St Austell passing through 6th August 1973.



D1013 Western Ranger waits at Penzance with the overnight non-sleeper for Paddington 22nd February 1977.



An unidentified Western is seen passing along the seawall towards Teignmouth with a train for Paignton in July 1972.



Closing Notes and Book Ends

Working Members caught hard at work - Alison & Dave Hewell in the “naughty corner” – busy scraping underneath “A” end of D1062 – I assume Mr Hewell was hiding behind the camera.



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 June

<https://westernlocomotives.com/>

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

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