



Western Locomotive Association e-Newsletter – August 2026

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

Well July seems to have passed in a bit of a blur, a busy month, starting with a Driver Footplate Experience on Friday 3rd July, followed by a WLA Board Meeting on Wednesday 8th July, a WLA Committee Meeting on Saturday 11th July, and ending with a 5-day operating stint from Tuesday 22nd to Thursday 24th and Saturday 25th and Sunday 26th July. Unfortunately, D1062 failed towards the end of the DFE on 3rd July with an electrical fault, but our superb team of experts quickly identified the fault, and it was rectified ahead of our next operating day. **A massive thank you to them.** Read on to learn more about what happened.

Also, some **BIG NEWS** has just been announced regarding an event scheduled in September - again, read on and find out more on Page 4!

To start, a nice picture of a side of Westerns - this picture was taken early in the morning on Friday 3rd July as D1062 Western Courier was being preheated prior to engines being started for the day's Driver Footplate Experience. Seen in the company of the DTG's D1015 Western Champion.



D1062 is then seen an hour later reversing onto the stock for the Driver Footplate Experience at Kidderminster and then again at midday at Bridgnorth in a classic view. It was as can be seen a beautiful day.



Unfortunately, as mentioned, on the final southbound trip from Bridgnorth to Kidderminster, with Drivers 7 & 8 in the cab, the locomotive was failed with an electrical fault and had to be rescued by Hagley Hall. Seen below on “The Naughty Step” having been returned to Kidderminster under steam power.



A team were scheduled to investigate the electrical fault on Wednesday 8th July.

Before we move on, **congratulations** to Mark Perry – who passed out as Second Man on Wednesday 22nd July, seen below on the previous day “In Training” with Darren in “The Chair” and Josh as Second Man.



Now for some **BIG NEWS...**

We are delighted to announce that we are planning a Members Only exclusive OBBO on Thursday 10th September.

The Western Memorial OBBO Tour

To celebrate the lives of WLA members who made significant contributions to the WLA in recent years - namely the late Greg Heathcliffe, Henry Coates and Chris Shields - we are delighted to announce a very special Western Memorial Observation Saloon Tour, for WLA members only.

Working with the Severn Valley Railway, we have provisionally booked D1062 Western Courier to haul a single GWR Observation Saloon, creating an exclusive opportunity for a day out behind a "Thousand", with no more than 23 guests.

The tour will begin and end at Kidderminster, with plans for each guest to have the opportunity to enjoy a cab ride during the day (subject to SVR approval, age restrictions and accessibility requirements). Your ticket will also include a full buffet lunch, together with tea, coffee and biscuits throughout the day.

We're aiming to complete three return trips behind D1062—providing almost 100 miles of "Thousand" haulage through the stunning scenery of the Severn Valley.

Ticket prices are expected to be around £180 per person. Sales will open as soon as the remaining details have been agreed with the Severn Valley Railway.

This promises to be a truly memorable day, honouring three much-missed members whilst enjoying one of Britain's finest diesel hydraulic locomotives in preservation.

Bookings opening soon, WLA members will be notified by email as soon as tickets are available to book online! It will be a case of **First Come, First Served** – so look out for our notification.

See below a picture of what to expect from a previous OBBO Tour.



Some more **BIG NEWS...**

WLA Strengthens Engineering Team

The WLA has strengthened its engineering team by creating the new position of **Assistant Engineering Co-ordinator** on its Management Committee and has appointed one of its younger working members, **Jack Baldwin**, to the role.

Jack is well known on the Severn Valley Railway, having led the successful Hydro Shunter Project as Project Team Leader. His achievements have been recognised with several prestigious awards, including Standing Ovation Awards: Apprentice of the Year 2023, Heritage Alliance: Young Heritage Hero 2025, and Heritage Railway Association: Highly Commended Rising Star 2026. Jack currently works for West Midlands Trains as a Reliability Technician, where he has gained extensive experience in maintenance, fault finding and repairs, particularly in electrical systems. His knowledge and expertise will further strengthen this important area of the WLA's engineering capability. The new position has been created primarily to support Engineering Co-ordinator Darren Shelmerdine, whose role has become increasingly demanding due to the ongoing maintenance programme for D1062 and the extensive locomotive and bogie overhaul of D1013.

Ahead of the current running season, D1062 underwent a significant maintenance programme. This included a bogie lift at "A" end to rectify an issue with an equalising beam and the replacement of a complete set of bogie cardan shafts. Since then, further work has been completed to resolve two earthing faults associated with the cab heaters and the transmission solenoid valve, also at "A" end. Progress on D1013 continues to be encouraging. The overhaul of "B" end bogie is now largely complete, while work on "A" end bogie is around halfway through. Following the successful completion of its non-destructive testing (NDT), reassembly is now underway. Although considerable work remains to complete the locomotive overhaul itself, the aim is to return D1013 to service in time to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the last Western-hauled British Rail service in 2027.

WLA Chairman Roger Smith welcomed the appointment, commenting that he was delighted with the proposal to create the new role which received unanimous support from both the Board and the Management Committee.

"Jack has already demonstrated his commitment and ability through his outstanding achievements, and I am confident that his Young Heritage Hero award will prove to be just the beginning. I believe he will become one of our own Western Heroes for the future."





Something else we would like to encourage you ALL to do is to sign up to “easyfundraising” – it’s free to do, costs you absolutely nothing, and as many, many retailers participate, every time you purchase something on-line with a signed-up retailer, the WLA receive a donation.

All you have to do is sign up online at [Support a Good Cause | Easyfundraising](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) (<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk>)

Select your cause...

A screenshot of the easyfundraising website's search interface. At the top, the "easyfundraising" logo is on the left, and navigation links "How it works", "Find a cause", "Register a cause", "Register a business", "Log in", and "Sign up" are on the right. Below the navigation bar, there is a search section with a text input field containing "Western Locomotive Association", a small "X" icon to clear the text, a second text input field with the placeholder "All postcodes and locations", and a yellow "Search cause" button. Below the search fields, it says "1 cause". A horizontal line separates this from the search results. The first result is for the "Western Locomotive Association", which includes a small logo, the text "12 supporters", "£86.25 raised", and a location pin icon followed by "Bridgnorth, Shropshire".

And we will start receiving donations whenever you spend, it couldn’t be easier. A big thank you to all of you that have already signed up, it is really starting to make a difference.

A teal-colored banner for the Western Locomotive Association. On the left, the text "Earn cashback for Western Locomotive Association" is in white. Below it, a location pin icon is followed by "Bridgnorth, Shropshire". Further down, "£86.25 raised" is displayed in white, with "12 supporters" in smaller text below it. A yellow button with the text "Start raising free donations today" is positioned below the fundraising totals. At the bottom left, in small white text, it says "Join thousands of others raising for good causes". On the right side of the banner, there is a white rounded rectangle containing a black and white image of a steam locomotive. Below the image, the text "D1013 D1062" and "Western Locomotive Association" is written in white.

And a final reminder – it's not too late to order your own copy of a Western Trilogy – there are a few copies left, numbered with the Western of your choice (if still available.)



Western Trilogy is a superb, ready mounted A3 print of our three WLA locomotives – Western Ranger, Western Lady and Western Courier, standing in front of the carriage shed at the Autumn 2024 Diesel Gala. Digitally printed from the original painted by Mike Tromans who is project lead for D1048.

A limited edition of just seventy-four prints will be produced, and you can choose a locomotive from D1000 to D1073 which Mike will add to the print and sign. Over half of the class have already been taken so please email miketromans@yahoo.com before ordering to check which locomotive numbers are still available.

To end this introduction, Old and New at Kidderminster Town, and memories of the long hot summer of 1976, although I believe the records of that year are now being broken - The DTG's D1015 Western Champion, seen awaiting the green light to go and rescue a failed steam locomotive, the DEPG's Hymek ready and waiting for a pickup and delivery onto its next gala appearance at The GWSR Diesel Gala, the "new" signal gantry at the end of the newly lengthened platform at Kidderminster Town, and perhaps a message to us all – "Beware of Trains!"



In this e-Newsletter

Features in this e-Newsletter include the following:

- News from The Chair.
- D1013 Western Ranger & D1048 Western Lady – A Progress Update – deferred this month.
- 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

With another hot month behind us, it's hard not to be reminded of that long, hot summer of 1976 with the remaining "Thousands" soldiering on through the heat with their work-stained bodies, the result of a BR ban on the use of washing plants - which didn't do much for the paintwork when they were working either! Imagine that 50 years ago – at least today D1062 still looks immaculate, almost ex-works (so long as you don't look too closely!) It is in fact due for a repaint but will at least receive some TLC on the bodywork side of things this winter, otherwise it really will begin to look like one of those hard-working weather-beaten Westerns from half a century ago!

Anyway, another busy month with a Board Meeting taking place on the 8th July, followed by a Management Committee Meeting on the 11th July. Halfway through the year and I'm pleased to report that the WLA has strengthened its financial position thanks to the continued generosity of our supporters through sales, donations and memberships (now close to our current target of 660).

The bogie project for D1013 is progressing well. The recent non-destructive testing (NDT) confirmed that there are no cracks in "A" end bogie frames, allowing us to move on to the rebuilding phase, starting off with the torque reaction arms and rubbers, which have now been put back in place, thanks to Darren and his team.

A special thanks to Robin Jones, assisted by Paul Medley, who resolved the two recent earthing faults on D1062, which made D1062 inoperable with the Control Circuit Breaker (CCB) tripping out whilst on a DFE early in the month, as you've probably all heard by now! This is the first time that one of our Westerns has failed in section since D1013 failed outside Bewdley and had to be rescued by A4 Union of South Africa some 20 years ago. Needless to say, D1013 was back up and running by the time it reached Kidderminster, so not a complete failure in the end! The fault on D1062 was traced to the cab heaters and transmission solenoid valve at "A" end. Apparently, it's not so bad with just one earthing fault but once you get two faults they conspire against you!

Following on from the Board and Committee Meetings, I'm pleased to report that we have agreed to strengthen our engineering team with a new position of "Assistant Engineering Co-ordinator" to help support Darren with his role as "Engineering Co-ordinator". As most of us will be aware, Darren's role has been increasingly demanding with the ongoing maintenance on D1062 and the extensive locomotive and bogie overhaul for D1013. The good news here is that one of our younger working members, Jack Baldwin has agreed to step into the new role, subject to the usual vote at the next AGM. Jack is well known on the Severn Valley Railway, having led the successful Hydro Shunter Project as Project Team Leader. His achievements have been recognised with several prestigious awards, including Standing Ovation Awards: Apprentice of the Year 2023, Heritage Alliance: Young Heritage Hero 2025, and Heritage Railway Association: Highly Commended Rising Star 2026. Jack currently works for West Midlands Trains as a Reliability Technician, where he has gained extensive experience in maintenance, fault finding and repairs, particularly in electrical systems. His knowledge and expertise will further strengthen this important area of the WLA's engineering capability.

I am sure you will all join me in giving Jack a very warm welcome to the team. We're delighted to have him on board and I'm confident he'll play a key role in helping us to keep our Westerns soldiering on for many more years to come - thank you!

See you on the Valley!

Roger Smith
Chairman



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

Let's start with a quick catch up from last month...

Andy Royle has shared the following pictures from Saturday 27th June when D1062 was at the front of two return trips on the Severn Valley Railway – in Andy's words - by both a Western & a Hymek & not to be missed!





Wednesday 1st July

D1062 was serviced by Mark Perry and other Working Members ahead of the DFE scheduled for Friday 3rd July. All oils were checked and topped up as needed. Coolant was also topped up – so will need checking on the day as it will expand and overflow! The overspill barrel was emptied in preparation of this, and a spare barrel also placed in the boiler room. Engines were primed and barred over and the fuel strainer removed and cleaned. Batteries were charged.

Krystian, Jack and Neil made some significant progress on D1013's bogie – two bolts were removed from each of the torque reaction arms, the remaining bolts were cracked ready for later removal. Tabs, Tab Locking Bolts & Washers were also removed and safely stored.

Torque reaction arms can now be removed and the surrounding areas prepared for NDT Testing – scheduled for Wednesday 8th July.





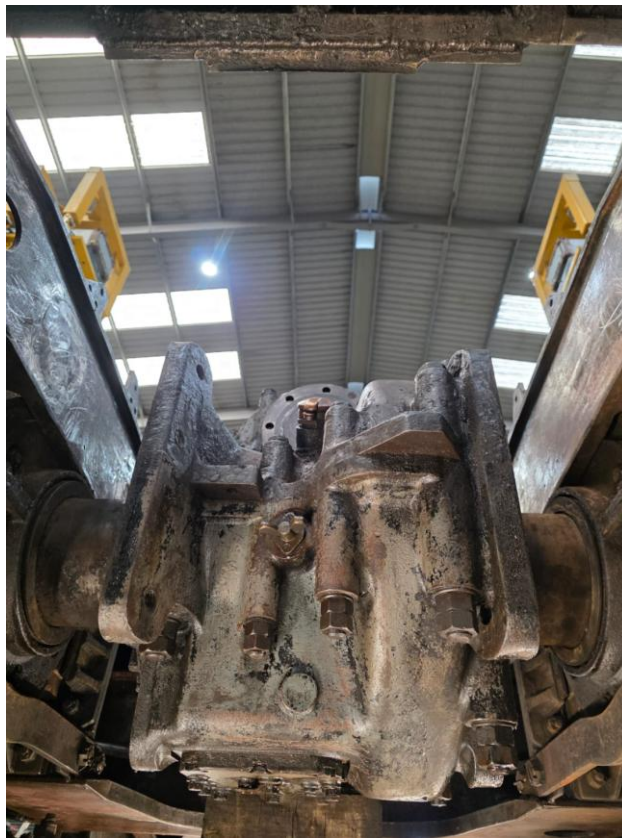
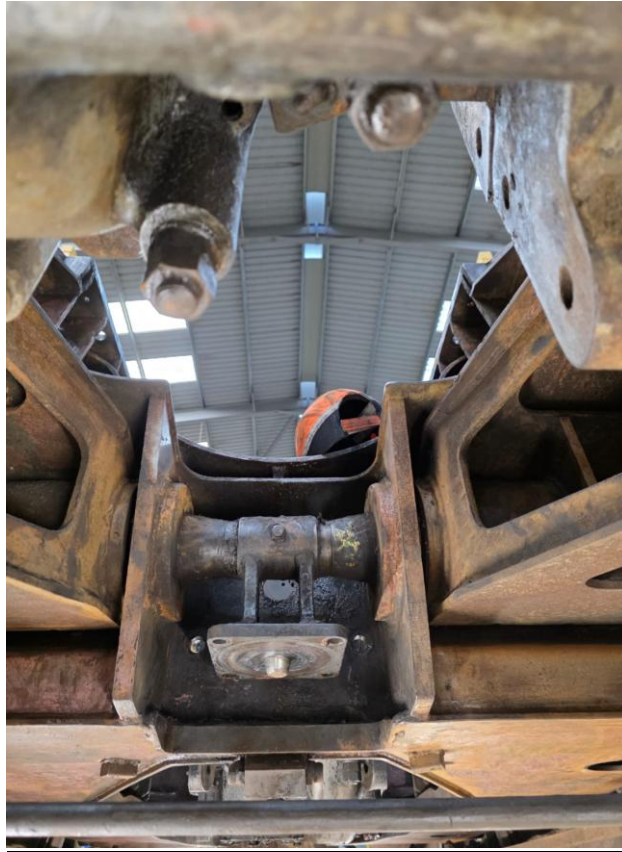
Thursday 2nd July

Two sets of Torque Reaction Arms were removed along with the Centre Torque Frame. Accessible areas seen in the following pictures now need a good clean – some areas were cleaned on the day and the loose rust needs hoovering.





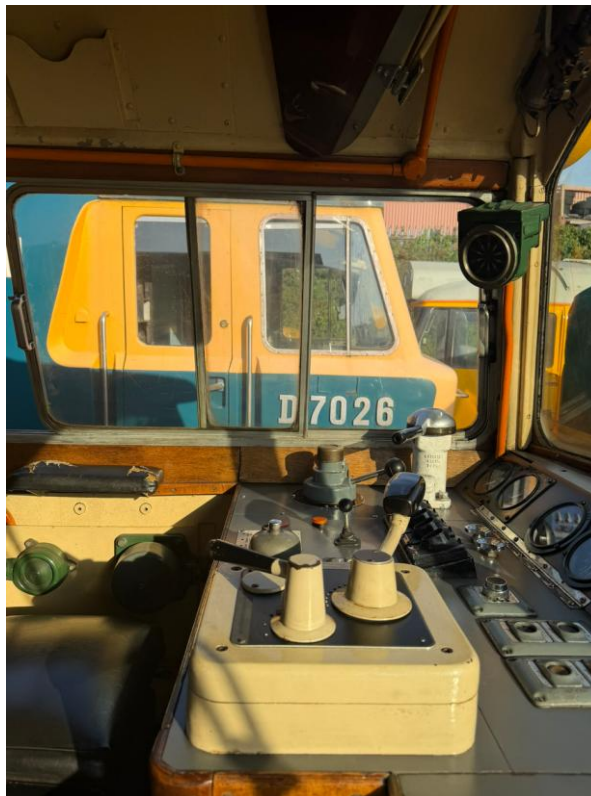
Spot the Bump Cap!





Friday 3rd July – Diesel Footplate Experience

Ahead of eight lucky guests joining us to experience the thrill of driving a Class 52, the cabs are given a good clean, the cleaning work being overlooked by Hymek D7026 ?



A superb line up at Kidderminster, Westerns and Hymeks taking us back to the Western Region in the late 60s and early 70s – although maybe the combination of liveries is a little out of sync.



D1062 is seen being pre-heated prior to engines being started.



Two Westerns – Two Hymeks, what is there not to like.



Engines started.



Reversing onto stock at Kidderminster station.



Seen later at Bridgnorth.



Running round for the return trip.



Certificates for the 1st four lucky drivers.





Happy Guests at the end of a super morning.



During the lunchtime TMD Tour, the DTG Team were busy at work on the overhaul of Hymek D7029's bogie, D1013 Western Ranger just visible in the background.



Time for the afternoon DFE and unfortunately, D1062 came to a halt with an electrical fault – seen here having come to a stop south of Hampton Loade.



And a view not too many have seen, from the cab of D1062, Hagley Hall hard at work returning the locomotive to Kidderminster.



Spirits remained high as a great day was had by all, as can be seen as the group gather back at Kidderminster, a little later in the day than originally planned.

Certificates were presented and of course the two drivers (well 1½) will be invited back to complete their experience.





Last picture of the day, and D1062 Western Courier seen in the twilight at Kidderminster after an eventful end to the Footplate Experience.



The same picture but with Driver and Host !



Saturday 4th July

Preparations continued for the up-and-coming NDT Testing – two sets of Torque Reaction Arms still need to be cleaned; the third arm still needs removing.

The recently removed block also required cleaning.



Tuesday 7th July

A good job completed on the block!



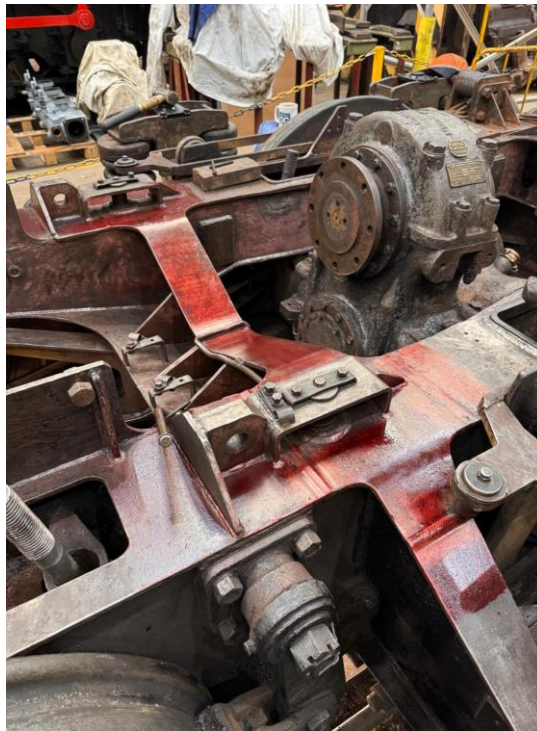
And other components now ready for NDT Testing....



Wednesday 8th July

NDT Testing was successfully carried out.

The other great news was that Robin Jones and Team managed to trace one of the negative faults on D1062 to the cab heater foot warmer element which was short circuiting to earth. The Negative Bus Bar is now clear but the 52s and 8s are still earthing – so further investigation will take place on Saturday and fingers crossed, we will be able to establish what has inadvertently energising the cab heaters.





Friday 10th July

The plan for Friday 10th – to shim No1 and No 2 Torque Reaction Arms and Trunnions – Jobs successfully completed and are now ready for refitting, the Block for No 2 Torque Reaction Arm was successfully refitted.





Saturday 11th July – WLA Committee Meeting

The Committee Team held a successful Quarterly Committee Meeting in the relative “cool” of Kidderminster Railway Museum – 8 members present in person, others connecting remotely via Zoom.

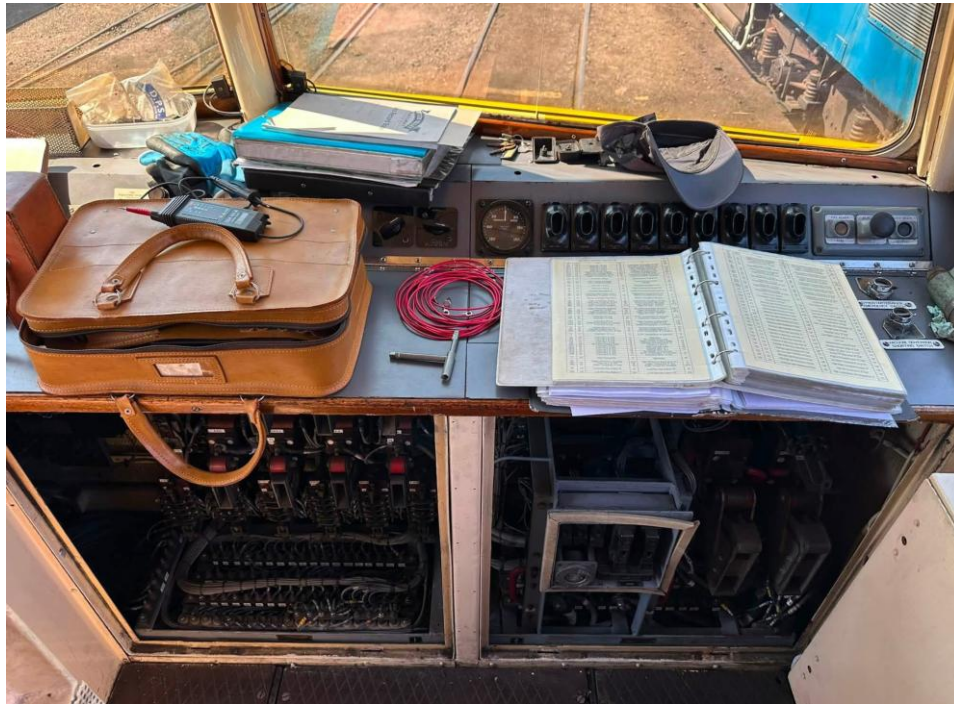


At the end of the meeting, the raffle was drawn for the donated model of D1062 Western Courier, in Maroon Livery with Half yellow ends.



At the same time, Robin was continuing to investigate the faults on D1062, with the good news reaching the meeting that the locomotive was being pre-heated and then engines started!

All issues have been identified and addressed, and the locomotive is ready for a return to traffic - "D1062 is good for traffic following completion of electrical repairs. The "A" end transmission reverse solenoid had failed, resulting in a direct short circuit between train wire 2 (reversing cable from the direction controller) and locomotive frame. A spare solenoid was fitted."



D1062 seen after repairs completed.



Not to be left out, a couple of shos of D1013 inside the TMD awaiting attention – and now the focus again with the return to traffic of D1062.



And to end the day, some hydraulic scenes at Kidderminster, although it was feeling a bit like the summer of 1976 – with the DTG's D1015 Western Champion in the company of the DEPG's D7018.



A final two to bring this day to an end.



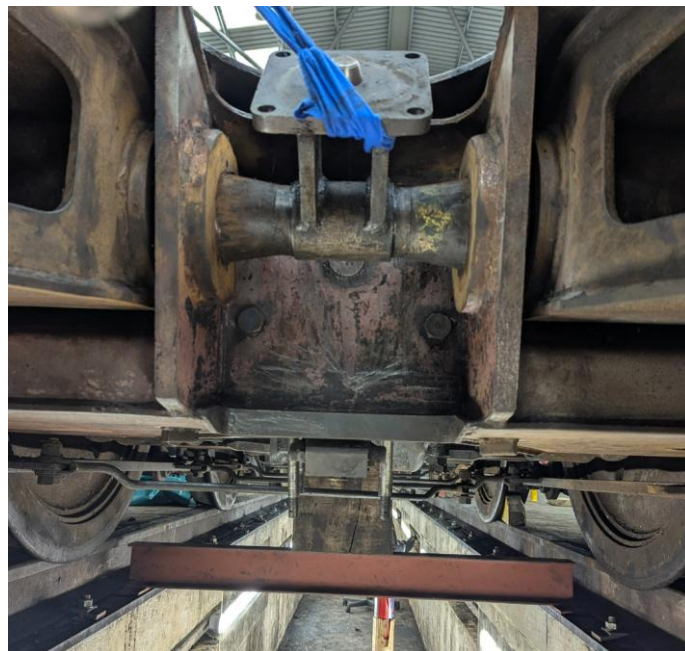
Meanwhile at Bridgnorth, the team were on site to strip and assess the two equalising beams removed from D1013's "A" end bogie, and the one removed from D1062 earlier in the year.

Here we see the spring hanger bolt, with a breaking up bearing alongside, and also a badly worn pin. This beam is the worse of the three, the other two just needing the central pin top hat brushes replacing.



Wednesday 14th July

Transformation work continued on Wednesday 14th – after thorough cleaning, red oxide is applied, followed by chassis black.





New batteries for D1013 also delivered to the TMD.



Thursday 16th July

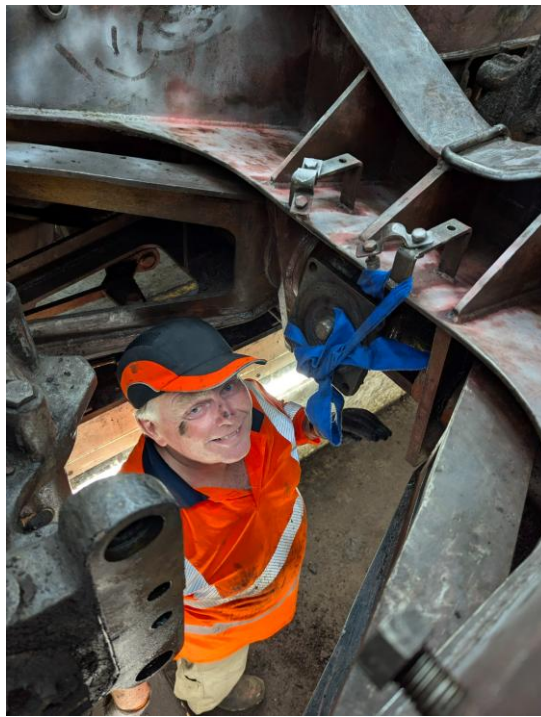
A busy Phil Hiscocks, putting boiler room window frames together, and then carrying on with the scraping and painting of the areas where the torque reaction arms are to be refitted. The arms themselves were made ready with red oxide and black.

Neil was also busy, and has to be called out, as not all tasks are big, glamorous and exciting but are equally as important – cleaning, painstakingly, an abundance of tab washers.

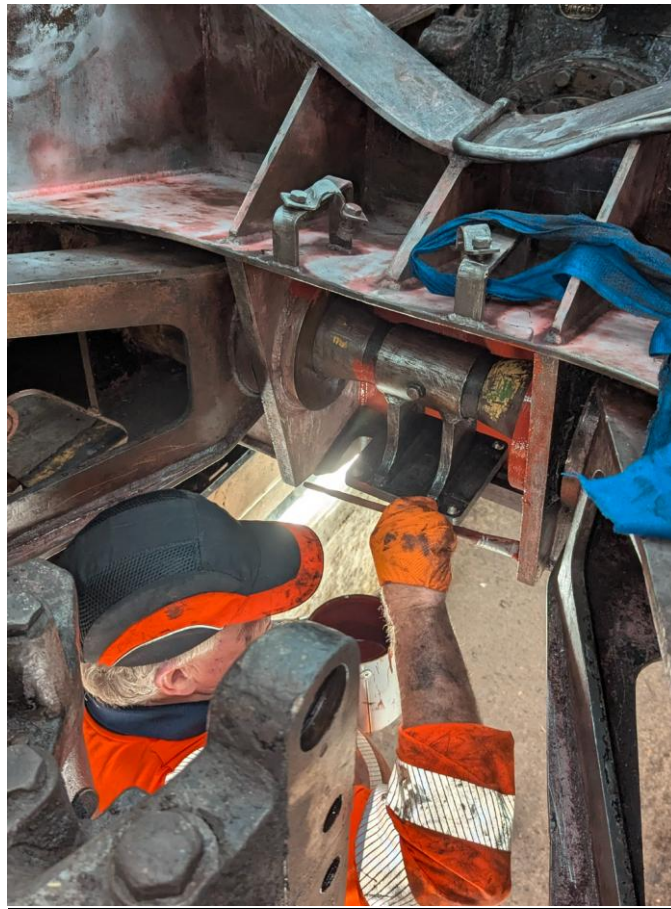
The boiler room window frames...



Then back to the scraping and cleaning...



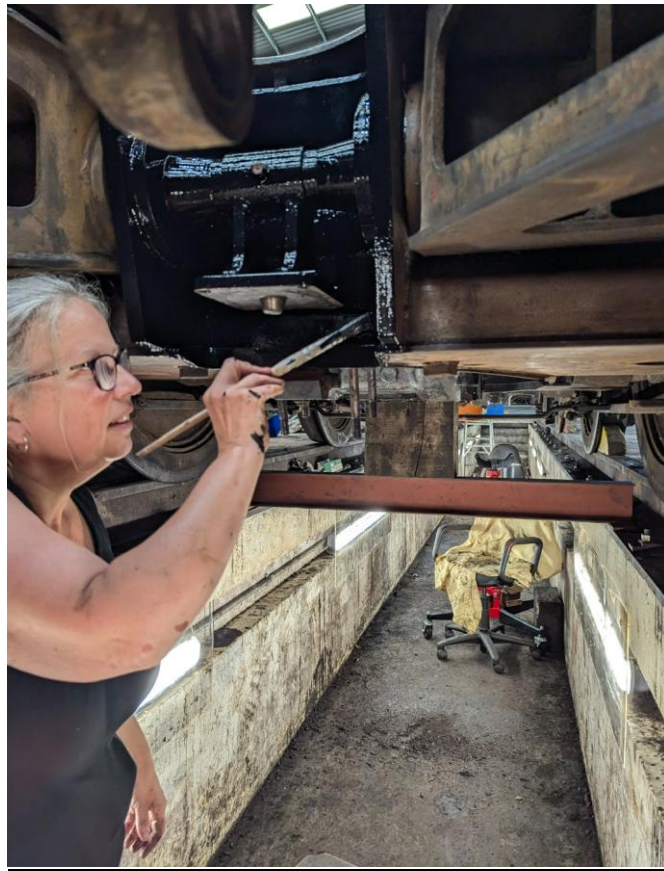
It sure was hot down there...



Awaiting the fitting of torque reaction rubbers...



An artist at work...



& The End Result...



And not forgetting the torque reaction arms, with Red Oxide...



With Chassis Black...



Tuesday 21st July

D1062 was out for five days, operating Tuesday through Thursday and then again Saturday & Sunday - what a crew for its first trip as seen earlier - Darren driving, Josh Second Man and Mark, Trainee Second Man!

This was D1062's first running day since its failure, and it operated without any issues.



A fabulous scene outside the TMD, a Peak outnumbered by tow Westerns.



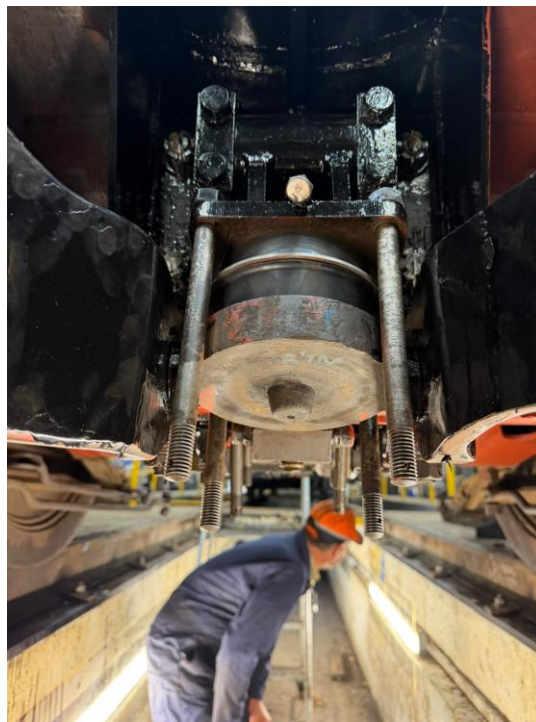
Wednesday 22nd July

A small team were present – following the success of yesterday when the third & final set of torque reaction arms shimmed and fitted, today's plan was to press the Torque Reaction Rubbers together and torque everything up, ahead of preparing the bogie for moving on Saturday. The torque reaction arms themselves are now tight but will require torquing when the bogie is back over the pit.

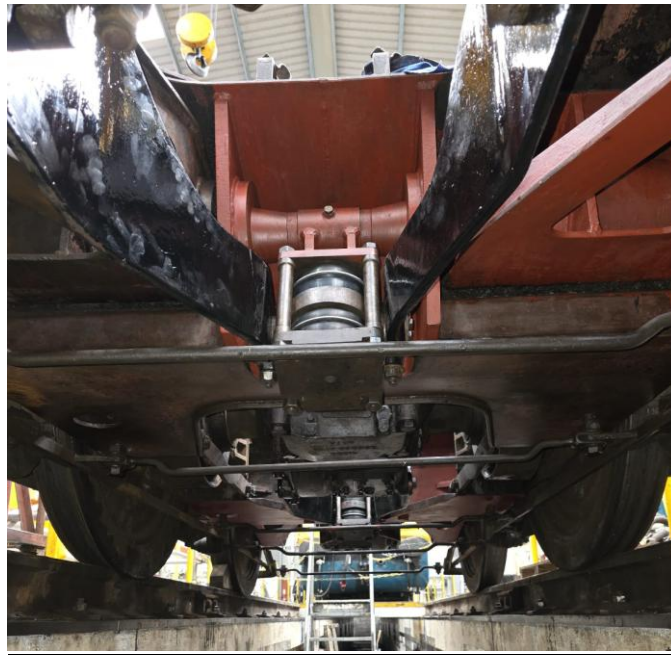
The arms in view and rubbers awaited.



One rubber fitted...



And the 2nd...



A nice shot of two of the torque reaction arms and rubbers



Sally was also busy preparing the brake rigging for painting, as there was a bit of a crowd under the bogie. After a thorough scraping and degreasing, red oxide was applied.



(Old torque reaction rubbers, seen top right, with only 50 years use, available to purchase on WLA Sales Stand)

And D1062 seen ready for departure...



Ben and Mark ready for the trip – its was Mark's big day and his Second Man Assessment.

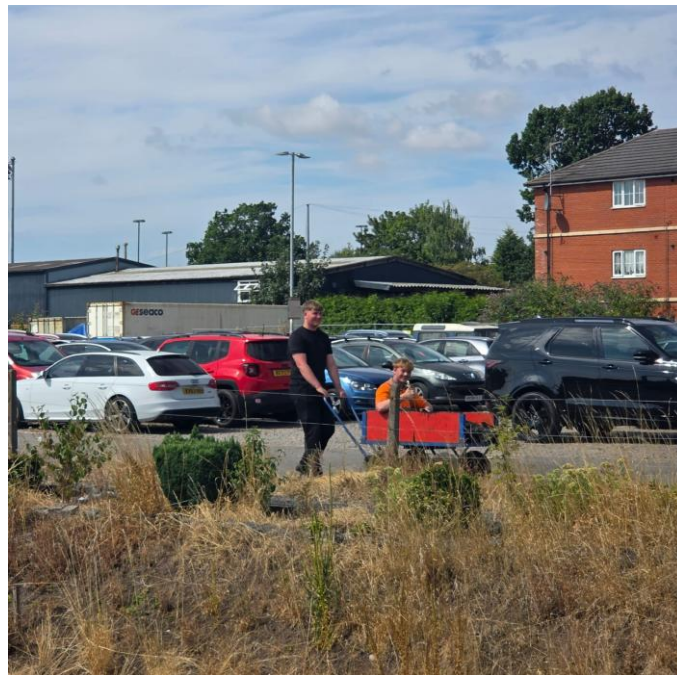


To end the day, brake cylinders made ready for delivery to Bridgnorth for overhaul on Saturday 25th

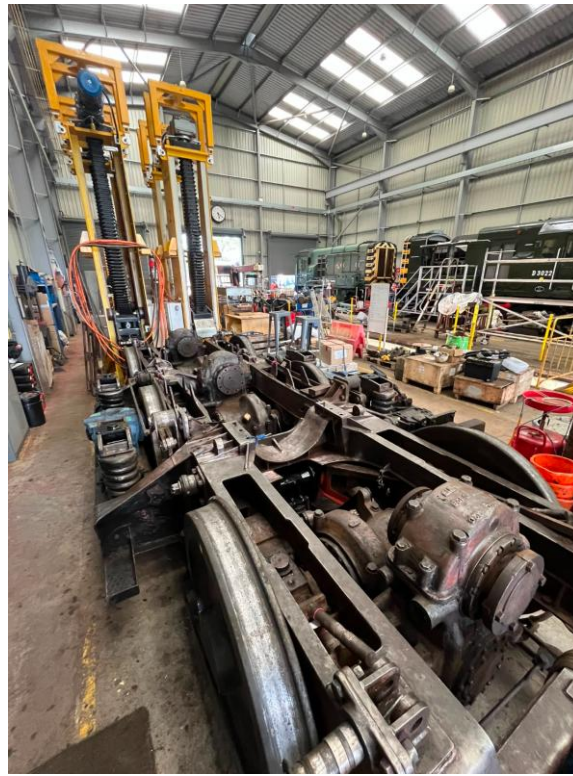


Saturday 25th July

The Brake Cylinders are moved to the Platform and onto the train to Bridgnorth, the team seen returning to the TMD in their "Traction" – already captioned "Master & Slave."



The bogie was also shunted from the Pit Lane and back to Lane 3.



A good attendance was also recorded at Bridgnorth, with 7 Working Members present.

Work carried out included attention to the Transmission Directional EP Valves, finishing touches made to a Vapour Watchman currently under overhaul, the ongoing refurbishment of Equalising Beams, and preparation of Brake Testing Equipment for next weeks "A" exam on D1062.

Site Security was also significantly enhanced with newly manufactured doors fitted to replace old "decaying" doors, a MASSIVE thanks to Coop for assisting in this task.

And whilst all this was going on, the Sales Team were busy promoting the WLA at the GWSR Diesel Gala.



Wednesday 29th July

Oils checked and topped up where necessary on D1062, coolant also topped up on both engines. Oil and Coolant Bottles also refilled .

And of course, windows cleaned inside and out, and batteries charged.
Thanks to Ian, Andy and Paul who were present in the heat.

Friday 31st July and Saturday 1st August

D1062 "A" Exam – whilst over the side pit.

Full report next month.

This month's D1062 Failure Addendum

The following updates have been provided by the team that addressed the issue and returned the locomotive to traffic in such a quick time.

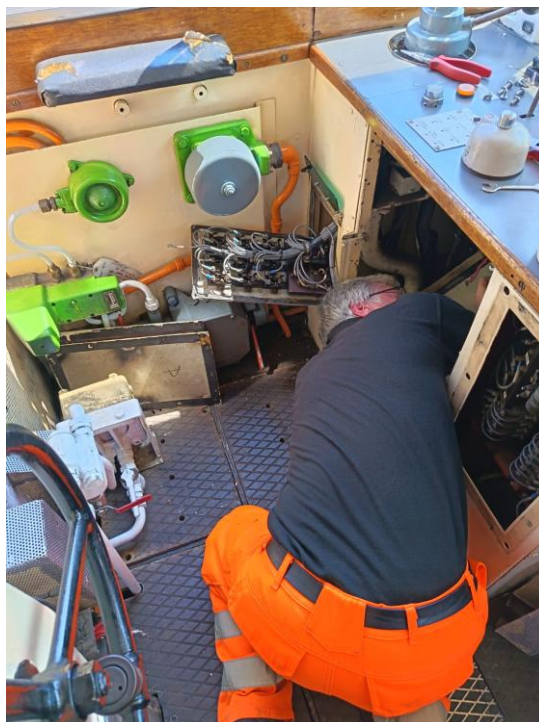
See below picture of the faulty Transmission EP Valve which caused the failure south of Hampton Loade.



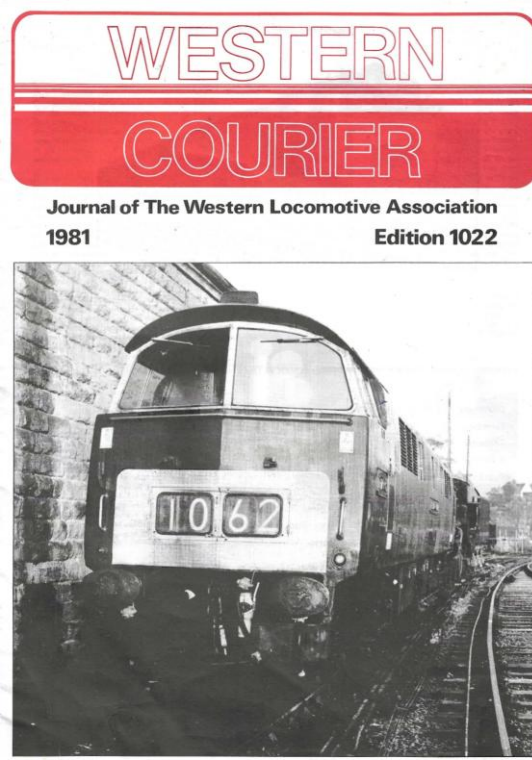
And a picture of one from a batch of spares which has been tested and found to be good.



Finally, Robin seen on 5th July, working with Paul, trying to trace the earth faults on the cab heaters, not an easy task in the heat on that particular day.



Western Courier



Our second last "out-take" / memory from Western Courier, Edition 1022, from 45 years ago!

The October 3rd / 4th Western Weekend

By Tony Willmore

Well, another "Western Weekend", the sixth on the SVR 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 the "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 SVR 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, with 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 AGM 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 secondman 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 D1041. 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 D1041) 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, secondman 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 signaller 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

I am delighted to tell you that the online raffle for a limited edition Dapol 00 Model of D1062 Western Courier, which had been donated, raised no less than £908! A magnificent result and thank you to all who took part. The lucky winner was Simon Lee, congratulations Simon. I would welcome feedback on the way we operate our WLA raffles and Lotteries please - email sales@westernlocomotives.com with your thoughts, suggestions and abuse if appropriate 😊

Members of the Sales Team had an enjoyable visit to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Diesel Gala last Friday with Hymek D7018 the star of the show and no less than four Rats and McRats from four different classes 24/25/26/27. We rode the trains on the Friday and manned the WLA Sales Stand on Saturday, raising a respectable £500 for WLA.

We are going to have a similar trip to the Bluebell Diesel Gala with a stand at Horsted Keynes on Saturday 5th September and hopefully many of our members living in the Southeast will come along and say hello.

The fiftieth anniversary of the Western Tribute railtour gets ever closer and we will be launching a range of celebratory merchandise at the Autumn Gala. Our latest release is a Western Tribute badge which is a cracker as you can see from the picture below. It is 30mm x 20mm and has two butterfly clips to hold it in place, making it easy to get the badge level. The badge is already selling well, with 20 out of 100 sold after launching on Facebook just a week ago. You can get yours at:-

<https://westernlocomotives.com/shop/western-tribute-badges/>

Bearing in mind the successful raffle of the Dapol model detailed above, do please root out any models, diesel books and railway memorabilia which you would like to donate for our Stand at the Autumn Gala.



Whizzo Woods

At the end of January, we have **609 trees** in Whizzo Woods, an increase of 24 trees 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 renew your membership in three ways:

- Payment by Credit Card (via Stripe) from our website – www.westernlocomotives.com
- Re-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.

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

No books to report on this month.

Media Coverage

For the first time in many years, no media coverage to report this month that we are aware of.

Severn Valley Railway News – Running Dates & Events

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

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

The Diesel Footplate Experience cancelled on Friday 26th June due to the extreme hot has been rescheduled for Friday 28th August.

The full Diesel Locomotive Roster for August is as follows:

Saturday	01-Aug	Table D S3 Diagram (Two Return Trips)	Class 50
Sunday	02-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	Class 50
Sunday	02-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	Class 20
Tuesday	04-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D821
Tuesday	04-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Wednesday	05-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D821
Wednesday	05-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Thursday	06-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D821
Thursday	06-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Friday	07-Aug	Diesel Footplate Experience	D821
Saturday	08-Aug	Table D S3 Diagram (Two Return Trips)	D821
Sunday	09-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D821
Sunday	09-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Tuesday	11-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D1062
Tuesday	11-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Wednesday	12-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D1062
Wednesday	12-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Thursday	13-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D1062
Thursday	13-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Friday	14-Aug	Diesel Footplate Experience	D1062
Saturday	15-Aug	Table D S3 Diagram (Two Return Trips)	D1062
Sunday	16-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D1062
Sunday	16-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Tuesday	18-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	Class 50
Tuesday	18-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	Class 20
Wednesday	19-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	Class 50
Wednesday	19-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	Class 20
Thursday	20-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	Class 50
Thursday	20-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	Class 20
Friday	21-Aug	Diesel Footplate Experience	Class 50
Saturday	22-Aug	Table D S3 Diagram (Two Return Trips)	Class 50
Sunday	23-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	Class 50
Sunday	23-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	Class 20
Tuesday	25-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D1062
Tuesday	25-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Wednesday	26-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D1062
Wednesday	26-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Thursday	27-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D1062
Thursday	27-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Saturday	29-Aug	Table D S3 Diagram (Two Return Trips)	D1062
Sunday	30-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D1062
Sunday	30-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	D9551
Monday	31-Aug	Table C+ S3 Diagram (One Return Trip)	D1062
Monday	31-Aug	Table C+ N1 Diagram (One Return Trip plus HY)	Class 20

Member's Forum & Gallery

"Memories"

We start this month with some memories from Laurie Woof....

Westerns

It all started in the early 60s while I was growing up in Devon. I lived on the edge of Exeter and by the age of 6 had developed a keen interest in steam trains, particularly those beautiful GWR brass funnelled locomotives. These were the last few years of steam, and I felt particularly sad that their days were numbered. I had become familiar with all the different classes of locomotive and particularly loved the Castle. With power and speed, you would always find one at the head of every important train. I felt resigned to their sad demise and assumed my interest in railways would completely die when they were gone.

Then one day after a long 3-mile ramble over fields and through woods north of Exeter, I found the main line out of Exeter. Warships had by then taken over from the Castles but then along came this new type of locomotive.

What was it?

I had never seen anything quite like it before - it just looked stunning. I was blown away.

This must have been around 1962, and the location was I believe Stoke Canon.

I quickly found out it was a Western.

She was hauling an express from Paddington, decked out in the usual maroon livery with small yellow ends. Obviously behind schedule and trying to make up time, it came roaring down at speed, and the sight and sound of that locomotive has been etched in my mind ever since.

My interest in Westerns developed and I would seek them out wherever I went, trying to hop a ride on one wherever that would take me. Over the years I managed to see the entire fleet with just one exception, which ironically was the first one ever built – Western Enterprise No D1000.

I travelled all over the West Country to see and photograph these works of art and when my parents moved to Worcester, a town where these locos would seldom venture, I was utterly distraught. But with school chums, I would sneak down to Bristol Temple Meads or London Paddington whenever I could and see them in all their glory.

When the news emerged that British Rail were planning to scrap all diesel hydraulics in favour of diesel electric traction, my heart sank, and I lost all interest in railways. I was appalled.

50 years later, while up in Shropshire I made my first visit to The Severn Valley Railway which happened to be hosting a steam gala event that day. It was wonderful to see a range of those magnificent GWR locomotives once again, but what really caught my eye was a poster of 2 Westerns preserved by a group of enthusiasts on this very railway. I had no idea these iconic locomotives had such a big following and promptly joined the Severn Valley Railway and Western Locomotive Association.

Fast forward a few more years and to celebrate my 60th birthday, I treated myself to a 'Driver Experience' day at Bridgnorth where I met up with Roger and Darren in the cab of one of these beauties – Western Courier of course. With expert tuition and perfect weather conditions on the day, I couldn't have had a better time. To actually control one of those Maybach engines and hear that roar was very special – something I thought I would never get to experience.

I vividly remember those other diesel locos of the time, mostly diesel-electric and thought how ugly they looked and sounded more like tractors.

So, what was so special about the Westerns and why were so many people entranced by them.

The Western was stunningly good looking.

The design is quite unique and here credit must go to the Western Region for seeking out a designer and design that could emulate those handsome predecessors on the GWR.

When I discovered the Western was designed by an architect - Misha Black from the Design Council or was it his understudy John Beresford-Evans, I was not surprised. So much care and attention to detail was put into the styling.

They have become timeless, an absolute classic. Rather like the Spitfire aircraft or cars like the DS Citroen (1958 model) or E-Type Jaguar – they still look good today.

The full yellow ends, introduced in the late 60s I felt helped make the design even more attractive, highlighting the design subtleties of the cab with its central crease line, splayed windows and sharp shadow line above.

When this new livery was applied to the other designs of locos, it did not improve their aesthetics – it simply made them look worse.

So, it is an absolute joy to follow the news about Western Courier, Ranger, Champion and others and long may they keep running.

I am an architect (now retired) but still pay homage to this wonderful locomotive.

I have nearly completed a large n-scale model railway set in the West Country with tunnels, viaducts, rivers and forests – all scratch built and operated using a DCC system. All locomotives, both steam and diesel are fitted with sound, and it won't surprise you to hear that three are Western Class locomotives, one of course being D1062 Western Courier!

The layout is at my home in East Devon, and I would be happy to show it to anyone interested.

Let's now go back "52 Years" again and take a look at a few more memories from July 1974 from Andy Collett who took over great 60 pictures taken that month back in 74 – here is the 2nd selection, starting with D1025...



D1025 Western Guardsman is seen at Dawlish on 23rd July 1974



And again, inside Laira Depot at 13.45pm on 21st July.



D1027 Western Lancer seen at Aller Junction at 14.34 on 17th July.



Western Lancer seen again at Newton Abbot at 13.53 on 14th July.



D1029 Western Legionnaire on a Paignton Service at Exeter St Davids at 13.30 on 18th July.



D1031 Western Rifleman and D1070 Western Gauntlet inside Laira on 21st July.



D1031 Western Rifleman with D1010 Western Campaigner inside Laira on 21st July.



D1036 Western Emperor with D1003 Western Pioneer behind at Laira on 21st July.



D1041 Western Prince at Newton Abbot on a Plymouth to Painton service at 17.46 on 18th July.



D1042 Western Prince again approaching Exeter St Davids at 11.08 on 18th July.



D1048 Western Lady emerges from Dainton Tunnel at 13.08 on 20th July.



D1050 Western Ruler at Newton Abbot Depot on 14th July.



D1051 Western Ambassador at Newton Abbot at 11.33 on 24th July.



D1052 Western Viceroy at Exeter Central at 13.58 on 16th July.



D1053 Western Patriarch at Exeter St Davids at 16.03 on 19th July.



D1054 Western Governor (left) and D1055 Western Advocate (right) with D1052 Western Viceroy in the distance at Westbury on 13th July.



D1054 Western Governor (right) and D1014 Western Leviathan (Left) inside Laire on 21st July.



D1056 Western Sultan (front) and D1023 Western Fusilier at Newton Abbot on 14th July.

Closing Notes and Book Ends

We end with an update on a WLA Sales Team day out on Friday 24th July at the GWSR Diesel Gala – some hydraulic action during the day and a curry in the evening.

The Hymek seen at Cheltenham Racecourse and then representing hydraulics in a classic 1970s line up.

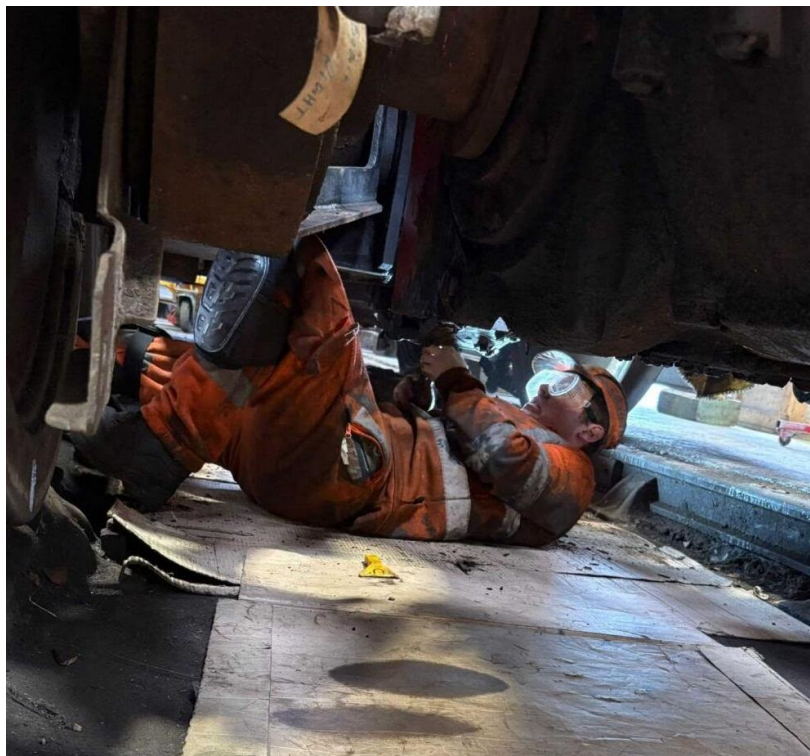


And of course, the curry !

Captions welcomed, and what was Bamber doing 😊



And finally, a picture shared earlier this month – of work being carried out in conjunction with the NDT Testing on D1013's bogies. Can you identify this Working Member – answers on a postcard to....



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 September

<https://westernlocomotives.com/>

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