

STEAM IN TRUST

The Friends of Vintage Trains Magazine

ISSUE 48 – SPRING 2021

Friends of Vintage Trains

Membership is open to all.

Details and application form:

<https://www.friendsofvt.org.uk>

or from: The Membership Secretary, Friends of Vintage Trains, 670 Warwick Road, Tyseley, Birmingham B11 2HL.

Benefits of membership

Receiving our magazine 'Steam In Trust' and occasional newsletters, reduced admission fee for Tyseley Open Days and free entry to social events organised by the Friends.

Subscription rates

	<i>1 Year</i>	<i>5 Year</i>
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Family (2+2)	£36	£157
Senior (60+)	£15	£52
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Secretary: Robin Coombes

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Registered as No 7668 with the Financial Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act.

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Vintage Trains Ltd

Train Operating Company, registered in England, Company No. 10436785

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Spring 2021

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Front cover images: four photos reflecting the illustrious career of Driver Ray Churchill. At top right we see Ray as a fireman on the footplate of a Super D during shunting moves at Willenhall Stafford Street in the early 60s. Beneath is a shot of Ray in the driving seat of an LMS Class 5 at Bescot – but looks can be deceptive: this was 1958 or '59 and he was still a passed cleaner, posing for the camera! At the bottom, we see him driving a Class 47 diesel during his BR career, and the main photo shows Ray with his wife Nickey and 'Clun Castle' in the background. The picture was taken after Ray's driving turn on the Cotswold Explorer to Oxford on 18th May 2019, his last year at the regulator on the mainline. Main photo courtesy of Richard Herington, small photos from Ray and Nickey.

Rear cover: Restored and repainted name boards on the Tyseley station platforms, with flower beds aglow courtesy of spring bulbs planted last year by our Membership Secretary Christine Brown.
Photo: Neil Ewart

EDITORIAL

In the early years of mainline steam preservation, the pioneers who saved locomotives from scrap faced huge difficulties in repairing and maintaining them without the resources of BR's repair shops. Some tasks were thought to be impossible, which is why locomotives like 6023 'King Edward II', with its centre wheelset cut through, languished in scrapyards for so long.

How times have changed! Now we have the means to restore any locomotive, no matter how parlous its condition, to ex-works standard. All it takes is a vast mountain of cash, a top-flight workshop with highly skilled engineers, like Tyseley Locomotive Works, and maybe some scouting around for specialists in, say, South Africa, for the trickier bits like tyres and crank axles. Anything is replaceable, and we can train the Alastair Meanleys of the future to carry on repairing and maintaining our iron horses for future generations to marvel at and enjoy.

What we can never bring back from the steam era are the people who sweated blood daily to build, drive, clean and maintain steam locomotives in their heyday, professionals of the calibre of Driver Ray Churchill. He worked his way up from shed cleaner in the tough, grimy railway world of the 1950s to serve the network for 44 years, and heritage steam for a further 18 years, finally announcing his retirement from the footplate at the age of 79 in December last year. Ray and his devoted wife Nickey grace the cover of this issue, and I'm sure members will join me in wishing them every happiness for the future. You'll surely see 'Clun Castle' and many others out on the mainline for years to come, but neither you nor future generations will be privileged to see the likes of Ray Churchill at the regulator ever again. Ray, we salute you.

Members will be aware that the UK's second lockdown caused the cancellation of Vintage Trains Limited's plans for the first half of 2021, so once again I have delayed publishing the magazine until the end of lockdown was confirmed and VTL's revised schedule for the year was available.

The new VTL website (www.vintagetrains.co.uk) with the full excursion programme and online booking was launched at Easter. Many of you will have seen this and already booked your trips, but

for those who shun the internet and prefer telephone booking, the excursion programme can be found on page 8. I'm sorry if you're seeing this one month after internet users, but the magazine takes time to compile, edit, design, print and post, so it's always behind electronic media.

These are exciting times indeed for Vintage Trains, as you will discover when you read through this issue, but I shall leave it to Neil Ewart, Michael Whitehouse, Adam Williams (our new Commercial Manager) and my other contributors to bring you up to speed with all the great news from Tyseley and the Shakespeare Line. I want to focus here on just one item: the member survey which you will find enclosed with the magazine.

Chairman Neil Ewart and the Friends committee are keen to attract new members and improve the quality and scope of the benefits offered by the organisation. To that end, the committee needs to know more about you, our current loyal members: why you joined, the nature of your interest in steam and VT, what you like and dislike about our offerings, and so on.

If you are asked to complete surveys as often as I am, any reluctance you may feel to fill in *yet another one* is very understandable. But please, please do help us by filling in and returning the one I've enclosed. The easiest way to do this is online through the Friends' website, www.friendsofvt.org.uk, where you will find a web version to click through, or you can do it the old-fashioned way by completing the paper one and sending it to the given address. I can assure you that your answers will help us to know and to serve you better, as well as assisting us in attracting new members to ensure the continued growth and improvement of the Friends of Vintage Trains. Also, I promise that an analysis of the results and the conclusions we have drawn will be published in a future issue of this magazine.

Thank you in advance for your help.



Editor, Friends of Vintage Trains
editor@friendsofvt.org.uk

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT



Preparing to take down the old TLW sign...

As I write this I am trying to avoid the subject of Covid as I am sure many of you are now fed up of hearing the word! It's very frustrating that Vintage Trains has been off the mainline since December 2019 and our volunteers' activities have been so restricted.

However, the membership of Friends of Vintage Trains remains quite steady which is a reflection of your desire to continue supporting us with your subscriptions and other help. We held a 'virtual' AGM in March and I am very pleased to report that the existing committee wished to stay intact and we welcomed a new member, VT's Volunteer Coordinator Tony Watson, to our ranks.

After stepping aside for over a year owing to ill health, Chris Schroeder confirmed at the AGM that he did not wish to resume the post of Chairman, so I'm afraid you will be lumbered with me for the foreseeable future! However, all is not lost: I am pleased to report that Chris has agreed to be co-opted onto the committee as an adviser, so we shall still benefit from his wise words. On behalf of our members I would like to thank Chris for all his hard work and commitment over many years.

I am delighted to announce our first post-lockdown social event, which will be held on Saturday 16th October at Tyseley Working Men's Club, directly opposite the locomotive works. Provisional times are 2pm to 4.30pm and entry is free for members plus one guest each. There will be a guest speaker and refreshments will be provided – full details to follow in due course. We are working on other ways of rewarding your loyalty and, to that end, we would be very grateful to you for helping us by completing the survey enclosed with this issue.

I feel very optimistic about the future of Vintage Trains. Work is in progress to refurbish the coaches to a high standard, with the Friends donating a large sum to enable the reupholstering of all the seats in one of the Pullmans, and from July we will be enjoying the sights and sounds of our trains running once again, with both 7029 and 5043 in action together for the first time.

The Friends have also paid for a new sign for the locomotive works, now in place on Warwick Road, and West Midlands Trains have put a lot of money into a quite dramatic refurbishment of the LMRCA building, the history of which was covered in the last issue. They intend to use most of it for offices in the short term but we hope that shared use with Vintage Trains will be agreed soon.

Without your unwavering support as members, donors and volunteers, Vintage Trains would be much the poorer, and I would like to thank you for sticking with us through the dark days of lockdown. Your faith in us has helped to ensure the survival of mainline steam in 2021 and beyond.

Neil Ewart

Chairman, Friends of Vintage Trains



...and the replacement in place, courtesy of the Friends of Vintage Trains.

**FRIENDS OF VINTAGE TRAINS
Social Event – Saturday 16th October**

Tyseley Working Men's Club, 2pm
Entry free for members plus one guest
Refreshments will be provided
Guest speaker to be announced

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Duchess of Sutherland will be a guest locomotive for VTL's 2021 excursion programme. Photo: Robin Coombes

Spring is in the air and we are all keen to get out and about again, safely, and meet family and friends. Our 'hibernation' has been far too long, we all fervently hope that the Government's 'road map to freedom' will prevail. At Tyseley, we have not been idle during this pandemic. We are good to go. Actually, we are in better shape than before the pandemic, having used our time wisely.

Tyseley Locomotive Works has been in continuous operation and returned to profit back in August. Always focused on staff welfare, we have furloughed on occasion where beneficial to personal and family circumstances but our safe system of working has enabled us to continue the engineering business and develop it further. In addition to progressing the completion of the ten-year overhaul of *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* and returning our First Class Pullman *Eagle* to main line service for the first time in our ownership, we have been very busy indeed with contract work. Actually, we are building four new steam locomotives: our very own 'Bloomer' (we have even acquired an original whistle!) is progressing; the Great Western County 4-4-0 now has main frames assembled; the Great Eastern 2-4-2T not only has main frames but also new cylinders installed; and *Betton Grange* is nearly finished. Even better, the Grange will now be shedded at Tyseley permanently and commissioned here, before going on its travels to heritage lines. *Duke of Gloucester* is being reassembled ready for main line service. We also have two Manors, a Hall, a 28XX, a 94XX, a Southern Pacific and many smaller, but no less important, contracts for parts and repairs. In fact, there are so many GWR

engines on site that we are beginning to look like a 21st century Swindon Works. Not for nothing did the Institute of Mechanical Engineers liken our works to Concorde and the E-Type Jaguar for engineering excellence. We continue to serve the heritage railway industry to the very best of our abilities.

Vintage Trains Limited is ready for service and, following the recent lockdown, we have revised our service plan to accommodate the planned re-opening of our country with a team focused on the delivery of our charter and Shakespeare Line timetabled trains. Assuming all goes to plan, we will restart public services from July with an augmented *Shakespeare Express* service, with some new services on Saturdays as well as our traditional Sundays, including fine dining opportunities in our Pullmans on Saturday evenings behind a Castle! We now have train paths on Saturdays and also Thursday and Friday evenings. Watch this space!

We will resume day-out charters in the summer holidays with a new series of trains to the seaside. Every family loves a trip to the seaside and we will take you there safely for a fun day out. Trains to Llandudno, Skegness, Weston-super-Mare and Scarborough are in planning, hauled by double headed Class 20s and 47 773 *The Queen Mother*.

From September, we will have our two Castles and *Duchess of Sutherland* climbing hills and running at speed over the network. The Lickey Incline is a particular focus and we expect our trains to sell out quickly. You all have an opportunity to see the plan on our new website: www.VintageTrains.co.uk.



6880 'Betton Grange' nearing completion in TLW

Whilst our trains and our engineering are important, our people are even more important – staff and volunteers. We have revised and expanded our team and, indeed, are still recruiting. We are all working together well.

We have reappointed Richard Thorne as a VTCT trustee. A surveyor who deals with all our land matters, he retired several years ago, but has kindly volunteered to lead the negotiations and documentation of our new 99-year Tyseley lease, including the incorporation of the LMRC building, the first phase of which is now nearly complete.

Phil Sturgeon, our Chief Financial Officer, has revised our financial planning, increasing transparency and accountability which eases the trustees' governance role and enables better prioritising of available cash. We are fortunate to have positive bank balances and no commercial borrowings. On the assumption we can run our train programme without interruption from the pandemic, our budget shows a surplus at the year end.

We welcome Adam Williams to the delivery team as our new Commercial Manager. With considerable experience in customer service delivery gained at the West Midlands Air Ambulance and Worcester Racecourse, he will enhance our operations. Together with Alastair Meanley, both Phil and Adam will form the depot service delivery team to whom everyone will report.

We have reviewed our documentation and systems. We are in good shape for safety, operations, human resources, competencies and technology. At Easter we launched a new website which takes bookings electronically for the first time, and we will continue to enhance this during the year. Now there looks like being a real opportunity to meet up again, we will be organising depot briefings to which you will be welcome. We will also co-ordinate and improve our mailings using *Steam in Trust*, the Friends' newsletter and a new staff and volunteer newsletter. Tony Watson, our volunteer coordinator, is implementing our volunteer strategy and induction. He is looking forward to hearing from you if you are willing to help us personally on our journey with your time, whether it be rewarding train stewarding or depot development.

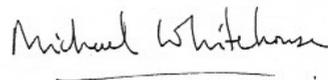
You can reach him here:
tony.watson@vintagetrains.co.uk .

We are powering ahead with our community engagement on the Shakespeare Line. We have adopted Tyseley station and the depot staff club is undergoing refurbishment (courtesy of West Midlands Trains) in readiness for multi-purpose use from 2022 as a visitor & community centre and conference and training facility, integrated with our depot and trains. We have begun our journey to develop the Shakespeare Line as Britain's first heritage main line and we are meeting many new friends along the way. Intriguingly, we are increasing our train paths and passenger demand at a time when the franchise companies are reducing theirs. Long live the staycation!

You will, of course, want to know when we plan to run the promised and, no doubt, eagerly awaited double-headed Castle trains. The good news is that *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* should have water in her boiler in April. Subject to satisfactory hydraulic and steam tests, she is due back in service to limber up on some *Shakespeare Express* trains then enter the charter fray in the autumn. With effectively a half-year programme to run in 2021 we must now concentrate our resources and volunteer support on selling and staffing full public trains in order to replenish our bank balance. Nevertheless, I'm pleased to say that we will set a date by the end of the year for our special double-header in 2022 and plan to honour the commitment we made to our staunch group of shareholding supporters.

So, we are ready and eager to go. It has been too long since we heard the sound of Great Western Railway steam locomotives, the chink of cutlery in the Pullman Cars and caught the aroma of bacon butties. Please join us on our tours, we look forward to meeting up with you again soon.

Yours sincerely



Michael Whitehouse
 Chairman, Vintage Trains Charitable Trust

THE SHAKESPEARE EXPRESS

This heralds the start of the 2021 season for Vintage Trains. It runs on four summer Saturdays and nine Sundays, presenting its well-proven formula of blossoming Warwickshire scenery through the window and great value Saturday evening dinner, Sunday lunch and afternoon tea options at your table.

On Saturdays the journey in both directions will be over the Shakespeare Line, but on Sundays the train will run from Stratford to Birmingham at express speeds of up to 75 mph via Solihull non-stop to Tyseley (so no alighting at Henley-in-Arden, although a return trip may still be made from there).

Two return journeys will operate each day:

Saturdays: afternoon and evening with round trips only from Birmingham Snow Hill or Tyseley.

Sundays: morning and afternoon. Travel options will be either outward in the morning from Birmingham or Tyseley for sightseeing in the Stratford area, returning late afternoon, or a round trip from Stratford to Birmingham and return in the afternoon.

JULY

Saturday 17th Sunday 18th

Saturday 24th Sunday 25th

AUGUST Sunday 1st

 Sunday 8th

Saturday 14th Sunday 15th

Saturday 21st Sunday 22nd

 Sunday 29th

SEPTEMBER Sunday 5th

 Sunday 12th

TRIPS TO THE SEASIDE

The Jolly Fisherman

Skegness – Wednesday 4th August

Double-headed Class 20 diesels

Departs Tyseley Loco Works, Coleshill Parkway, Nuneaton, Leicester, East Midlands Parkway



Saint Tudno Express

Llandudno – Wednesday 11th August

Double-headed Class 20 diesels

Departs Tyseley Loco Works, Walsall and Wolverhampton

Western Venturer

Bristol and Weston-super-Mare –
Wednesday 18th August

Class 47 ‘The Queen Mother’ and Class 20 diesels

Departs Tyseley Loco Works, Birmingham Snow Hill, Stourbridge Jct, Worcester

The Scarborough Belle

York and Scarborough – Wednesday 25th August

Class 47 ‘The Queen Mother’ and Class 20 diesels

Departs Tyseley Loco Works, Birmingham Snow Hill, Stourbridge Jct, Worcester

MAINLINE STEAM TRIPS*SLS 70th Anniversary Special***Swindon** – Saturday 25th September

5043 ‘Earl of Mount Edgcumbe’

Departs Tyseley Loco Works and Birmingham Snow Hill

*Return to Steam 50th Anniversary***Hereford** – Saturday 2nd October

7029 ‘Clun Castle’

Departs Tyseley Loco Works, Birmingham New Street

*Welsh Marches Express***Hereford** – Saturday 9th October

6233 ‘Duchess of Sutherland’

Departs Tyseley Loco Works, Birmingham Snow Hill

TYSELEY OPEN WEEKEND**70th Anniversary of Volunteering Party**

‘Duchess of Sutherland’, ‘Clun Castle’, ‘Earl of Mount Edgcumbe’ and 7752

23rd and 24th October*The Midland Bristolian***Bristol** – Saturday 30th October

6233 ‘Duchess of Sutherland’

Departs Derby, Burton-on-Trent, Tamworth High Level, Coleshill Parkway, Tyseley

*The Lickey Banker***Worcester** – Saturday 20th November

Two trips in one day, booked separately

Morning: 5043 ‘Earl of Mount Edgcumbe’

Afternoon: 7029 ‘Clun Castle’

Both trains banked up the Lickey Incline by pannier tank No 9466

Departs Tyseley Loco Works, Birmingham Snow Hill

*Victorian Christmas Fayre***Melton Mowbray** – Sunday 5th December

Castles 7029 and 5043 ‘top-and-tailed’

Departs Tyseley Loco Works, Coleshill Parkway, Nuneaton

*Harringworth Viaduct***From Melton Mowbray to Corby and return** – Sunday 5th December

Castles 7029 and 5043 ‘top-and-tailed’

Can be booked as part of the Victorian Christmas Fayre trip above or separately

*The Merchant Venturer***Bath Christmas Market** – Saturday 11th December

5043 ‘Earl of Mount Edgcumbe’

Departs Solihull, Dorridge, Leamington Spa, Banbury

*The White Rose***York Christmas Market** – Saturday 18th December

7029 ‘Clun Castle’

Departs Solihull, Dorridge, Leamington Spa, Banbury

Departs Tyseley Loco Works, Coleshill Parkway, Tamworth High Level, Burton-upon-Trent, Derby

Tours and dates correct at time of going to press, but please check the website and email or phone for updates and further details:www.vintagetrains.co.uk

Tel 0121 708 4960

bookings@vintagetrains.co.uk**FRIENDS OF VINTAGE TRAINS
Social Event – Saturday 16th October**Tyseley Working Men’s Club, 2pm
Entry free for members plus one guest
Refreshments will be provided
Guest speaker to be announced

INTRODUCING ADAM WILLIAMS



All the opportunities to get involved will be published here first along with all the latest developments and news.

Vintage Trains has been locked down like all of us for far too long! I hope you can join us in celebrating our freedom and going back to what we do best, operating steam trains on the main line at speed!

I look forward to meeting as many Friends of Vintage Trains as possible when the season starts in July.

All the best,

Adam Williams

Dear Friends of Vintage Trains,

I am delighted to have joined the Vintage Trains family for such an exciting last six months of 2021, during which Vintage Trains Limited will be more active than ever before. From 17th July, The Shakespeare Express is back bigger and better than ever, with four Saturday trips augmenting the traditional nine Sundays of the season. Look out for on-board entertainment! A cast of professional actors will be delivering an award-winning Murder Mystery performance on two evenings, and there will also be a Mad Hatter-themed party for all the family to enjoy.

A brand-new Seaside Express is being launched in August. As we can't go on holiday abroad this year, VTL is offering to take you to **four** different seaside locations during the school holidays. I can't wait to see the sea, feel the sand under my feet and smell the sea air!

Then, in September, VTL will be unleashing the awesome 'Clun Castle' & 'Earl of Mount Edgumbe' on trips to nine different destinations. We kick off on Saturday 25th September with a Stephenson Locomotive Society 70th Anniversary Special to Swindon which everyone at the depot is looking forward to. It has been far too long without seeing a loco move in anger!

If you want up-to-the-minute information and behind the scenes details about all things Vintage Trains, please follow us on social media and take a look at our new website at:

www.vintagetrains.co.uk



THE CLASS 144 PACERS

Vintage Trains is pleased to announce its acquisition of an iconic set of railway rolling stock, three Class 144 Pacer diesel multiple units, ensuring that the Pacer experience can continue on the main line for years to come. Thanks to the generosity of Porterbrook Leasing, 3 x three-car sets have arrived at Tyseley in a sponsorship arrangement, ensuring that the Pacer continues to run on the main line for the benefit of enthusiasts and the general public alike.

The Pacer is an important part not only of railway innovation and heritage but also of the social history of the UK. Their last operator was Northern where they saw service across West Yorkshire, the 144s offering a unique insight into the lives of workers across the North East over a period of 30 years. Loathed by some and loved by many (the 'Marmite' trains), they are worthy of preservation in their own right. Pacers offer a versatile and easy to maintain platform and will help expand the scope of VT operations.

Only 10 three-car sets were produced out of a fleet total of 23 (the rest were two-car sets), all built at BREL in Derby using Walter Alexander bodies on a BREL underframe. VT's three sets, built in 1987, include the first and last of the three-car series: 144014 and 144023 plus 144019. Each has 2 driving cars and a trailer, all powered. They are in very good condition, forced out of service with Northern Trains early as a result of Covid-19. All 144s were refurbished in a programme which started in 2002.

Enthusiasts will undoubtedly crave a ride on the mainline in a Pacer, particularly on new routes for the class, including the ever-popular branch line specials. The West Midlands is unfamiliar territory for Class 144 so initial route clearance is being requested for the Worcester/Birmingham Snow Hill/Stratford upon Avon corridor.

However, our sets will primarily be used to expand Vintage Trains into the 'experience' sector, targeting new audiences and building on the success of 'The Polar Express'. Individuals and families, particularly those with young children, are looking for 'day out with a difference' experiences, and the success of 'The Polar Express' on the mainline over the last two years has shown that a theatrical performance on a train is much in demand, so we have other productions already in the planning stage for the future. The Pacer is ideally suited to on-train shows at an affordable price.

Further details on the future operation of the Pacers and a potential programme of events will be announced in due course.

WORKSHOP REPORT

Tyseley Locomotives and Coaches

7029 'Clun Castle' is awaiting completion of its annual inspections and re-certification, with the mechanical and cold boiler inspections completed so far. All the washout plugs and doors have been refitted to the boiler and the water gauge reassembled in readiness for a working inspection prior to the locomotive's return to service.

The boiler of 5043 'Earl of Mount Edgcumbe' has been completely retubed and we have carried out extra work on the steel doorplate following ultrasonic testing. Some copper flange screws remain to be fitted to the firebox tubeplate, and the superheater header has been overhauled and blanked off ready for testing. Towards the end of March we will be moving the boiler outside to carry out water testing.



Boiler tubes for 5043 awaiting fitting

By the time you read this, the repainting of our Class 47 diesel No 47773 at Kidderminster diesel depot will be completed in readiness for its appearance at the SVR's Diesel Gala in mid-May, after which it will return to service for VTL excursions in August. Another locomotive which has been away from home, pannier tank No 7552, has already returned, but its boiler certificate expires in April. We've had initial discussions aimed at gaining a 12 month extension, but if allowed there will probably be a limit of 12 steaming cycles imposed.

The tender of 5080 'Defiant' has been shunted down from the coaling stage shed and we've started work on removing the tank, brake gear and the front dragbox, which requires renewal.

As for our coaching stock, a refurbishment programme is in progress, with particular attention being given to the Pullman cars. We aim to put No 311 'Eagle' into traffic in June for the first time under our ownership.

Third Party Work – Repair & Restoration

All the superheater flue tubes have been fitted to the boiler of 71000 'Duke of Gloucester' and are now being expanded and beaded. The driving wheels of 34070 'Manston' have been removed and the axleboxes re-metalled and machined. We are currently working on the frame horn liners and wheelset alignment.

Third Party Work – New Locomotives



Machining one of the new piston rods for 71000

Work continues on the frames of 3840 ‘County of Montgomery’: all the horn blocks and frame stretchers have been fitted and riveted in position. We’ve also assembled the dragbox and will be sending it to a company in Bordesley for machining of the side faces.

Much progress has been made with the frames of the Holden F5 mentioned in the last issue, with the frame stretchers, motion bracket, buffer beams and their supports and the cylinders all fitted. We are now manufacturing the buffers, frame angles, the smokebox, foot plating and spring gear.

New parts have arrived for the tender dragbox of 5029 ‘Nunney Castle’ and drilling of these is underway, whilst all reusable parts have been sent away for shotblasting. The new cylinders for 7802 ‘Bradley Manor’ have been delivered and we are planning the next stages of work on this locomotive.

I mentioned in the last issue that pannier tank No 9466 had arrived from the West Somerset Railway for cylinder liner renewal. In readiness for this, we have now bored out the cylinders using our own boring gear, something which we haven’t been able to do before. We have the gear for boring valve liners and for some time have contemplated using one of our two ex-Worcester locomotive works boring bars to tackle cylinders as well, but further parts were needed to achieve this. Knowing the 9466 job was coming up, I designed and drew these items and TLW manufactured them. We then set up the boring gear on the locomotive and, after a few adjustments to the feed rate gearing, it did a great job, so we are now equipped for future cylinder boring contracts.



Above and below: new cylinder block in place between the frames of the Holden F5 (GER 2-4-2T No 789



*New cylinder blocks for 7802 ‘Bradley Manor’
All photos in this report courtesy of Denis Chick*



Work to complete 6880 ‘Betton Grange’ has continued as detailed in issue 47.

Alastair Meanley

General Manager, Tyseley Locomotive Works

DRIVER RAY CHURCHILL, MAINLINE STEAM LEGEND, RETIRES AFTER 63 YEARS AS A RAILWAYMAN

From junior train spotter to Vintage Trains steam locomotive driver and footplate legend, Driver Ray Churchill has decided to hang up his signature red scarf and grease top, curtailing his long and illustrious railway career with retirement from the main line.

Ray was born in October 1941 in Wednesbury, in the Black Country. He recalls a happy childhood travelling to holiday destinations in the sidecar of his father's motorcycle and his first close encounter with steam, waving to passing GWR Dukedogs at Barmouth. His first ride brought him to tears – first of fright, being so close to the engine, then gradually to delight, and by the end he didn't want to get off. From then he was hooked.

He was passionate about football as well as railways, funding these interests with a Saturday job in a local butcher's shop, which became his full-time employment on leaving school at 15 - but not for long. Railways continued to beckon and a visit to Bescot freight depot landed him with a job as a cleaner for the princely sum of 72 shillings and 6 pence a week in 1957. He got on well and progressed to firing school, eventually becoming a passed fireman in 1966, having experienced several turns on the West Coast Mainline. Steam had by then disappeared from Bescot, but he was delighted when loco 48195 (8F) was borrowed from Saltley Shed so that he could pass out on a steamer. Further training took him to driver status in 1972.

Ray continued to work at Bescot through the BR days, driving for various freight companies until he eventually retired from EWS late in 2001. He was a first aider and regularly took part in competitions. He was also awarded a certificate of special merit after going to the assistance of a person electrocuted on the 25,000 volt overhead line system.

Apart from a few forays into heritage steam driving while he was at Bescot, it returned to his veins big time in 2002 when he was approached by West Coast Railways to drive steam specials across the UK network. Ray describes these years as 'the icing on the cake'. With WCR he 'learned the road' into Cornwall, his favourite section of railway, retiring from WCR in 2016.

In 2018 he was approached by the reborn Vintage Trains, now a Train Operating Company, with plans to grow its business in the heritage railtour sector. He was reluctant at first as he was happy with his hobbies of DIY and living the good life with his new wife within the sound of the Severn Valley Railway at Highley. But by visiting Tyseley and seeing the newly restored 'Clun Castle', he twisted his own arm and climbed back onto the footplate. Equipped with his new driving licence Ray was firmly back at the regulator of 'Clun' and 'Bahamas' for the 2019 season. A major highlight for Ray was The Polar Express season where he recalls the huge pleasure and emotional experience he felt from seeing the faces of hundreds of delighted children (and parents).

With Covid-19 curtailing all VT steam operations in 2020, Ray realised that by the time he could take the regulator again he would be effectively starting from scratch with route and rule refreshers plus medicals ahead as he approached his 80th birthday. So, after 60 years on the railway, the grease top and prominent red scarf have retired along with one of the UK's legends of the heritage steam era.

VTL Chairman Michael Whitehouse offered this tribute:

"Only recently did I learn that Ray and I first met on the footplate of the very last Harborne Express in 1963. Little did we know then that our paths would cross again in the new millennium. His willingness to step out of retirement in 2018 and drive on VT tours was an enormous help in establishing our own operations as a TOC. Vintage Trains is a strong, integrated team and the Churchills have been a core part of our operation, Ray delivering some spectacular performances on the main line with his usual finesse and care for his steed, while his wife Nickey was busy on board selling souvenirs to our passengers. We wish them both a long and healthy retirement and look forward to seeing them both regularly at Tyseley. I'm sure that Ray will need no persuasion to take the regulator again on our open days!"

Denis Chick

FRIENDS OF THE SHAKESPEARE LINE

In the last edition of Steam in Trust I wrote about the formation of the Friends of the Shakespeare Line (FoSL), the umbrella organisation set up to support the station adopters along the Shakespeare Line and the first Community Station Partnership (CSP) in the UK. I want to begin by updating readers about what has been happening over the winter period.

Despite the imposition of two lockdowns, behind the scenes and on the ground much progress has been made. Current activity and future plans continue to be ably managed by Fraser Pithie, with assistance from four other FoSL trustees and support from Fay Easton, Head of Stakeholder and Community at West Midlands Railway, and Ian Taylor, Station Manager Dorridge/Stratford Lines.

In conjunction with Rotary UK and Ireland's Purple4Polio campaign to help eradicate polio throughout the world, last autumn purple crocus corms were planted at all the stations. King Alfred daffodil bulbs were also distributed to volunteers and as I write in late-March these blooms are now in full flower, hopefully providing added enjoyment for passengers on their journeys.

Since the start of the year Earlswood Garden & Landscaping Centre (EGLC) has been busy building bespoke planters for the stations. A total of 66 have now been delivered and filled with a mixture of soil and compost, as per the station plans agreed between FoSL and West Midlands Trains. Henley-in-Arden has received a total of 14 planters as befits its status as one of the larger stations. Orders for plants are due to be collected from EGLC by station adopters in the next few weeks.

The next major project due to come to fruition is the provision of information boards at all the stations. FoSL trustee Angela Okey, who also leads the Friends of Henley-in-Arden Railway Station (FoHRS), has been working with a local artist and designer to produce an information board template. The content on each board is intended to reflect the unique appeal of the particular station and locality. Details about the heritage, attractions and well-known inhabitants of the neighbourhood will be accompanied by attractive illustrations.

To complement the boards a new website has been launched: www.friendsl.org.uk



One of the new planters, made and donated by Earlswood Garden and Landscaping Centre, at Danzey Station

In addition to information explaining the role and objectives of the CSP the site has an individual page for each station, which delivers more space for 'then and now' photographs and additional detail.

The bulk of the funding for these projects has come from West Midlands Trains, with other contributions from Birmingham City Council for the stations from Small Heath to Yardley Wood and a smaller amount from the Heart of England Community Rail Partnership for plants at Shakespeare Line stations in the CRP area i.e. from Shirley through to Stratford-upon-Avon. In addition a generous donation of £500 has been received from Wilmcote Chariturst to support the work of the adopters at Wilmcote station.

Finally on this subject, on 9th February Lord Digby Jones, a former director general of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and Minister of State for Trade and Investment, announced via his Twitter feed that he had agreed to become patron of the Friends of the Shakespeare Line. Lord Jones, who has a house in the local area, said "I am delighted to be associated with the Friends of the Shakespeare Line and share their vision that this nation's local communities will sow the seeds of growth for the rail industry."

The second topic I briefly want to mention is the economic impact study (EIS) into the level of benefits that would arise from reopening the railway south from Stratford-upon-Avon.

On 25th November Chris Heaton-Harris MP, the Minister for Railways, confirmed that the joint submission by the SLPG, Stratford Rail Transport Group, Solihull & Leamington Rail Users Association and the Cotswold Line Promotion Group for funding under the Department for Transport's Restoring Your Railway - Ideas Fund had been successful in the second round. The funding is for 75% of the total cost of the EIS up to a maximum of £50,000. It is hoped that local authorities will fund the bulk of the shortfall, though the SLPG has committed to provide £1000 should it be needed.

Without a huge amount of work by John Morgan of Stratford Rail Transport Group it would not have been possible to get the submission over the line and this has been reinforced since by the scale of his subsequent input to Wychavon District Council, which is acting as the lead local authority. SLPG Chairman Peter Morris has also been heavily involved, evaluating tenders from consultants bidding for the work, attending Steering Group meetings and liaising with other parties involved. The four rail groups are also indebted to Nigel Huddleston MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport), who sponsored the funding bid and has latterly been coordinating communication with the other 9 local constituency MPs who pledged their support.

It is hoped that the final version of the study, now termed a Strategic Outline Business Case, will be available no later than mid-June. If the report is positive it could be a big step forward along the road to getting the railway reinstated. One day we might just see the Shakespeare Express continuing onto Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway metals!

Neil Williamson

Editor of 'Shakespeare Line News'



VOLUNTEER UPDATE

I thought for this article it might be useful to focus on one of my key functions, which is administering the Volunteer Take-on process. When I first took over as Volunteer Co-ordinator I decided to set up a new process, based on the various application form templates we had, and this is now up-and-running. With our new push for volunteer recruitment I thought now might be a good time to let everyone know how it works.

When we receive a volunteering request, either from the Friends of Vintage Trains website, via social media or through a direct email approach, the first task is to issue a Volunteer Application form. This gathers basic contact information, details of the applicant's skillset, occupation and experience, together with a note of the volunteering opportunities that interest them.



This is key data to allow us to ascertain how the applicant could best help us. Upon receipt the application is assessed by me, together with the team leaders of the area(s) of interest, and if the application is considered suitable a record is set up on the Volunteer Database and a volunteer file is created on our secure shared drive. If, on the other hand, it is felt that the applicant's skillset might be more useful in other areas, a response is sent to them to see if they are amenable to the idea.

A Volunteer Role offer is then made and Registration & Medical Forms are issued. These forms are intended to obtain the applicant's emergency contact details and one or two other items of personal information which are required at this stage, as well as confirming that the applicant's health will allow them to carry out the specific role they have applied for.

Once the completed Registration and Medical forms are received, a Volunteer Agreement is issued for the agreed role. After this is returned we conduct a handover to the relevant Team Leader for an introduction to the team and arrangements are made for the new Volunteer to start their role. If they are going to volunteer at Tyseley site then, on their first attendance, a full Induction is undertaken along with a Health & Safety brief. A slightly lengthier induction and training process is carried out for all new volunteers who join us to work out on the main line as Train Stewards or Customer Hosts.

The new Volunteer then receives the Volunteer Handbook, which tells them what they can expect from Vintage Trains, as well as what Vintage Trains expects of them.

No doubt some existing Volunteers reading this have not yet received a Volunteer Agreement for the role they are in, nor a Volunteer Handbook.

Well, worry not, I can confirm that I'm in the middle of a review process which aims to ensure all current, active volunteers are issued with these items and if I haven't managed to get to you yet, I soon will, so keep an eye on your emails or post.

If anyone knows of family or friends who might be interested in helping out at Vintage Trains, then please point them in my direction. We are especially looking for help in looking after passengers, especially on the Shakespeare Express, although there is always room to help out in other areas. They may have a skillset which could be useful "behind the scenes", so as long as we know what they can offer us we may be able to find them a role to suit.

Tony Watson

Volunteer Co-ordinator
tony.watson@vintage trains.co.uk

"ALL ABOARD!" with Sharon Salter

I thought it would be great to share with you how things are done behind the scenes to get a train ready and covered by myself and the stewarding team.

I am Sharon Salter, volunteer Tour Manager for Vintage Trains Ltd. You will notice a few changes have happened since we were last on the rails. At times it was frustrating waiting to hear when we could get back on site, and coping with the difficulties experienced throughout this pandemic has been hard for everyone, but believe me, we have not been idle: I have even cleaned a load of coffee pots! My laptop seems to be out every day now, working on spreadsheets and dealing with numerous emails to get things ready for our return.

Firstly, a bit of history about myself. I was a College Tutor for 15 years, teaching in Administration, Business & Management, also the Centre Manager for the College at a school in Hodge Hill, Birmingham, until I left in 2000. I continued working in education in a school as the Cover & Professional Development Manager until my retirement in March 2013. I have been volunteering with VTL since June 2013. Many of you will have travelled with me when I was the



At the 2018 Open Day



Stewards 2014. You may recognise in orange our Train Manager, Arthur Kesterton, and there's also a glimpse of Ted Ashworth who is in the back row, 3rd from left by his wife Jan, who works the buffet

steward in 5191, the TSO I looked after, including cleaning it inside and out every Tuesday. Regular passengers remember me with my lanyard of badges, earning me the grand name of “Duchess of Tyseley”. Don't you just love it when people make you feel special and over the years there have been many, which is what keeps the interest going for a VTL volunteer. We always had great banter and lots of fun on board 5191.

As well as being a steward, I worked in the background supporting Ted Ashworth the Train Manager, after his predecessor Arthur Kesterton retired. I allocated stewards their duties and any administration work that Ted needed. I took on the role of Train Manager after Ted stepped down in late 2016, along with Neil Ewart as Deputy Manager, and we sadly lost Ted in April 2017. With the new TOC came further changes made by our new management: we became Senior Stewards, but what I did remained the same. Things have now changed again and, with a great team of people, a new structure is in place ready to get us safely back on the rails in July 2021.

My job as Tour Manager is working with the Guard and overseeing the stewards. On the Guard's instruction, I make announcements for



5191 after I had washed and polished the outside



5191 after I had cleaned the inside

stewards to follow, for example opening the coach doors. Only trained stewards can do this, they all attend rigorous Health and Safety training to ensure you are safe. One of the reasons being... the train might appear to have come to a halt, but some coaches might be off the platform or the locomotive is not fully at the point of stop. Suddenly the train will move forward, so all stewards must wait for my instruction when to open the doors. Another might be.... we are at a platform but it is not an authorised stop for you to alight, we might just be waiting for traffic to pass through and the stop will only be a few minutes, so doors will not be opened. We often have a passenger trying to open a door, but we operate a secondary locking system to ensure the door is locked, and many locks have been damaged where a passenger has tried to open a door. Passengers will hear all these announcements, which might be specific information for them to get ready if they are departing the next station, or it could be an early announcement if you are requested to move up the train to alight due to coaches not being platformed. So, if you are travelling with us, listen out throughout the tour, they are important and may be for you.

I do a lot of planning and preparation for our trains - not only for our main line tours, but I also cover the Shakespeare Express and Polar Express trains with steward availability and coach allocation, and I set up rotas for Open Days. I am fortunate to have a great working team and the camaraderie is very evident in how they support myself and each other. If I'm not on the train, the Deputy Tour Manager, Ken Kendall, will oversee the Stewards. I have also put in place three new Senior Stewards that you may see working the Shakespeare Express during the Summer. All new, and very exciting for us to be there to support your train tour, and make sure you take away great memories.

All our stewards and myself are volunteers and not only work on train tours but in other areas at our Tyseley depot. Stewards are the main cleaning team working on coaches, getting them prepared for our next train tour. They are a hardworking team that go every Tuesday, removing rubbish from the previous tour, watering up and cleaning all the coaches. This involves brushing down seats, removing seat pads and cleaning underneath. You would be surprised at what we



*The legend...Ray Churchill and myself in 2019.
Picture taken by his wife Nickey*

find, nothing that makes us rich but usually a sweet or two or maybe a pen. The inside windows are cleaned, toilets are done, we vacuum the Pullmans and mop the TSO floors on our way out before locking the door in readiness for the next train.

This is quite hard to do in the winter months when even the polish you spray on the window freezes. The carriage water supply has been drained off, so cleaning is difficult and a lot of carrying water to the train is done in mop buckets, but we generally do a deep clean which includes window channels, lights, and vestibule ends. In the better weather the outsides get a good wash and occasionally a polish. There are other areas of volunteering that some stewards also work in ... yes, they are a keen bunch!

Thursday evening is a bit more on the engineering side, but stewards even volunteer here. This work includes a variety of jobs from rubbing down and painting frames, painting the fencing which looks great when it's freshly done, to pulling up weeds

between the tracks, I've even done that. We don't have to look far for something, there is plenty to keep us busy.

If you want further information on becoming a volunteer, please contact Tony Watson our Volunteer Co-ordinator at:

tony.watson@vintagetrains.co.uk.

So apart from getting ready to be out with you all again, I hope I've given an insight into a little of what happens behind the scenes to keep steam alive, our passengers safe and for you to be out with a clean train.

Sharon Salter

Tour Manager for Vintage Trains Ltd

TO THE ARCHIVES! Volunteer Archivist Michael Hughes reports on progress with digitising the Tyseley Archives – and collecting more information

Thanks for all the emails with information about the photographs in the last issue.

We now know the person in the blue pullover on page 27 was Brian Wilkinson, the Education Officer of Birmingham Railway Museum. He was also known as "Wilko the Wizard" at Halloween events. And we have the identity of one of the men holding the 'City of Birmingham' nameplate on page 29: on the right it's Eddie Hartwell, who joined Tyseley Locomotive Works through a Manpower Services Commission scheme and remained with us, as a fitter, for many years.

Geoff Petch emailed us with lots of information about the top picture on page 28. He says:

"Leaning out of the fireman's cabside window (the driver is on the 'wrong' side on LMS engines) is Jimmy Allen, behind him wearing the engineman's cap is, I think, Johnny Pearson [other people have identified him as John Pritchett – does anyone know for sure?]. Both were BR Saltley drivers at the time. Jim had been a fireman at Tyseley towards the end of steam, and probably John too although I did not know him so well. Like many enginemen in the Birmingham area they would have transferred to Saltley when their original depots (Tyseley, Bourneville, Aston) closed. Jim later became a Train Crew Leader at Saltley. Jim and John were among several trusted enginemen

upon whom Bernard Rainbow, then the Depot Superintendent at Tyseley, could call when he needed additional crew.

This may be the occasion when the Duke drove Clun Castle from Moor Street to Tyseley, the crew would have been Bernard Rainbow and Phil Gloster, no doubt with a senior locomotive inspector.

Michael Whitehouse and the Duke are on the ramp of the sleeper platform; this was completed 1982-83, so this dates the photograph later than that.

Halfway down the right-hand margin of the photograph can be seen three or four of the cast iron-capped brick pillars of the GWR style boundary fence. This was built during Manpower Services Commission schemes in the late 1970s and early 80s. To the left of the pillars, beyond the coal heap, can be seen the chimney and roof of a steamroller - this belonged to Mickey Richards (another BR Saltley driver), he used to give demonstrations on Open Days.

Visible to the left of the leaning telegraph pole is one of the original water columns, and a tall Suggs gas lamp. Helping to fit the heavy tops to these lamp posts was one of the first tasks undertaken when I joined the 'Sunday Gang' in 1976.

This area was cleared in the late 1980s / early 1990s to construct the running line into platforms 1 and 2, Tyseley Warwick Road."

Thanks to Geoff we can now pin down the visit of HRH the Duke of Gloucester to 5th of August (but what year?). There is a picture of him and Bernard Rainbow in the Archive that could match Geoff's description of 7029's run from Moor Street to Tyseley. *But we still do not know the year!*

If you have any more information about the photos that appeared in *Steam in Trust* 47, please contact us at archives@vintagetrains.co.uk.



Prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester, picks up some tips from Bernard Rainbow on the footplate of 'Clun Castle'

ACQUISITIONS

Even in lockdown we are acquiring new photographs for the archives. From the appeal in 'Steam In Trust' 47 we received several digital images from Michael Campion. One was taken at Banbury Station in 1974, with 'Clun Castle'. About a week later there was a damp and gloomy Open Day at Tyseley. This time the featured locomotive was LMS Black Five 5428 'Eric Treacy'.



7029 'Clun Castle' – with an interesting mix of semaphore and early colour light signals at Banbury. Not to mention a motley crew of lineside trespassers.

Does anyone have more information about these photographs, and was the year 1974?

PHOTOGRAPHS

Do you have any photographs that you would be willing to donate to the archives?

We are interested in any images that could help future generations to understand the history and development of the activities of Vintage Trains.

Pictures with a story are particularly welcome, but we can always ask the readers of 'Steam In Trust' to assist with tracking down those elusive facts.

Any format will do, but the higher the resolution the better. Please contact:

archives@vintagetrains.co.uk

eBAY

One source of images, particularly of Tyseley locomotives out on the mainline and in their previous incarnations, is the online auction site eBay. We do not have a budget for buying images, so I keep an eye open for interesting shots and buy negatives or slides as cheaply as possible, but quality and information about the images varies: see opposite.



The picture above came with the information that it was 7029 on a viaduct! Can anyone tell us any more about it? And the shot of 'Kolhapur' below has no supporting information at all. It looks like it's on the Settle and Carlisle, but can any readers of 'Steam In Trust' give us the exact location and a date?



A Short History of GWR Covered Wagons for Cars and the Tyseley MOGO

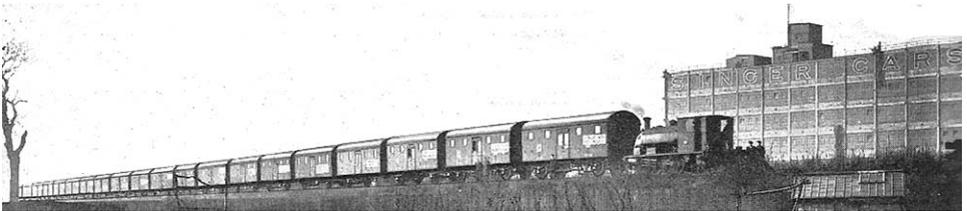


The Tyseley MOGO in a GWR publicity shot of 1936

In the 19th century the Great Western Railway built a range of covered and flat wagons for carrying horse-drawn carriages. The first purpose-built covered wagons for carrying motor cars (telegraphic code: PYTHON) appeared in 1905. The internal dimensions of the first sixty were 27' long, which was sufficient for two motor cars, by 7'10" wide. Full width doors were provided at both ends to allow cars to be driven on, there were side doors and four small windows on each side, and the framing was internal with vertical planking. They were designed so that wealthy passengers could transport their vehicles when they travelled long distances by train and as such were considered to be passenger stock,

As cars became more reliable, this market dried up and the covered wagons were used more frequently for transporting new cars.

The Great Western Railway provided a loading ramp for end-loading cars into PYTHON covered wagons at Tyseley Goods Yard, probably for Rover, who after the First World War took over a surplus Munitions Factory in Abingdon Road (now Hay Hall Road). Here they manufactured the chassis for their 'Rover Eight' two-seater, producing 17,700 between 1919 and 1925.



This photograph from the June 1933 GWR Magazine shows a special train of PYTHON wagons at the Singer Motorcar Works in Small Heath (Singer Motors Ltd acquired this site on the Coventry Road, where the ASDA supermarket is now, in 1926). The train was transporting new cars to Brentford Docks in west London for export. The PYTHON wagons were also used for other purposes, such as transporting travelling circus animals, and one wagon (No 580) was specially strengthened to carry elephants.

As car production increased, there were insufficient PYTHON wagons to meet manufacturers' demands, so the GWR built two freight versions, telegraphic code DAMO A, and the shorter DAMO B, from 1925. This was followed in 1930 by the ASMO, a slightly longer version of the DAMO A. All three freight versions were built to a similar design to the previous PYTHONS, with doors at both ends for loading cars and side doors for freight, but no windows.

By 1933, the demand for wagons to transport new vehicles from both the Morris Cowley Works at Oxford and the Austin Works at Longbridge to the London Docks for export was outstripping supply. But the GWR was unwilling to build more ASMO wagons, believing that the increase in car production could slow or turn to a decline, leaving them with a surplus of large dedicated car wagons. So they decided to build a convertible wagon, based on their standard covered goods wagon (Diagram V23). This would only be able

to carry a single car, as the internal dimensions of the van were 17'4¼" (5.29 metres) by 7' (2.14 metres), but, like its predecessors, it would have doors at both ends to allow vehicles to drive through for loading, and double doors in the side for loading general merchandise. The telegraphic code for the new design, MOGO, was a shortened form of **MO**torcar / **GO**ods wagon.



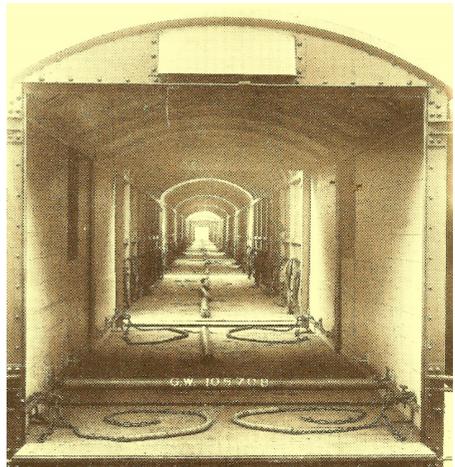
Car production continued to increase, of course: the GWR Magazine reported that 2,500 motorcars had been transported from the Morris Cowley Works alone during July and August 1935. This aerial photograph from the British Motor Industry Heritage Trust shows the Morris Cowley Works in 1937 with numerous MOGO and ASMO wagons in the sidings.

Description of the GWR 12-ton MOGO covered wagon

MOGO wagons of the original G31 type were built from 1933 to 1936 to the current Railway Clearing House (RCH) standard dimensions and incorporated many RCH standard fittings. Each was 17'6" (5.334 metres) long with a 10' (3.048 metre) wheelbase. The underframe was constructed of rolled channel section steel and the bodies were horizontally planked with rebated timbers fixed to vertical steel T-stanchions, which were strengthened by diagonal L-bracing. The side and end doors were vertically planked and the former had rain strips above them, while underneath the latter was a short hinged flap with blocks. This could be lowered to rest on the buffers, providing a platform which allowed cars to be driven through a train of coupled wagons with all the end doors folded back and fastened to the wagon sides.

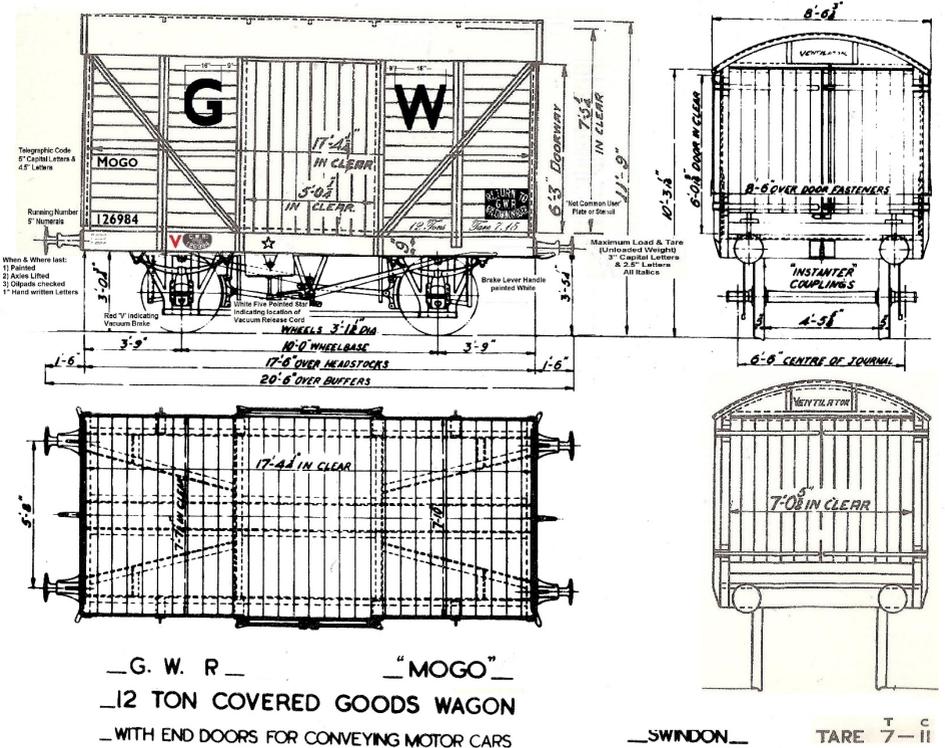
The roof construction was canvas stretched over wooden roof boards, which were supported on steel hoops from each pair of stanchions. To make the canvas watertight it was covered in a bedding compound made from chalk in linseed oil, making the roof white, but it gradually turned grey when stained with soot.

This photograph shows a series of car wagons set up to allow vehicles to be driven along the length of the train. The first wagon is a MOGO, but after this is a series of either ASMO or DAMO wagons, with another MOGO at the far end. Unlike its predecessors with curve-topped doors, the MOGO had rectangular doors and no internal framing, as can be seen in the photograph. Also visible at floor level are wheel beams and chains for securing the load. The nearest beam is marked with the wagon number 105708, which was a Diagram G31 MOGO from lot 1224, built in 1936.



All the wagons were fitted with vacuum brakes, which acted on all four wheels. A manual brake lever of the

'Morton' type was also provided on either side at the right-hand end, in accordance with Board of Trade requirements. A 7" red 'V' was painted on the solebar to indicate that the wagon was fitted with a vacuum brake and a white 2½" five-pointed star painted on the solebar indicated the location of the vacuum release lever. Wagons fitted with vacuum brakes were allowed to travel in express goods trains (class C headcode), if they also had oil axle boxes. The MOGOs had standard 3'1½" (0.952 metres) diameter three-hole steel disc wheels and standard RCH oil axleboxes. The axlebox journals were 9 inch with a ¼ inch diameter, which was suitable for a four wheeled wagon rated for a load of 12 tons.



In addition to construction detail, the above drawing shows the original markings and plates on the MOGO. On the bottom right-hand plank (side view) '12 tons' in italics can just be seen, which is the maximum laden weight, followed by 'Tare 7.15', the unladen weight. Above this is a black rectangle bearing the words 'Return to GWR not common user' in white lettering. This shows that the wagon is not part of the pooling arrangement between the four big railway companies and must be returned to the GWR after use.

A cast-iron plate attached to the solebar to the right of the red 'V' bears the wagon number, and the word 'standard' indicates that the wagon is built from standard Railway Clearing House components, so these may be used for any repairs. Also on the solebar at the far left-hand end of the side view are three hand-painted lines of text, saying when and where the wagon was last painted, when and where the axles were last removed to check the journals, and when and where the bearing oil pads were last checked.

The GWR built a total of 350 12-ton MOGO covered wagons to Diagram G31, in five different lots. Four of these wagons have been preserved and the details are given in the table on the next page.



Lot No.	Date	Quantity	Running Numbers	Preserved	Current Owner and Location
1147	1933	50	123951 - 124000	None	
1168	1934	100	126331 - 126430	126359	GWR 813 Fund, at Avon Valley Rly
1178	1934	50	126431 - 126480	126438	National Railway Museum at Shildon
1210	1934	50	126951 - 127000	126984	Vintage Trains, at Tyseley Locomotive Works
1224	1936	100	105661 - 105760	105742	GWS, at Didcot Rly Centre

A further 100 MOGO covered wagons were built to GWR Diagram G43 in lot 1556 in 1946/47. This was virtually identical to G31, but with plywood sides and side doors. No.65801 from this lot has been preserved by the GWR 813 Fund and can be seen at the Severn Valley Railway.

Although the ownership / number plates are now missing from the solebar of MOGO wagon No.126984 at Tyseley, the original build plate and a repair plate do remain in situ and these confirm the build date as 1934 (lot 1210).

1	Repair Plate	Generally Repaired 9/57	2	Build Plate	GWR Swindon 1934
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In 1936, the Great Western Railway produced a Publicity Pamphlet entitled ‘Exceptional Loads’ and this included photographs of the Tyseley MOGO (One of these is shown at the top of this article).

In the 1960s vacuum-fitted freight train speeds increased with the advent of diesel traction and it was found that unevenly loaded wagons with the short 10’ wheelbase could become unstable. After a number of derailments, these wagons were withdrawn from service, many becoming stores vans.

In 1979, wagon No.126984 was withdrawn from BR service at the Acton Marshalling Yard in London, from where it was purchased by the Birmingham Railway Museum and brought to Tyseley. The wagon was repaired and repainted before being used for the storage of spare parts. Unfortunately, having stood outside for years, it has slowly deteriorated and now needs major renovation work, which Tyseley volunteers hope to undertake

Robert Ferris, Volunteer Archivist

TIMEKEEPING

Volunteer Dave Martin explains his crucial job on all VTL trips

For those of you that don't know me, here's a brief introduction.

I come from a family that has been involved with railways for over 50 years. My grandfathers worked at Curzon Street and Aston in the goods departments, my mother worked at Metro Cammell, a French Polisher by trade, and my father was involved with electric locomotives and helped build India's first electric locomotive, Chitternanjan, in 1961.

My contribution was survey work on the West Coast main line from Preston to Carlisle in the early seventies, surveying the track and column base levels to set the height of the overhead wires from a datum on the column base. Closer to home I assisted in the removal and replacement of two railway bridges, one at Proof House Junction and the other at Sandy Lane, Bordesley.

I've been involved with recording times of VTS tours since 2009. In that time, I have developed a system which I'm currently using, but no doubt in time further tweaks may be necessary. My system kicks into gear as soon as we receive a copy of the timings that have been issued by Network Rail. These are confidential, and I treat them accordingly.

My first task is to put together a set of maps that show the route we will take that day, which is very helpful as I can see what the next station, tunnel or junction will be at any given point. I then read through the times, noting when we arrive and depart stations or any other stops that are on the timing sheets.

Next I produce a table like the one at the top of the next page that shows all the planned stops for the day and send it to the Tour Manager to pass on to the stewards on the Thursday or Friday before the tour.

Communication is key for the tour to run smoothly and we need to know how long we have at a station. The column in the table shown as 'Min' is our booked duration, but we could be a minute or so late arriving, in which case the booked departure time is key: if we lose too much time, we could lose our slot and get held while other trains pass us by all the way to our destination. Also, if we delay another train on the network, we can be fined a

serious amount of money if we hold them up, and if several trains are affected, it will soon mount up to a considerable sum.

I also produce a pocket size timetable to issue to the stewards and crew members on the day: there's an example at the bottom of the next page. A pocket size timetable has its limitations, but I can cover a good number of times on the outward and return journeys that are key to the stewards.

- Bold text indicates departure
- Blue text indicates a water stop
- Italics show passing times
- Minutes shown in brackets are the time we are booked to stop

On the day of the tour, I will bring with me my route maps, a copy of Network Rail's times and my trusty Garmin Legend GPS receiver, which will show me my location to within 32 feet. My GPS unit also displays the time as well as adjacent roads *etc* and the time checks to within a second or two of those shown on the digital station clocks as we pass them.

As the tour progresses, we will sometimes be held at a red signal. The times we stop and start are recorded and the signal post noted - not possible if it's on a gantry, in which case we jot down a brief description of where we are.

If we seem to be held for no obvious reason and it will affect the time of our next passing point, I will check on the 'Real Time Trains' website to see if another train passing in front of us is running late. If it is, I note the operator and code and how late it's running.

It's most important that the records of our stops and passing places are accurate, since they may be needed later to prove that we were running late owing to another train being late on the network. Unfortunately we don't get many favours and all scheduled traffic will get priority over us, unless there's something special going on, for example the Bristolian on 17th April 2010. It's not often you see an HST125 relegated to the up slow line while we thunder past on the up main line!

It's usually a long day making sure all the passing points are correctly noted, and when it gets dark it becomes even more of a problem because the overhead lights in the coach make it near

VOLUNTEERING

YORK - 7th September 2019

Times Based on Network Rail Version 2

It's going to

be a long day - 17 hours for some of the stewards and up to 15½ hours for our Dorrridge passengers. We need to keep an eye on passengers as we approach the end of the day in case they fall asleep and miss their station.

We are routed back via Doncaster and on occasions in the past we have stopped there, DO NOT OPEN DOORS if we stop in Doncaster.

We are booked to stop eleven times; two for water, two for crew changes and seven held for other trains to pass. Ensure passengers don't lean out of windows as there may be trains passing close to our train at high speed.

STATION/HOLDING POINT	Plat	Arr	Dep	Min	Comments
Tyseley Steam Trust			07:04		
<i>Small Heath South</i>		07:11	07:16	5	Reverse Move
Dorrridge	3	07:32	07:45	13	Pick up passengers
Solihull		07:55	07:59	4	Pick up passengers
Tyseley	4	08:06	08:12	6	Pick up passengers
<i>Landor Street Jn</i>		08:22	08:28	6	<i>Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS</i>
Coleshill PW	2	08:55	08:58	4	Pick up passengers
<i>Kingsbury Jn</i>		09:08	09:16	10	<i>Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS</i>
Tamworth	3	09:25	09:29	4	Pick up passengers
<i>Clay Mills Jn</i>		09:54	10:00	6	<i>Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS</i>
Ilkeston	1	10:45	10:49	4	Pick up passengers - non dining
Chesterfield	3	11C14	11C16	2	Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS
Pontefract Baghill		12W07	12W27		Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS
<i>Milford Loop</i>		12:39	13:02	23	<i>Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS</i>
York	10	13:26	14:02	36	Unload ALL passengers - stock to Holgate SDGS
York	10	17:51	18:05	14	Pick up ALL passengers
Hexthorpe N Jn		18:50	18:53	3	<i>Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS</i>
Thrybergh Jn		19W08	19W40	35	Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS
Chesterfield	3	20C12	20C15	3	Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS
<i>Blackwell South Jn</i>		20:29	20:34	5	<i>Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS</i>
Ilkeston	2	20:53	20:57	4	Drop off passengers
Tamworth	4	21:58	22:02	4	Drop off passengers
<i>Whitacre Jn</i>		22:17	22:25	8	<i>Operational stop - DO NOT OPEN DOORS</i>
Coleshill PW	1	22:29	22:32	3	Drop off passengers
Tyseley	1	22:56	22:59	3	Drop off passengers
Solihull		23:06	23:09	3	Drop off passengers
Dorrridge	3	23:19	23:30	11	Unload ALL passengers
<i>Small Heath South</i>		23:47	23:52	5	Reverse Move
Tyseley Steam Trust		23:59			

White Rose - 7th September 2019				7029 Clun Castle - Top/Tail Class 20 diesel			
Tyseley ST	07:04	Ilkeston	10:49	York	18:05	Stenson Jn	21:36
Dorrridge	07:45	Langley Mill	10:55	Hambleton N Jn	18:20	Burton-on-Trent	21:43
Solihull	07:59	Chesterfield (2min)	11C16	Doncaster	18:42	Tamworth	22:02
Tyseley (4)	08:12	Barrow Hill N Jn	11:22	Thrybergh Jn	19W40	Whitacre Jn (8min)	22:25
Landor St (6min)	08:28	Treeton Jn	11:33	Beighton Jn	19:57	Coleshill Pw	22:32
Coleshill Pw	08:58	Swinton	11:47	Chesterfield (2min)	20C15	St Andrews	22:48
Kingsbury Jn (4min)	09:16	Moorthorpe	11:58	Blackwell S Jn (5min)	20:34	Tyseley	22:59
Tamworth	09:29	Pontefract Baghill	12W27	Ilkeston	20:57	Solihull	23:09
Clay Mills (6min)	10:00	Milford L (23min)	13:02	Trent East Jn	21:16	Dorrridge	23:19
Castle Donnington	10:24	York	13:26	Castle Donnington	21:24	Tyseley ST	23:59

impossible to see outside. I used to be able to confer with the VTS official timekeeper and performance analyst, the late Mike Notley, who would do his workings from the guards/luggage compartment of the coach. He was a great mentor and taught me a thing or two about what to watch for and even listen for in the dark.

There's not much chance to join in with the boisterous banter of the stewards when they come down to the buffet for a cup of tea. Some might even think I'm ignoring them, but the timings must come first and a certain amount of concentration is needed to make sure I capture everything. There's no chance to nod off for a minute or two.

In my early years one other issue was tunnels as we used to run the train during the daylight hours with the lights off to conserve the batteries. I must confess that I did miss giving the shout "Lights!" before we were plunged into darkness. I had my maps, but if a motorway bridge had been built over

the line and we were travelling quite slowly, darkness would prevail.

Another task I must do is alert the Tour Manager when we are approaching a station for a pick up or set down, so they can advise the stewards and passengers who are about to alight from the train. The last thing we need is a mad rush to the doors.

We have on a few occasions had a good run and made good time, but it can be so frustrating waiting at, say, Whitacre Junction for a Cross Country train that's on time but not due for half an hour: it feels so near yet so far.

Sometimes we come back via New Street, much to the amusement of some of the drunken revellers on adjoining platforms awaiting their trains, but New Street is always a tricky one, so it's important to record the exact time we arrive and leave the platform as we head for Tyseley and home.

Dave Martin

MOSTLY HARMLESS...

Aliens in a spacecraft doing a bit of market research, particularly during the 1960s, would have been a bit puzzled as they looked down at most decent-sized railway stations. At these places a group of earthlings would be behaving very oddly. Gathered in differing numbers, they were invariably quite young and seemed to congregate at the ends of platforms. When certain trains came in they could become quite animated. It would be noted that they seem to be writing something down each time. Could it be some sort of code?

Closer observations revealed a uniform of sorts: an anorak, or a plastic mac. The anorak was often festooned with badges: did that show their ranking in the pack? Their basic diet seemed to be jam in bread and a strange liquid called Corona.

So many of us started our passion for railways in this inexplicable way. When asked, it was very difficult to explain to a non-believer the attraction of writing down numbers and then underlining a list of locos in our Ian Allan books when we 'copped' a loco. Our collection held no monetary value but we all knew why we did it and kept it to ourselves.

Train spotting was, and still is, a totally harmless past time. That is, if we ignore 'bunking' engine sheds. This invariably involved sneaking in with one eye on rows of very live steam engines and the other for the shed foreman. Looking back, we must have been a nightmare for them!

It was a highly social pursuit as we would chat away comparing experiences and advising others of the best places to find certain locos. Many developed an encyclopaedic knowledge of the geography of the UK, something severely lacking in generations since. Just observe certain quiz shows on TV where contestants haven't a clue where anywhere is.

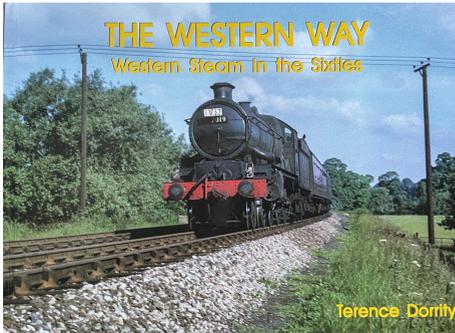
A curious fact about spotters is that they were an honest lot. I do not know of any who would cheat to build up their numbers. Instead they would spend hours and often a lot of money traversing the system to spot an elusive loco.

Strange pastime but great fun!!

Neil Ewart

STRATFORD RAILWAY MUSEUM

Many Members of the Friends of Vintage Trains who travel on the Shakespeare Express will be aware of the museum at 49 Rother Street, created, maintained and run by member Harry Cowan. He is hoping to open the museum from July to coincide with all the SE dates: everyone is welcome. Harry posts advertising boards at Stratford Station, on Rother Street and outside the museum itself when it is open to the public and SE customers, so look out for these if you are interested. The museum includes model railway layouts and displays of artefacts, and Harry has recently completed a new room dedicated to the Moreton Tramway, as well as a new display about the Shakespeare Express.



The 70s through the 90s were fantastic years for railway books, particularly those of the pictorial variety, but then there was a bit of a lull when we thought that the stocks of stunning images were exhausted. These days, rarely does something special come up. But this time, just like buses, two arrive at once.

Terence Dorrity started his spotting years in the 1950s at Henley-in-Arden, pre GWR territory. Meeting fellow spotters, taking numbers, watching 'Railway Roundabout', taking cycle rides with pals to new locations and eventually acquiring a Kodak Brownie 127 – it all sounds familiar, even my own best pal was named Terry! I did exactly the same. But Terence went on to do something I regretted not doing: taking lots of photos, on colour slides, and, above all, keeping them with notes.

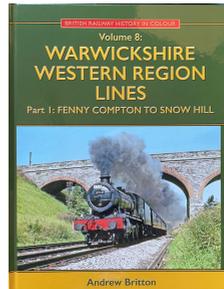
The result is an excellent eclectic selection of wonderful images of trains in the landscape. Not your standard front-three-quarter but images with plenty of background, infrastructure, people, industry and countryside. Very few places in this book look the same today but how wonderful to see them: lots are taken around Warwickshire and at Stratford, and how times have changed. The book is split into two main chapters, tender engines and tank engines, then subdivided by express, passenger, goods, sheds, etc.

Our own 'Clun Castle' features on the last regular steam hauled passenger train out of Paddington to Banbury passing Kings Sutton, along with some evocative shots of Stratford Old Town station and the Thames, Severn and Avon Railtour of October 1963, images you'll dwell on for ages. This is a real coffee table book that you'll constantly revisit and see more on every page. I could go on and on but that would spoil the fun. Published by Irwell

Press, it uses their full page landscape format with excellent reproduction quality. Don't hesitate, order it today. You won't be disappointed.

The Western Way – Western Steam in the Sixties. www.irwellpress.com. Priced at £25.95.

The second book comes from one of the best publishing houses in the UK today: Lightmoor Press. Its owner, Neil Parkhouse, has managed to acquire large collections of b+w and full colour images over many years on a variety of subjects and is producing several series of railway books to give us the pleasure of new perspectives. Where this all-new imagery keeps coming from never fails to surprise me. *British Railways The First 25 Years* has already appeared in ten volumes followed by *British Railway History in Colour*, the first four volumes concentrating on the Forest of Dean and Gloucestershire in glorious technicolor with informative captions and produced in the very best fidelity on good old-fashioned high quality art paper.



Volume 8 (the gaps have to be filled) visits Warwickshire and the line from Fenny Compton to Birmingham Snow Hill. Readers familiar with this line will be drooling and frankly, others too. How about 304 pages, each with several images and

every detail imaginable of trains and the lineside, signal boxes and stations, along with copious notes and loco records – page after page, nothing is missed. And Tyseley shed like you've never seen it before! Author Andrew Britton grew up in Leamington, trainspotted on the platforms and made regular visits to its shed courtesy of his neighbour who was a driver. He now lives in Warwick. Bravo Andrew, you've done us proud. This book is marvellous, every enthusiast's home must have one – and beware, this is Volume 1: Volume 2 Long Marston to Birmingham Moor Street comes next!!

British Railway History in Colour Volume 8 – Warwickshire Western Region Lines Part 1: Fenny Compton to Snow Hill.

www.lightmoor.co.uk. Priced at £35 (fantastic value!).

Denis Chick

NOTES

From time to time locomotives and stock may be loaned to other railway centres for use or static display, and mainline certified engines may be temporarily stabled away from home in order to undertake mainline duties. The list includes guest locomotives and rolling stock, which may be at Tyseley Locomotive Works for attention or using the depot as an operating base, including for Vintage Trains charters. Items marked 'P' are privately owned and not part of the Tyseley collection.

Some locomotives and rolling stock may not be accessible to Tyseley depot visitors, who are only admitted on Open Days or by special invitation. Please note that this list is compiled by volunteers and may not be up-to-date when it appears in the magazine.

Coaches in Vintage Trains' mainline operational fleet: TY01=vacuum braked/steam heat; TY02=air braked/air con

Locomotives in the Works (In private ownership unless otherwise stated. '*'= Mike Thomson Engineering)

No	Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
6880	Betton Grange	68xx Grange	New build	6880 Society
4936	Kinlet Hall	49xx Hall 4-6-0	1929 Swindon	JJP Holdings
789		F5 2-4-2T	New build	Holden F5 Trust
34070	Manston	BB 4-6-2	1947 Brighton	Unrebuilt
7802	Bradley Manor	78xx Manor	1938 Swindon	E M Fund
7812	Erlestoke Manor	78xx Manor	1939 Swindon	E M Fund
3840	County of Montgomery	County 4-4-0	New build	Churchward C T
71000	Duke of Gloucester	8P 4-6-2	1954 Crewe	71000 Trust
08568	St Rollox (D3735)	08 DE 0-6-0	1959 Crewe	A Goodman
No 65*	B+W Engineering	0-6-0T	1929 H/Clarke	Works No 1631
2918*	Achilles/Pony/BD No 2	0-4-0ST	1912 H/Leslie	Works No 2918
3597*	FD&E Co No 3	0-4-0ST	1926 H/Leslie	Registered 1968
4588*		4575 2-6-2T	1927 Swindon	

GWR Steam Locomotives

Number		Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
2885	P		28xx 2-8-0	1938 Swindon	Practical GW Steam
4121	P		5101 2-6-2T	1937 Swindon	Under overhaul
4965		Rood Ashton Hall	49xx Hall 4-6-0	1929 Swindon	Stored
5043		Earl of Mount Edgecumbe	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1936 Swindon	Under overhaul
5080		Defiant	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1939 Swindon	Stored
7029		Clun Castle	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1950 Swindon	Operational
7752			57xx 0-6-0PT	1930 Glasgow	LT No 94
7760			57xx 0-6-0PT	1930 Glasgow	LT No 90
9600			57xx 0-6-0PT	1945 Swindon	

LMS Steam Locomotives

5593		Kolhapur	5XP Jubilee 4-6-0	1934 NBL	BR Class 6P5F
670			LNWR 'Bloomer'	1987 Tyseley	Replica, ongoing work

Industrial Steam Locomotives

		Henry	0-4-0ST	1901 H/Leslie	At Barrow Hill
1		Cadbury No 1	0-4-0T	1925 Avonside	
No 1			0-4-0ST	1941 Peckett	
71480	P	Fred	WD 0-6-0ST	1945 RSH	(LNER Class J94)

Industrial Diesel & Petrol Locomotives

299299	P		88DS 0-4-0DM	1950 Ruston & Hornsby	Table Pilot
347447	P		LWS 0-6-0 DM	1957 Ruston & Hornsby	
800	P		0-4-0 Petrol loco	1920 Baguley	
376	P	Princess Margaret	0-4-0 DM	1948 Andrew Barclay & Sons	

BR Diesel / Electric Locomotives

Number		Name / Numbers	Class	Built	Notes
13029		D3029, 08 021	08 DE 0-6-0	1953 Derby	
40 118	P	D318	40 DE 1Co-Co1	1961 EE/RSH	D318 LTD
47 773		D1755 The Queen Mother	47 DE Co-Co	1964 Brush	47 161, 47 541
50 033		D433 Glorious	50 DE Co-Co	1968 EE/VF	At the SVRLy

Class 144 Pacers

Set number	Car numbers	Builder & date
144014	55814 DMS – 55850 MS – 55837 DMSL	Derby 1986-7
144019	55819 DMS – 55855 MS – 55842 DMSL	Derby 1986-7
144023	55823 DMS – 55859 MS – 55846 DMSL	Derby 1986-7

Coaches

Number / Name	Type	Builder & date	Notes
Car No 311 Eagle	Mk 1 Pullman Kitchen 1st	1960 Metro Cammell	From NRM
Car No 335 - 99361	Mk 1 Pullman Kitchen 2nd	1960 Metro Cammell	TY01
Car No 349 - 99349	Mk 1 Pullman Parlour 2nd	1960 Metro Cammell	TY01
Car No 353 - 99353	Mk 1 Pullman Parlour 2nd	1960 Metro Cammell	Under overhaul
1201	Mk 2 RFO	1973-4 Derby	TY02 – For Sale
3309	Mk 2 FO	1973 Derby	TY02 – For Sale
3351	Mk 2 FO	1973-4 Derby	TY02 – For Sale
3416	Mk 2 FO	1973-4 Derby	TY02 – For Sale
5148	Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	At Telford
5157	Mk 2 TSO	1966 Derby	TY01
5177	Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	Under overhaul
5179	Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	Top Bank
5183	Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	Top Bank
5186	Mk 2 TSO	1966 Derby	Fuel Sidings 2
5191	Mk 2 TSO	1966 Derby	TY01
5193	Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	At Telford
5194	Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	Fuel Sidings 1
5198	Mk 2 Club Car (ex TSO)	1966 Derby	TY01
5212	Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	TY01
5221	Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	At Telford
5300	Mk 2a TSO	1968 Derby	In compound – For Sale
5314	Mk 2a TSO	1968 Derby	At turntable
5420	Mk 2a TSO	1969 Derby	Top Bank – For Sale
5928	Mk 2 SO	1973 Derby	TY02
9101	Mk 2 BSO (Buffet Car)	1966 Derby	TY01
17015	Mk 1 BFK	1961 Swindon	4936 support
17018	Mk 1 BFK	1961 Swindon	TY01
17041	Mk 2 BFK	1966 Derby	71000 support
17090	Mk 2 BFK	1968 Derby	Top Bank
35470	Mk 1 BSK	1963 Wolverton	TY01
96100	GUV (Water Carrier)	1959 Pressed Steel	TY01
6320	LMS Saloon	1927/65 Wolverton	PRCLT Derby
14064	Mk 2 BFK	1967 Derby	43505 support

G Middy 5 March 2021



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