

ISSUE 53 – AUTUMN 2023

STEAM IN TRUST

The Friends of Vintage Trains Magazine



Friends of Vintage Trains

Membership is open to all

Details and application form:

www.friendsofvt.org.uk or from:

The Membership Secretary

Friends of Vintage Trains

670 Warwick Road, Tyseley, Birmingham B11 2HL

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*Front Cover Image: 5043 Earl of Mount Edgcumbe departing from Stratford on the afternoon train on the 6 August Shakespeare Express. The wreath on the smokebox is in memory of Arthur Kesterton, an active volunteer and member of the Friends’ Committee for many years, who sadly passed away on 1st August 2022. See the previous issue of Steam in Trust for memories of Arthur from his many friends and members of the Friends.
 Photo: Mary McCullough*

*Rear Cover Image: GWR 0-6-0PT 7752 standing outside Tyseley. There is no date for this picture. The loco is in steam and the young lad appears to be lost in admiration!
 Photographer: Unknown
 7752 is now stored at Tyseley in Great Western livery.
 Photo: Mary McCullough*

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A warm welcome to this edition of Steam in Trust.

In the previous edition of Steam in Trust we noted with deep regret the passing of Jeff Robinson, who had been a volunteer for over 40 years and a long-time member of the Friends Committee. We include an obituary for Jeff with contributions from some of those who knew him well.

The 2024 Annual General Meeting of The Friends of Vintage Trains will be held on Saturday 23 March 2024 at the Tyseley Working Men's Club. More details will be in our next Newsletter in early 2024 and are on our website, so please put this in your diary.

We have started sending brief monthly emails to our members for whom we have an email address with news about forthcoming events and other updates from the Friends. Every mailing will have a link to opt out of these emails; if you do not wish to receive these updates then click on that link or complete the opt-out form at <https://friendsofvintage.org.uk/email-updates-opt-out/>

Despite the current inflationary environment we are keeping our membership subscriptions unchanged for the 4th year running whilst maintaining all of the benefits of membership, including regular social events, 50% discount on fares on trains 2 and 3 on every Shakespeare Express apart from special occasions such as haulage by guest engines, reduced entry to the Tyseley Open Days and, of course, Steam in Trust and our Newsletter. We rely on our Membership subscriptions and donations so please spread the word and encourage new members. A downloadable membership form can be found on our website in the *Joining Us* section.



The cover of the 2024 Calendar.
Cover image copyright John Austin

With the festive season approaching, why not buy a calendar (or two) as a gift, or for yourself? The theme for the 2024 calendar is *The Shakespeare Route*, with a mix of historical and modern images and traction. As in the past, each month includes an interesting historical snippet looking back at some event in that month. The cover of the calendar features a painting by John Austin FGRA. showing *The Cornishman* passing through Henley-in-Arden in the 1950s. All proceeds from the sale of the calendar to our members goes into the Friends funds. An order form for the calendar is enclosed with this issue. Further details, including the page images and an on-line order form, can be found on our website; see page 2 for our contact details.

Vintage Trains will shortly be launching their tour program up to August 2024 which will be on their web site at www.vintagetrains.co.uk; we have included a flyer for the forthcoming Polar Express trains with this issue. Please support Vintage Trains by travelling on their railtours or bringing the family to meet Santa on the Polar Express.

Paul Hatton - Chairman and Steam in Trust Editor; Friends of Vintage Trains

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

Welcome to the following new members - we hope to see you at one of our forthcoming events:

Mr M Gorman and Mrs L Marshall

We also record, with sadness, the death of Mr R M Tedd and send our condolences to his family.

JEFF ROBINSON, HONORARY MEMBER



Jeff Robinson had been a member of the Friends, and Vintage Trains Society – our predecessor organisation, for 43 years when he died in April 2023. He was an ever-present volunteer with the Tuesday maintenance and Thursday evening volunteers and had also held the post of Chairman and Secretary of the Vintage Trains Society.

Bob Meanley reflects on Jeff's work at Tyseley:

"I cannot remember exactly when I first encountered Jeff Robinson, but it must have been at least 35 years ago. He immediately struck me as one of nature's gentlemen, definitely somewhat different to we engineers. When I took over the Chief Engineer role at Tyseley back

in 1994 Jeff was an enormous help to what we were trying to do to bring the Works back to life and a better future. He was instrumental in rallying the volunteers to get behind tidying up the place and bringing some order to the rather large collection of various locomotive parts which had been dumped and abandoned around the works. We came up with a scheme which designated separate storage areas for the parts for Castles, Halls and Panniers and then spent quite some time scouring the works and adding dabs of spray paint to the scattered collections of parts. Castles were green, Halls red and Panniers yellow. Following that Jeff had gangs of volunteers slaving for a number of weeks to clear the designated storage areas, and then to fill them up with the segregated parts, some of which were quite heavy. The process brought a great deal of order to understanding what we really had, and that guided us into what we needed to make and acquire for 9600, and then for 'Rood Ashton Hall' and finally in the late 90s for 'Earl of Mount Edgumbe'. I suspect that not a lot of people other than those directly involved ever had the faintest idea of what had been done but it made a significant difference which greatly accelerated our understanding of what we had. Of course, we never found all of the parts, and we used to joke that the quickest way to find a part was to make a new one, as the original was sure to turn up a few weeks or months later, and thus we accumulated several original parts of 9600 which remain as spares to this day. The process continued with 4965 where Jeff and his team of volunteers ensured that we got quite a number of its parts under cover and secure before others spirited them away from outside areas where they had been abandoned. And finally we got around to 5043 which was probably our greatest test. By this time Jeff was leading the Thursday evening gang which did sterling work in dealing with my endless lists of parts to clean up and derust. In all of this Jeff and his Tuesday and Thursday gangs were an immensely valuable resource around the works, and considerably contributed to the restoration of Edgumbe.

As time passed Jeff went on to become the unofficial Works Recycling Officer, and spent many years well into his late 80s dealing with much of the waste material generated by the works and ferrying it off to the tip in his little car:

He must have become quite a regular there, and I am not sure how he managed to avoid being spotted making regular deliveries of industrial waste, perhaps it was just his natural charm which got him through the gates time after time. We used to endlessly worry about his habit of stamping on probably thousands of drinks cans over the years to flatten them and condense their bulk, because we always thought that he might end up with an arthritic heel or worse. But the Robinson heels were obviously made of sterner stuff.

Jeff Robinson was a true gentleman and character and was of the greatest help to us. I shall always be grateful for his help and friendship, and I feel it will take a long time for his memory to disappear from those of us who worked alongside him.”

One of our past members of the Thursday Night gang, Dave Collings, has the following memories of Jeff.

Jeff was affectionally known as “Crusher”. He was a fervent recycler and earned this name from his tendency to stamp on pop cans - he was a passionate about re-using/re-cycling. He would always ensure that paint brushes were properly cleaned and stored after use as they would have to be thrown away which was a real waste for Jeff.

Jeff was also a long-term representative for Vintage Trains on the Birmingham Heritage Forum. Philip Aubrey, Chairman of the Birmingham Heritage Forum paid the following tribute to Jeff:

“Vintage Trains were founder members of the Birmingham Heritage Forum when it was set up by Cllr Renee Spector in 1990. When the City Council withdrew funding Vintage Trains along with the other members decided to continue as an independent voluntary group. From memory Jeff Robinson represented Vintage Trains from those early days.

Jeff probably had the best record of attendance at Forum meetings, always enthusiastic and especially welcoming to new members.

I never managed to get Jeff to use a computer so each agenda had to be emailed to the office and be printed out for Jeff. Jeff would duly complete the tear off attendance slip and return it to me in the post! Of course during Covid Jeff could not join us for our ZOOM meetings but as soon as we were allowed to meet again Jeff was there in person. This meeting, at the Martineau Gardens, was the last time I saw Jeff who, in spite of his advancing years, was still looking very well.

Jeff is sadly missed by myself and his many friends at the Forum.”

We send our condolences to Jeff’s wife, Mary, and his family. RIP Jeff



Jeff working on Clun Castle's tender in 2010

MEMBERS' SOCIALS

We had our first informal 'greet and go' in September, visiting the Great Western pub in Wolverhampton. It was deemed great to meet up with like-minded Friends chewing the cud. We will be looking to find another interesting location and do this again sometime in the future so watch out for further announcements. If you have any suggestions of locations to visit that are within easy reach of Birmingham and do not require any advance bookings then please let us know through any of our contact details on page 2.

Members and guests of the Friends recently paid a second visit to The Electric Cinema in Birmingham for a morning of railway themed films. This wonderful old cinema provides an ideal venue to meet up as it alongside New Street Station and within a stone's throw of Wetherspoons' London and North Western pub for a spot of lunch and a chat. We will hopefully be returning in early 2024; details will be in our next Steam in Trust newsletter.

Neil Ewart

TYSELEY STATION UPDATE

Friends of Vintage Trains volunteers worked hard on the station throughout the summer looking after the three large flower beds and generally keeping the station tidy and fit for public use. We are waiting for the recently installed CCTV system to be commissioned. Plans for the refurbishment of the roofs and the road bridge outside are awaited.



We are very pleased that a new volunteer has come forward to join the team. Michael Cridge, a young volunteer living in Tyseley, has completed the application process and is now waiting a Health and Safety briefing from West Midland Trains.

The recent work on the station platform facias at Tyseley has attracted significant interest and positive comment. The artwork boards, used to cover badly etched windows, display daycation destinations plus local Tyseley history and heritage information.



The content and conception of the boards is due to the Friends of the Shakespeare Line and local design company Creative Touch Design based at Henley in Arden. The level of interest has extended to Andrew Haines, Chief Executive of Network Rail, who chose to visit the station in late June along with Network Rail's *Central Route* Director Denise Wetton, plus others from Network Rail and West Midlands Trains.

With some of the art boards visible in the background, Andrew Haines, CEO of Network Rail (left) is accompanied by Denise Wetton, Director - Central Route Network Rail, Federica Labanca, Principal Route Engineer (Buildings) - Network Rail, Fraser Pithie, Chair of Friends of the Shakespeare Line, Maggie Summers, PA to Andrew Haines, Rob Goode, Director of Property - West Midlands Trains Ltd and Adam Checkley, Director of Infrastructure - Central Route Network Rail. (26 June 2023)

Neil Ewart and Fraser Pithie

VINTAGE TRAINS CHAIRMAN'S LETTER TO CBS AND FOVT MEMBERS

We are building on rock, not sand. Business results in the current financial year are an improvement on last, but we still have some way to go. We will always need to seek to improve. We are safely running recycled heritage equipment on the national network and the costs of doing this will always continue to increase. Whilst we will strive to ensure both our operating companies generate profits on a day to day basis and make contributions to the development and maintenance of our collection, we also need to be realistic. We will always need to seek funds for development and repairs. We are in exactly the same position as any other heritage organisation, including the National Trust. We welcome help from our supporters, whether it be by volunteering hours, donations or legacies. All of you will, at some time or another, ask when we are going to progress or deliver a project dear to you and we are delighted that you are interested. To do so, we need your continued support and the trustees thank you for your help to date.

We raised just over £1 million to establish our train operating company, which many said could not be done. We were obliged to restart it following suspending services during the pandemic. We now run a safe and reliable train service and, each year, we add more competent and qualified people to the roster for locomotives, maintenance, stewarding and catering, including welcoming many young people.

But we have actually achieved much more than this. Since the CBS share offer we have raised a further £2.7 million which we have used to:

- return *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* to service
- acquire an English Electric type 3 diesel

- refurbish our turntable
- upgrade our train and equip it with controlled emission toilets, window limiters and the prototype for our new central door locking system
- build the first phase of our new carriage works
- commence the regeneration of our Tyseley depot, working with our friends West Midlands Trains, by upgrading security, car parking and safe walking routes. The next steps are to install modern welfare facilities for all our staff and volunteers (showers, kitchen, lockers and mess room) and integrate the former staff club within our facilities
- acquire track for our Sutton Miniature Railway to begin to welcome visitors back to the depot, following the successful trials of public depot tours this year
- provide further working capital to support our operating companies during the pandemic and for Vintage Trains Limited's restart.

We are very grateful to our sponsors: the City of Birmingham, European Regional Development Fund, Network Rail, West Midlands Trains, the Spencer Group, the National Heritage Lottery Fund, the Friends of Vintage Trains and those who have (and continue to) contribute to our new Patrons' Club, projects and leave legacies.

This overall contribution has exceeded, by some 25%, the sum we set out to raise in our CBS share offer and is a magnificent achievement.

All our trains are profitable and our engineering business goes from strength to strength, restrained only by our ability to recruit staff to undertake more work.

As you will know, pursuant to the ERDF project we undertook to employ an additional ten full time equivalent staff which has increased our employed people numbers by 50%. Amongst these are several young people who are now gainfully at work in both our engineering and commercial activities, so passing on the skills of the steam age and business to the next generation. But we want to do more.

As you will see if you read our overall financial reports and accounts, we still need to build our train operating business so it can stand on its own feet, rather than be reliant on support from Vintage Trains Charitable Trust. Whilst it would be perfectly practical and profitable to concentrate only on running and developing Tyseley Locomotive Works (and there is surely enough demand for our services to do that), it is not all we want to do. We all like running express steam trains and now also introducing diesel explorer trains, but we all need to support the development of that business more in two ways. Of course, you can all help by subscribing to individual projects and by joining the Friends of Vintage Trains as a member and we encourage you to do so. However, by far the greatest help you can give is to come aboard our trains as paying passengers and encourage your friends and people in your area to do the

same. Vintage Trains Limited simply needs to grow by selling more seats!

I think you will find our 2024 express steam train programme most attractive. You will see that we are expanding our *Shakespeare Express* programme next year by starting some trains from Worcester, Derby and Leicester which will give us much greater geographical reach. Our express steam trains will pick up at an inner ring and outer ring of stations on their journey to make it easier for more people to join at stations such as Coleshill, Widney Manor, Droitwich, Wolverhampton and Banbury. And now we have completed the construction of the first phase of our new carriage works, we will start northbound trains from Tyseley Locomotive Works once again where we can offer limited free car parking.

The not to be missed experience for 2024 is *Clun Castle's* return to the Devon Banks (unassisted both ways) in a rerun of her famous 1964 1Z48 record run for a two day tour in May. This will also see her continue on to London Paddington, returning there for the first time since she hauled the last Western Region steam train from there in 1965. You simply have to be there. Book now and be part of our history!

Michael Whitehouse, Chairman

DATE FOR THE DIARY

The VT Community Benefit Society (CBS) AGM will be held at Tyseley on Saturday 18 November at 2pm, with the formal business of the AGM being open to CBS members only. This will be followed by a briefing at around 2.30 to the whole internal community (Friends of Vintage Trains members, VT members, volunteers and staff) with tea & biscuits.

This briefing, which will include a brief presentation from Michael Whitehouse on the vision for the future of Vintage Trains, is an opportunity to meet the whole Vintage Trains and Friends of Vintage Trains team and ask questions. A depot tour has been arranged following the briefing.

The Friends are helping with the on-the-day organisation of this day. Any offers to help, for example with registration or the refreshments, will be welcome. If you are able to help please let us know through any of our contact details on page 2.

TYSELEY DEPOT GUIDED TOURS – A 2023 SELLOUT!

Vintage Trains' contribution to Birmingham Heritage Week on Saturday 16th September concluded the sold out Tyseley Depot Guided Tours for 2023. Due to public demand and support from my fellow volunteer guides, we doubled the original planned tours per Guided Tour Saturday dates between May and September. The guides also contributed to specific interest group visits such as the Heywood Society and two photo charters.



16th September Birmingham Heritage tour - Robert Ferris, Roger Williams, Michael Cridge (observer), Mike Corbett, Stuart Hyde (observer). Photo: Mary McCullough



Geoff Massey and July tour visitors admire 'Clun Castle' on steam preparation. Photo: Mike Corbett

Thanks are due to volunteer guides Geoff Massey, Robert Ferris and Roger Williams for their significant achievements, with much support from Mary McCullough, Harj Taggar, Alastair Meanley, Richard Dovey and the Tuesday volunteers to enable the tours to operate.

The tours provided the opportunity for visitors to appreciate the history of Tyseley depot, view some of the Tyseley Collection of vintage locomotives and rolling stock, visit 'points of interest' such as the signal box and new carriage shed and experience the development of the 15" Sutton Miniature Railway project.

Preparation of information and familiarisation for the site guides, including safety induction for visitors, safe walking routes and protocols, gaining knowledge of depot history and the Tyseley Collection, all progressed in advance of the May start date. Visual aids such as vintage Tyseley Depot 1908 drawings and models were resurrected from the former Visitor Centre and were on show for the first time for many years to provide a 'show and tell' introduction to the tours. Early experience has confirmed a minimum of two guides are required per tour to accompany a maximum of twelve visitors, with each tour length approaching two hours - and the time soon goes! Visitor interest in the tours has been such that they have travelled from as far away as Stirling, Brixham and Norwich to be with us!

So where do we go from here?

We are pleased to welcome four additional volunteers who have all received guiding observer experience and will receive further training in advance of a 2024 programme.

The Guided Tours team will be reviewing the visitor feedback shortly and engaging with Vintage Trains and Tyseley Locomotive Works for Guided Tour and Group visits and dates in 2024.

We are still keen to further increase the volunteer site guide numbers in 2024. If you are interested you should be fit and comfortable with welcoming and communicating with visitors, have an interest in engineering or social history, and some railway knowledge is useful. Training, including briefing notes and site familiarisation will be provided. It may be that you know of students who are interested in a history/ heritage/museum career and would welcome the opportunity of a charity volunteering work experience.

Please email: volunteering@vintagetrains.co.uk and let us know.

Mike Corbett: Guided Tours Team Leader

WELCOME TO A NEW MEMBER OF THE TYSELEY TEAM



Who am I? Hi, Everyone, John Mills here. My role at Vintage Trains is a Depot Support Manager, supporting the General Manager, people, welfare and safety, my main responsibilities.

I began my working career with Midland Red Omnibus back in 1977, as an electrical apprentice, attending Handsworth College for 5 years. I remained there for a total of ten years. I then moved on to Jaguar Cars electrical rectification. It was a very steep but rewarding learning curve in my career path.

In April 1991, I joined Regional Railways as a craft interchange technician, based at Tyseley Depot. I then spent a total of 33 years working at various locations for the different train operating companies who owned the franchises:

- Depot Manager at Birmingham New Street, which also incorporated the on-train cleaning team for the West Coast Main Line.
- Soho Depot Manager responsible for the class 323 Electric fleet running on the cross-city services.
- Returning to Tyseley as Depot Manager from 2016 up to 2021. In my final year with West Midlands Trains I spent time with the Safety and Environmental Team.

I have worked with some great people in my time, and I have learned a lot along my work life journey. I believe I am a people person and an active Mental Health First Aider, and strongly believe in Physio Social ... you may want to speak with me to understand it.

My hobbies ... I am a keen golfer, although not very good I enjoy the etiquette that the game generates and will play at every opportunity that arises.

I enjoy painting in various forms, again not a gifted artist I just find the experience so relaxing.

For my sins, Birmingham City FC is my football team of choice and for those of you who follow the game you will appreciate what we have endured over the decades of disappointment.

I have been married for 42 years and have four children, 3 girls and 1 boy and 8 grandchildren. 4 boys and 4 girls.

For the grandparents amongst us, you'll appreciate that they certainly keep you young at heart.

My favorite time of the year is Christmas, although I struggle to understand why people can't always behave like they do in the festive season on a normal daily basis. So please, for those working around the Tyseley site, make sure that I receive my invitations to any Christmas parties that are happening. But remember *The Polar Express*, I have committed myself to the cause so any dates that clash I am afraid the Polars will take priority!

I am excited to be here. My initial thoughts are the whole team is amazing, but we are going on a journey of change, the change will be for the betterment of Vintage Trains both as a business and its people. One thing that I have learned over my working life is that you can't implement changes without consultation and buy-in from the stakeholders. As you can appreciate there's a lot of hard work and many challenges ahead of us, I believe in this team and know we will deliver the changes required.

I pride myself on trying to do the right thing.

Thanks in advance for your support.

John Mills

RAILTOURS UPDATE FOR WINTER 2023



After a very successful summer season of Shakespeare Express and Diesel Explorer trains, the Autumn/ Winter programme kicked off with a trip to Melton Mowbray and over the Harringworth Viaduct for lunch, with 5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*. 7029 *Clun Castle* then made history as the first GWR designed locomotive to depart from King's Cross for 10 years.



Vintage Trains will be visiting Blackpool for the illuminations on 11th November, with an optional tram tour through the famous lights as part of the itinerary, a first for us. The train will use a class 37 and is sure to become a favourite for years to come.

There are also two traditional Vintage Trains Christmas trips. The White Rose will depart Birmingham for York on 28th November, with a Castle at the helm and the following week, a Castle will head along classic Great Western territory to Bath and Bristol.

Of course, no Winter would be complete without the Polar Express. Running on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 24th November to 23rd December, believers will be taken on a magical journey from Birmingham to the North Pole, aboard the Polar Express. There will be hot chocolate galore, a visit from Santa and entertainment for all the family. Tickets can be booked via the Vintage Trains website at www.vintage trains.co.uk or by calling 0121 708 4690.

Peter Jeffs - Tour Manager, Vintage Trains

YOUNG VOLUNTEERS - VITAL TO FUTURE SUCCESS

As a younger volunteer, involvement in the heritage railway sector can be challenging, but at Vintage Trains there are exciting opportunities and rewarding ways of playing a part in main line steam. Wherever your enthusiasm lies, there are many ways to participate and stewarding is one of them.

Here you can build your skills in a variety of areas. Customer service is paramount and people skills can be developed whilst engaging with passengers. Throughout every Vintage Trains excursion, there is considerable opportunity to engage with passengers, talking about what we do and answering general enquiries. Initially it's quite daunting but you quickly get the hang of it and build your confidence. You also begin to develop an understanding of passenger expectations and confidence grows in line with the experience.



By far the most important duty of any steward is safety. Over the age of 18, we are responsible for opening and closing doors at station stops and ensuring the safe boarding of our passengers. Whilst on board, the welfare and comfort of passengers is front of mind at all times. We keep our coaches clean and tidy and make sure that passengers are acting in line with operational safety regulations. This can be challenging but you soon pick up the skills required to be 'firm' but also 'fair' with people. Anyone over 16 can be involved in these duties, but under the supervision of an experienced volunteer.

Despite the challenges of long operating days and an intense tour programme, many younger volunteers are now a key part of the VT family. From general stewarding duties and coach cleaning to administration, train planning and more senior steward roles, there are lots of opportunities to progress.

You will be made aware of confidential operational matters that are not for sharing. Handling these confidential areas professionally is key to success in the role, through which you will also obtain a deeper understanding of operational requirements.

Volunteering on main line charter trains also provides a valuable addition to the CV of anyone seeking a career in the rail industry. Several younger stewards have joined the railway since volunteering with VT, in roles such as dispatching, on-train catering and control.

I have travelled over ten thousand miles in the last two years as a VT Steward and now Deputy Tour Manager. It was a feeling of immense pride as I looked back at our coaches standing behind 7828 and 7812 on the blocks at Minehead on the recent 'Whistling Ghost Express'. As a railway enthusiast and all round 'crank' since I was a boy, VT has enabled me to channel my passion for trains and it feels an honour to be part of a team that makes so many people smile as we travel the rails of Great Britain. There have been many challenges, but I have been welcomed into a very experienced team and learned many skills from those around me, whilst progressing within the organisation.

The Vintage Trains tour management team is looking for new stewards to join our team as we enter a very exciting period, with ever more Shakespeare and Polar Express trains, as well as Diesel Explorers and Express Steam excursions to support. If you could see yourself being part of this team or would like some more information, please get in touch with us by emailing stewards@vintagetrains.co.uk. We are particularly keen to hear from young people.

Joe Bevan - Deputy Tour Manager, Vintage Trains

WORKSHOP REPORT

TYSELEY LOCOMOTIVES

7029 *Clun Castle*

7029 continues to perform well, its annual boiler inspection in July raising no issues.

5043 *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe*

With new superheater header installed, the locomotive continues to perform well. The paintwork was revarnished in May.

5043 double headed the CBS Shareholder's Special to Didcot with 7029 *Clun Castle*. The pair were out again on the Welsh Marches Express in June and tackled the Lickey incline. After more running in turns with the Shakespeare Express, 5043 hauled 'The Melton Pieman' in late September.



A classic steam shed shot with 5080 (minus tender) and 7029 on 5th August 2023.



A turntable 'Castle' gathering – part of the 9th June 2023 photo shoot held in advance of the Tyseley 'Castle 100' June weekend.

5080 *Defiant*

5080 was moved from storage to feature in the June 'Castle 100' weekend line up, which included 4079 *Pendennis Castle* on loan from the GWS at Didcot. A new welded construction tender tank has been received but dummy rivets will be fitted to the tank to retain its original appearance.

4965 *Rood Ashton Hall*

Stored for several years following its boiler ticket expiry, consideration is being given to an overhaul plan for 4965. New fabrication techniques and careful re-engineering mean that re-construction with narrower cylinder casings and covers will enhance its mainline gauging prospects for access to Network Rail routes.

Class 47 47773

A new electronic Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR), replacing the original design, has been manufactured and delivered. Fitting is due to be completed during October.

Class 37 37240

The arrival of VT's new acquisition, Class 37 37240 to provide expansion and resilience to main line operation will now be in 2024. The locomotive body is at Eastcroft Depot, Nottingham, the monoblock wheels and axles

are receiving attention by South Devon Railway's wheelshop and the bogies are at Tyseley for attention to the axlebox manganese horn liners. The locomotive will arrive at Tyseley in its current Transrail livery but will eventually be repainted in British Railways original green livery.

COACHING STOCK

Pullman Car No. 353

Continued restoration work on Pullman Car No. 353 in 2023 remains subject to funding availability.

Mk1 and Mk2 vehicles

Coaching stock modifications

- **Controlled Emission Toilet (CET)**

All the operational coaching stock fleet CET installations were completed by the end of May and, following some early snagging issues, are now operating well. The arrangements for tank discharge on a regular basis to a road bowser is also working well.

- **Central Door Locking (CDL)**

Following CDL design and installation programme discussion with the ORR (Office of Road and Rail) and the expiry of VT's previous Railway Safety Regulations 1999 Certificate of Exemption, a further Certificate of Exemption has been issued to November 2024 to enable continued use of VT's fleet on the main line.

ORR has approved a VT programme with a prototype coach installation on Mk 2 Brake Second Open completed by the end of 2023 and an installation programme for Tyseley fleet completion by the end of November 2024.

CARRIAGE WORKSHOP

The construction of a carriage workshop on the former Tyseley Warwick Road Station site, benefitting from a grant awarded by Birmingham City Council from the European Regional Development Fund Property Investment Programme, has been completed. It was formally opened on 20th June by Councillor John Cotton, Leader of Birmingham City Council and will operate under the name Metropolitan Railway Carriage and Wagon Company, with a new sign to be mounted on the building.

Additional platform safety and other improvements are currently being undertaken by the Tuesday gang volunteers.

The workshop is proving of immediate benefit for enhancing coach maintenance under cover e.g. external coach cleaning, body repairs and painting.

There is an aspiration that further groundworks and track extension will proceed next year to enable the storage of up to eight coaches undercover to provide much needed protection. As part of the next phase a set of lifting jacks has been overhauled, load tested, and is waiting delivery.

The carriage workshop agreement has enabled recruitment of ten additional staff to be progressed including trainees and fitter/machinists.



Carriage workshop official opening by John Cotton Leader of Birmingham City Council 20th June. Apprentices Louis Foulkes and River Temlett hold the new Metropolitan Railway Carriage & Wagon Co. sign.



The original temporary wooden structure, soon to be a memory, is now in the process of demolition.

THE HUT

The demolition of ‘The Hut’ is in progress by the Tuesday gang volunteers with stored artefacts to be retained now transferred to the LMRCA. In its place, with Spencer Group undertaking design and construction anticipated to start by the end of the year, a machine workshop is proposed with a roof canopy constructed to protect both the workshop and the adjacent existing brick office and former visitor centre (to be converted to mess/amenity accommodation).

Mike Corbett and Michael Hughes.

All images by Mike Corbett and Michael Hughes, except where credited

THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER PROJECT UPDATE

The team is making steady progress on preparing the mighty *Duke of Gloucester* for main line running.

The work is divided into:

- Cleaning and painting the various parts and fixing them to the locomotive. In some cases, parts have had to be re-made to fit other alterations. Electrical work is proceeding with the final jobs waiting until the boiler cladding is fitted. The boiler is now awaiting hydraulic testing (an important milestone in the overhaul). Underneath, the brake gear is being reassembled with new pins and bushes.
- Big jobs, and jobs for Tyseley Locomotive Works – such as overhauling the superheater header and machining the centre connection rod. Several hairline cracks were discovered in the rod when it was subject to non-destructive stress testing.
- Work on the tender – electrical works and refitting the steam brake cylinder. The filling hoses and hydrant gear have been checked and are stored in the support coach.
- The support coach is being fitted out ready for use – work that mainly takes place on wet days! The water system is ready to be tested – and then the cooker and water heater can be gas-tested. Meanwhile (on dry days) the coach is getting a good coating of wax to protect it from the elements as winter approaches.



This is the block ('billet') of special steel that the replacement centre connecting rod will be machined from. Nearly 0.2 tons of steel will have to be shaved off. This will be the fourth one fitted to The Duke since 1954. (Image: Dave Oliver)



*Wax polish for the support coach.
(Image: Tony Watson)*

All this work continues to cost money! The Duke sales stand is currently doing the rounds of the Autumn Steam Galas and other railway events. It is one way to raise funds – and a good way to keep in touch with the members of The Duke’s “family”. There are over 500 members of the family – and you can join for a little as £5 a month. As well as contributing to the success of the project, members will be able to travel on the first *Duke of Gloucester* test run for just £10!

If you are interested in joining, or volunteering, go to: <https://www.theduke.uk.com>

Michael Hughes

Did you know...

The Duke of Gloucester needs five different types of lubricating oil.

COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY PROJECT UPDATE

Currently the frames are at TLW, along with the boiler and many of the parts acquired for the build (chimney, running plate and cab material, axleboxes, etc). The cylinders have been cast and we are currently looking for a supplier to machine them as our original supplier has decided to close due to retirement and will not be able to work on our castings before he retires. The driving wheels have been cast and along with the pony wheels are up in Lancashire waiting on new axles and tyres to make up the wheelsets. The extension frames were to be machined at the same



The boiler arriving at Tyseley from Didcot

supplier as the cylinders but we are having to find a new supplier for the same reason as the cylinders. Hopefully, when we can get this work done we should be in a position to have the rest of the frames (cylinders, extension frames and buffer beam) assembled at TLW by the end of next year, closely followed by the wheeling of the chassis. All this, as usual, relies on resources being available to do the work which these days is a challenge in itself. We also want to have the boiler cleaned and preserved to stop any more deterioration before winter sets in. Further funding is always welcome so if you have a few shillings to spare, take a look at how you could help www.churchwardcounty.org.uk.

The Churchward County Project Team

TUESDAY VOLUNTEER GROUP UPDATE



Regular travellers on the VT Railtours will have seen the headboards for the tours, such as the one for the recent Melton Pieman. These are created by Pat Taylor, a member of this volunteer group, which he then donates for the on train raffle. This is very popular with the passengers, and of course provides funds for Vintage Trains.



The new carriage shed is proving invaluable in providing shelter for the coaches and a better working environment for the coach cleaning volunteers. Here we see volunteer David Shaw working in the dry removing rain marks on the part of the carriage that is not fortunate enough to be under cover.

Geoff Middleton and Michael Hughes

SUTTON MINIATURE RAILWAY UPDATE

Thanks to a significant donation from The Friends of Vintage Trains and several smaller private donations, work on *Sutton Belle's* new boiler has now commenced and is starting to take shape at the Denver Light Railway's workshop. This is a major milestone in *Sutton Belle's* restoration and with the advanced progress of the main locomotive restoration, we are optimistic that *Sutton Belle* could be operational next year.



New Boiler taking shape at DLR – Pic: Andy Walton

We are now looking to raise the funds for the 43 tubes required to complete the boiler. These can be sponsored at a cost of just £25 each. See below for details.

Our volunteers at Tyseley have made great progress stripping Coach #3 – the first of the closed coaches. Structurally, the coach appears to be in good condition, and we are hoping to move it into the new Coach shed so that painting and re-upholstering work can commence over the winter.



Thursday Night Volunteers Stripping Coach #3 at Tyseley – Pic: Simon Edmunds

If you are able to provide financial support to this project, you can now do it through the main **Vintage Trains** website, by clicking on the ‘**support us**’ option, then selecting ‘**all appeals**’ and then selecting the ‘**Sutton Miniature Railway Appeal**’.

Simon Edmunds - SMR Project Lead

Our roving photographer Al Wallace recalled a visit that he paid to the Sutton Miniature Railway in 2008 when the locomotives and rolling stock were based at the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway. A couple of his photographs showing Sutton Belle (on the left) and Sutton Flyer (on the right) in action are shown here.



Come and visit us at the Warley National Model Railway Exhibition at the NEC on 25 and 26 November. The Sutton Miniature Railway project is hoping to take Sutton Belle, including the part-built boiler, in its semi-restored condition with a view to raising the final funds to get it over the line. The project has just received another donation of £2000 so it is well on the way!

THE SHAKESPEARE LINE - LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Following a substantive review, in May the committee of the Shakespeare Line Promotion Group endorsed a proposal to rename the Group as the Shakespeare Line Rail User Group (SLRUG) in order to clarify its identity and purpose and help explain the relationship with Friends of the Shakespeare Line (FoSL). The overall structure now looks like this:



SLRUG represents the interests of users of rail services between Birmingham and Stratford upon Avon and Stratford upon Avon and Leamington Spa/London and the local communities they serve.

FoSL is a non-profit making trust that seeks funding and sponsorship to support station volunteers and develops schemes to enhance the stations, thus improving the experience for passengers using them.

The two organisations liaise with each other and have the common aim of ultimately increasing the numbers of passengers using the line.

Turning now to news of FoSL activities, I want to begin by providing an update on two of the four ongoing projects grant funded, either fully or in part, under the Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF) operated by West Midlands Trains.

The commencement of work to restore the station building at Henley in Arden in early April revealed several structural issues that had not previously been identified. Following removal of all but one of the chimneys to create more internal space the existing ceilings were taken down. This exposed corroded lintels and other major issues.

A report by structural engineers, commissioned and paid for by Friends of Henley Railway Station (FoHRS), identified brickwork and masonry in poor condition and a rotten timber wall plate on the east elevation caused by water ingress due to guttering failures and defective roofing sheets.

The wall plate supports the canopy and is thus a critical structural component.

Lack of maintenance by Network Rail and predecessor custodians over a number of years has allowed the building to fall into disrepair.



The interior of Henley station under restoration

The first part of the floor and drainage was installed in mid-June and more recently 13 stainless steel/galvanised wind posts have been fitted to provide lateral restraint to the long front and rear walls, thus allowing work to commence on repairing the brickwork. The plan is to install a micro-brewery when the windows in this area of the building have been bricked-up and new lintels installed. In early September joists were fitted to support a rubber roof that will keep the building watertight, even if repairs by Network Rail to the east elevation of the canopy continue to be delayed.

Tim Hedley-Jones, the Executive Director of the Railway Heritage Trust, visited the station at the beginning of August and committed a further sum of up to £45,000 towards unforeseen structural works. This is in addition to the figure previously pledged by the RHT of £110,000.

Local builders merchant EH Smith has continued to supply many building materials at cost price and staff have helped with design work. The company is also sponsoring the ladies toilets and providing the gents and disabled facilities at cost price.

Fans of real ale will no doubt be pleased to hear that the Micro-Brewery is now

operational and once the building opens ales will be served on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings. Lager is to be supplied by the Purity Brewing Co. based in Great Alne.

A Coffee Pod is to be sited in the outside area and this will also be available for use by schoolchildren.

The whole project has continued to be masterminded by the indefatigable FoHRS Chair, Angela Okey, who is hoping the building will become a community hub for the town and as a consequence bring back life to the station. A tentative opening date of “before Christmas” has been mentioned so keep an eye on the various media channels.

The second project is the volunteer/sales/information hub at Stratford upon Avon station. This has now been kitted out with furniture and equipment for its different roles. A range of merchandise has been purchased, including greeting cards depicting paintings by John Austin GRA, jute shopping bags, water bottles, fridge magnets, pens and jigsaws. The room has already been used by the Friends of Vintage Trains for a couple of meetings.

Some readers may be wondering what has happened to the life-size steel ‘Shakespeare’ silhouettes mentioned in the last edition of Steam in Trust. The accompanying information boards have been available for some time but as I write in the last week of September the silhouettes themselves, which have been manufactured in Manchester, are expected to be delivered imminently. The first station installation will be at Henley in Arden and once this has been successfully completed the project will be rolled out across the other stations along the line.

Neil Williamson

THE SEMI-ROYAL SALOON (806)

After 22 years of varied preservation away from Tyseley, the Semi- Royal Saloon has returned. Built in 1903 as number 74 by the LNWR at Wolverton for King Edward VII's Royal Train, it has also been numbered 5074/10506/806.



It first entered preservation at Tyseley in 1973. Here we see *Clun Castle* with a decorated headlamp alongside the Royal Saloon; both photos were taken at Tyseley Warwick Road in 1988 by the late John Harvey. It was fully restored by 1989, sold in 2000 to a private individual at the Bluebell Railway for use in the dining trains and eventually bought by a film company.



Its nomadic life continued at an Indian restaurant then, following an aborted plan to turn it into a dining room, it was finally rescued again and transported back to Tyseley by its private owner for storage.

The coach is currently stored under wraps at Tyseley to

protect it from the weather. Although the Royal Saloon was purchased to save it from possible scrapping, the future of the coach is uncertain. It would be great if it could be incorporated into the work being carried out by the new Metropolitan Railway Carriage and Wagon Company in the new carriage shed alongside the Pullman coaches and the TSO refurbishment program, but this is very dependent on available funds.



Geoff Middleton and Michael Hughes

GWR COVERED VAN (MINK A) DIAGRAM V23 NO.125912

PART 1 – HISTORICAL USAGE OF OPEN WAGONS AND COVERED VANS



GWR Mink A (Dia V23)



GWR Mink A No 125912

This is the first part of a 2-part article describing the historical use of open wagons and covered vans by the railways. The second part describing the history of Covered Van 126912, which is currently stored at Tyseley, will be featured in the next issue of Steam in Trust.

The railways carried most of their freight traffic in either open wagons or covered vans. The majority of mineral traffic was not carried in Railway Company owned stock, but in open wagons belonging to Private Owners. A census carried out in August 1918 recorded there were 626,223 private owner wagons registered to operate on railway company lines. Of these the majority (566,340) were open wagons for coal and coke distribution. These open wagons were operated by Collieries (72%), Distribution Factors (22%), Individual Traders and Statutory Undertakings. There were only 2,500 covered vans belonging to Private Owners and 9,500 tank wagons.

The main Railway Companies owned a similar number of wagons for transporting non-mineral freight traffic. At the Grouping in 1922, the total of Railway Company owned Goods stock was 624,399. This increased to a peak in 1928 (744,785), before gradually decreasing. The total of Railway Company owned Goods stock in 1934 (when the Tyseley covered van was ordered) was 670,707.

The ratio of open wagons to covered vans gradually reduced over the years as customers demanded that their goods were better protected from the weather.

The table below lists the quantity of each wagon type for the Great Western Railway for various years:

Description	1928	1930	1932	1934
Open Wagon	53,787	52,960	51,025	46,724
Covered Van (Mink)	20,991	21,570	21,483	22,972
Specialist Wagon (Girder, Machinery, Transformer, Insulated Banana & Meat Vans, Container flats, etc.)	797	1,022	1,142	1,427
Rail or Timber Bolster Wagon	2,933	2,885	2,829	2,448
Mineral Open Wagon	1,644	1,640	1,611	1,394
Cattle Truck	3,208	3,250	3,211	3,173
Brake Van (Toad)	2,380	2,382	2,292	2,212
Coal, coke, ash & sand (Locomotive Dept.)	4,861	4,889	4,649	4,498
Ballast (Permanent Way Dept.)	2,524	2,411	2,199	2,018
Miscellaneous Goods (inc Shunter Trucks)	1,597	1,596	1,571	1,525
Sub Total Goods Stock (inc Service vehicles)	94,722	94,605	92,012	88,391
Post Office Van	40	37	37	34
Luggage, Parcel, Milk, Fruit & Pass Brake Vehicle	1,632	1,619	1,460	1,362
Fish Van	364	364	363	363
Carriage Truck	331	314	277	262
Horse Box	819	790	793	729
Miscellaneous Non-Passenger	32	31	56	72
Sub Total Non-Passenger (Brown) Stock	3,218	3,155	2,986	2,822
Total	97,940	97,760	94,998	91,213

The Non-Passenger (Brown) stock were separately identified because they all had oil axle boxes, vacuum brakes and could be close coupled with screw couplings. These features allowed them to operate in fast passenger trains.



The majority of open wagons and covered vans were eventually included in the Common User (Pool) Agreement, allowing them to be used by any Railway Company. This scheme had been introduced as an emergency measure during the First World War to increase the availability of wagons, by reducing the amount of empty wagon haulage. Wagons not in this scheme were labelled 'Not Common User' and had to be returned empty to the owning Railway Company, but those in the scheme could be reloaded and sent to another destination. There was a weekly 'Balancing' requirement that ensured that the same number of wagons were exchanged between each Railway Company. The scheme initially only applied to unfitted open wagons, but as time passed other types were introduced. Issues with the comparative quality of wagons built by the individual companies lead to some problems, but by January 1939, wagon design had been largely standardised and 81.6% of all railway company owned goods stock was included.

The table below lists the dates when each of the Great Western Railway wagon types were included in (and in the case of Cattle trucks withdrawn from) the Common User scheme:

2nd April 1916	Unfitted Open wagons (3 plank deep and upwards)
3rd June 1919	Unfitted Covered Vans
4th February 1926	End door mineral wagons (12 tons and under)
31st May 1927	Four wheeled single bolster wagons All Cattle trucks
24th July 1927	Pig-iron wagons (20tons and under) End door mineral wagons (20 tons and under)
31st December 1927	Cattle trucks withdrawn from Common User Agreement
5th September 1939	All Open wagons (21 tons and under) Vacuum brake fitted Covered Vans All Cattle trucks Double bolsters Various other Specialist wagons
11th November 1940	Vacuum brake fitted Insulated Meat Vans Vacuum brake fitted Insulated Banana Vans Insulated Containers & associated Vacuum braked flats

One reason why the Great Western Railway did not include Vacuum brake fitted Covered Vans in the Common User scheme (until the start of World War Two) was their extensive use in overnight express freight trains. These operated in conjunction with supplementary and feeder services to provide one-day transit times for general merchandise between major centres. The use of vacuum braked stock improved the braking capability of the train, which allowed it to be safely accelerated. The typical speed of a fully vacuum braked 'Class C' express freight trains was 40mph, which can be compared with an average ordinary freight train speed of 7mph. The Great Western Railway had commenced running these services in January 1905 and in 1909 there were 26 regular vacuum braked express freight trains operating daily. By 1927 this total had risen to 69.

Many of these overnight express freight services acquired names based on either the type of traffic carried, or their destination/origin. The names engendered a sense of pride amongst the railway staff who worked on these services and the names were also publicised by the Company together with details about the punctuality of the services.

The speed and quantity of the overnight express freight train and onward delivery services further increased in the early 1930's and this table illustrates this by showing the number of destinations reached by the overnight services departing from Birmingham (Hockley) in 1929 and 1936:

For Delivery:	Number of delivery locations for freight sent from Birmingham (accepted before 5:00pm)	
	1929	1936
Next Morning	71	108
Noon next day	16	5
Next Afternoon	7	13
Next Day	20	22
Second Morning	-	4
Total	114	152



2-6-0 26XX (Aberdare) Class locomotive No.2618 with a 'Class C' Lamp Headcode indicating a fully fitted Vacuum brake Express Freight Train. The train is heading north towards Birmingham through Whitnash Cutting near Leamington in 1928. The train comprises seven new vacuum brake fitted ventilated covered vans (Mink A) and a brake van (Toad) at the rear.

FOR THE REFENCES SEE THE PUBLICATIONS PAGE ON THE FRIENDS' WEB SITE AT [WWW.FRIENDSOFTV.ORG.UK](http://WWW.FRIENDSOFTV.org.uk)

*Robert Ferris
Volunteer Archivist (November 2022)*

Following on from Glynis Dray's poem about Tyseley Station in the previous issue of Steam in Trust we are pleased to showcase one of her paintings in this issue.



This painting of *Clun Castle* approaching Tyseley Station from the Solihull direction was done from a photo that Glynis took on Sunday 23rd June 2019. Glynis had been at the Open Day and took a photograph using a telephoto lens from the bridge at Tyseley Station as *Clun Castle* rounded the corner on the approach to Tyseley from Solihull. It is not bearing the headboard **Shakespeare Express** so either there wasn't one then or it was a dummy run as in the photo *Clun Castle* is on the track leading into Tyseley Depot. Glynis stood there and put the outline of the train in from her photo then sketched the rest of the view 'Live', later painting *Clun Castle* in from the photo.

Originally this painting was to be used for the launch of the 2019 Shakespeare Express season so Glynis took some artistic licence and moved *Clun Castle* onto the through line in the painting.

Glynis Dray and Paul Hatton

RAY CHURCHILL LOOKS BACK

Geoff Middleton recently texted a photo of an old Bescot Super 'D' standing in Wednesbury Exchange sidings. During my 44 years at Bescot I had this job quite a few times. The purpose of the job was twofold; shunting the exchange sidings and to 'bank' any train that needed assistance over the P&O or Princes End and Ocker Hill Line to give it its full title. The loco 49275 of which I've taken a shovel to on various occasions is standing in a siding in which you were out of the way of any incoming trains. There was no direct access to the yard from the Bescot direction, trains would have to pull through Wednesbury Town station and over Potters Lane crossing until the brake van cleared the crossover behind which was controlled by Wednesbury No 2-signal box. When the route had been set the Guard would hand signal the driver back through the crossover onto the opposite running line. When the 'Bobby' at No 1-signalbox had closed the gates to traffic the train would be signalled wrong road through the station over the crossing immediately passing No1 box who had set the route into the yard. Picking-up the shunter from the cabin next to the box the train now turned off the main line to the right passing through a bridge hole that carried the GW Paddington to Birkenhead main line overhead. Now for the tricky bit, tricky because the whole yard was on a sharp right-hand bend and a stiff gradient so you couldn't have a good run at it for fear of becoming de-railed. With the train secured the loco would be detached and come through a clear road either to load out or go light to the Depot. Any traffic for the WR should have been marshalled next to the engine so that it was easy for them to pick up with their shunt engine, usually a pannier tank with a shunters match truck attached.



On Sunday 28 May 1960 an ex-LNWR 'Super D' 0-8-0 No 49275 potters around, shunting goods wagons near Wednesbury adjacent to the line from Walsall to Dudley in a typical Black Country landscape. The lines curving right under the footbridge gave access to the former GW and LMS exchange sidings, from where in the latter days of steam many scrap locomotives bound for Cashmore's of Great Bridge were transferred for their final journey. No. 49275 was a Bescot engine from December 1958 until being withdrawn from service in October 1961.

Now when it became necessary for us to shunt it could be a real nuisance to road traffic. The shunter would tell the signalman of our requirements. He would close the Potters Lane gates to road traffic and set the route. We would draw a great raft of wagons onto the main line very often requiring No 2 box to clear his home signal, when the last wagon was clear of the crossing the shunter would stop us and hook-off the first wagon or wagons with his shunting pole. Then he would signal the Driver to 'Hit 'em up' who would then give it some wellie until the shunter signalled him to stop. There was a knack to this as I found out one day when my driver was letting me do the shunting.

We had a big raft on and after hitting 'em-up I was signalled to stop. A 'D' had quite a powerful vacuum brake and I put the lot in. I felt the wagons stretching out trying to pull me along then we stopped rather abruptly. The waggon that the shunter had detached went scooting off into the siding followed by another one. Puzzled it took me a moment to realise that the abrupt stop had caused the coupling to break on the second waggon. I told my mate who said to put a small amount of brake in to stretch them out then I could put the lot in. Here endeth the first lesson!

Potters Lane wasn't a busy road, but it had its moments and if we'd just started shunting and traffic rolled up to the gates then they could be held up 20 mins to half an hour getting frustrated and blowing horns etc, some turning round to find a way round on the Holyhead Road. We sometimes had to go up to Ocker Hill Power station to make a shunt, we also serviced Bagnall's steel works which was almost opposite the power station on the other side of the line.

If a train rolled up for the P&O and wanted a banker, the Driver would give 'Two Crows' on the whistle when passing the No 1 box and he'd then draw up to the starting signal on P&O which was by the Power station and wait there until we were released from our duties. Of course, we may have been standing idle in which case we'd go right out behind him. It was a tough gradient and you needed to get the fire in order pretty smart. We were already on the gradient when we got behind him and if it was a train of heavy Iron Ore for Stewart and Lloyds Spring Vale works at Bilston, they took a bit of starting. Add to that we passed very close to the Cooling Towers of the Power station and sometimes the wind would blow the fine draining condensate onto the track causing either loco to lose its feet when passing over it. After getting underway we would pass under Toll End bridge'ole which was nearly a tunnel owing to the busy island road junction above. Eventually we'd come out of a cutting on to a very high embankment still slogging away until the line started to curve to the left and the gradient ended abruptly on passing over the canal bridge and started downwards to Princes End Road crossing and box just over a train length away. Great skill was needed here if he hadn't got the road as the train driver had only the engine brake to control his heavy load. The bank engine Driver could see what portion of the train had crossed over the canal bridge and adjusted his power accordingly eventually shutting off altogether. If the train had got the road then the driver just let them go and we would follow behind to stop behind a crossover that would turn us back to Wednesbury.

One morning we were stood idle in the siding when I just happened to glance up as the Cornishman rolled to a stand for its Wednesbury Central stop at about 0913. On the front was Stafford Road Castle 5031 *Totnes Castle*. On start-up the staccato bark was awesome, faced with a three -mile climb of 1 in 100/97/100 they didn't have to mess about. I thought tomorrow I'll bring my camera. Just before the said time I climbed the embankment that brought me just a few yards off the end of the platform. It was *Totnes Castle* again and I got a nice shot of it. Some good time later I took a shot of the returning Cornishman at Gloucester again with *Totnes Castle*. It was years later whilst taking a careful look at the two photos I noticed that in the shot at Gloucester the Castle had been fitted with a double chimney. Well until I think of something else to write a baht, that's yer lot!

Ray Churchill

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We are always pleased to hear from our readers. Please let us have any feedback through any of the routes in the *Contact the Friends* details on page 2.

The feature in our last issue on the Prince of Wales' visit in 1988 led Michael Whitehouse to share some personal recollections of that visit:

Sirs

Your article on the Prince of Wales' visit in September 1988 brought back many happy memories. My father had worked very hard to secure a Government job creation scheme for us, together with substantial funding. This proved so successful that, not only did we benefit from major depot upgrades and improvements to our collection, but over 800 unemployed people received training so that they re-gained their confidence and succeeded in returning to employment elsewhere. We benefited from engineering, carpentry, painting, building, visitor services and educational support. 7029, 5593, 5080 were all returned to main line service and our depot brought up to scratch. I thought all this magnificent work should be recognised and, through the good offices of the West Midlands Lord Lieutenant, a Royal visit was arranged.

The Prince of Wales kindly visited. We had a wonderful day showing him round the depot and he re-commissioned L&NWR Royal Saloon 806, which the job creation scheme had rebuilt.



The Royal Train arriving at Tyseley



Depot tour

British Railways agreed to run a special steam Royal Train to collect the Prince from Snow Hill. I met him on the platform and invited him to ride the footplate of Clun Castle to Tyseley with Dick Potts driving and Bernard Rainbow firing, two stalwart Tyseley men. Dick let the Prince drive part of the way under supervision.

At Tyseley, we showed the Prince of Wales our workshop and depot and he spoke with several staff members. We also had the Liverpool & Manchester Railway Lion in steam in readiness for the forthcoming open weekend to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the London & Birmingham Railway, so he footplated that too. The Prince recommissioned 806, opened our new demonstration line and had a buffet lunch with us in 9001.

Before the grand day, we had several visits from the security forces who took aerial photographs, asked innumerable questions, inspected everything and even sent a frogman inside Clun Castle's tender, just to check!

We have never had a prouder day.

Michael Whitehouse

STOCK LIST

From time to time locomotives and stock may be loaned out to other railway centres for static display or to operate services. Main line certified engines may be temporarily stabled away from home in order to undertake mainline duties. Guest Locomotives and rolling stock are included. These may be stabled at Tyseley Locomotive Works for attention or using Tyseley as an operating base, including use on Vintage Trains charter trains. Items marked 'p' are privately owned and not part of the Tyseley collection.

Please note that this list is maintained by volunteers and may not be complete at the date shown.

Some locomotives and rolling stock may not be on view in areas accessible by visitors to Tyseley Locomotive Works. Visitors are only admitted to the works site on Tyseley Open Days.

BR=BR Power Classification ; P= Locomotives in private ownership.

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

GWR Steam Locomotives

No.		Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
2885	P		28xx 2-8-0	1938 Swindon	Practical GW Steam
4121	P		5101 2-6-2T	1937 Swindon	on overhaul
4965		Rood Ashton Hall	49xx Hall 4-6-0	1929 Swindon	Stored
5043		Earl of Mount Edgcumbe	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1936 Swindon	Operational
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. L94 Stored
7760			57xx 0-6-0PT	1930 Glasgow	LT No. L90 Stored
9600			57xx 0-6-0PT	1945 Swindon	Stored

LMS/BR Steam Locomotives

5593		Kolhapur	5XP Jubilee 4-6-0	1934 NBL	BR 6P5F Stored
670			LNWR Bloomer	1987 Tyseley	Replica, ongoing work
71000	P	Duke of Gloucester	8P 4-6-2	1954 Crewe	on overhaul 71000 Trust

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

299099	p		88DS 0-4-0 DM	1950 Ruston & Hornsby	
347447	p		LWS 0-6-0 DM	1957 Ruston & Hornsby	
376	p	Princess Margaret	0-4-0 DM	1948 Andrew Barclay	at Turntable

BR Diesel/Electric Locomotives

No.	Name/Numbers	Class	Built	Notes
13029	08 021, D3029	08 DE 0-6-0	1953 Derby	Site Shunter
37240	D6940	37 DE Co-Co	1964 EE/VF	At Boden Rail
47 773	D1755 The Queen Mother	47 DE Co-Co	1964 Brush	47161/47541 Operational
50 033	Glorious D433	50 DE Co-Co	1968 EE/VF	At SVRly

Coaches

No.	Name/Numbers	Class	Built	Notes
311	Eagle	Mk1 Pullman Kitchen First	1960 Metro Cammell	NRM/TY01
335	Car No 335 : 99361	Mk1 Pullman Kitchen Second	1960 Metro Cammell	TY01
349	Car No 349 : 99349	Mk1 Pullman Parlour Second	1960 Metro Cammell	TY01
353	Car No 353 : 99353	Mk1 Pullman Parlour Second	1960 Metro Cammell	On Overhaul
806	74/5074/10506	Semi Royal Saloon	1903 Wolverton	LNWR Stored
1201		Mk 2RFO	1973/74 Derby	TY02
3309		Mk 2 FO	1973 Derby	TY02
3351		Mk 2 FO	1973/74 Derby	TY02
3416		Mk 2 FO	1973/74 Derby	TY02
5148		Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	at Telford
5157		Mk 2 TSO	1966 Derby	TY01
5177		Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	TY01
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 TSO/Club Car	1966 Derby	TY01
5212		Mk 2 TSO/Club Car	1967 Derby	TY01
5221		Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	at Telford
5314		Mk 2a TSO	1968 Derby	at Turntable
5420		Mk 2a TSO	1969 Derby	Top Bank
5928		Mk 2 SO	1973 Derby	TY02
9101		Mk 2 BSO (Buffet Car)	1966 Derby	TY01
35470		MK 1 BSK	1963 Wolverton	TY01
14064		Mk 2 BFK	1967 Derby	45305 Support
17015		MK 1 BFK	1961 Swindon	71000 Support
17018		MK 1 BFK	1961 Swindon	TY01
17090		MK 2 BFK	1968 Derby	at Turntable
96100		GUV (Water Carrier)	1959 Pressed Steel	

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144 Pacers

Set Number	Car Numbers	Builder and Date
144019	55819 DMS - 55855 MS - 55842 DMSL	Built 1987 Derby
144023	55859 MS - 55846 DMSL	Built 1987 Derby

Occasional Based Diesel Locomotives

No.	Name/Numbers	Class	Built	Notes
08417	D3532	08DE 0-6-0	1958 Derby	NR Yellow
08846	D4014	08DE 0-6-0	1961 Horwich	RSS Blue
20007	D8007	20DE Bo-Bo	1957 EE Vulcan Foundry	Green
20142	D8142	20DE Bo-Bo	1966 EE Vulcan Foundry	LT Red Sir John Betjeman
20189	D8189	20DE Bo-Bo	1967 EE Vulcan Foundry	BR Blue
20205	D8305	20DE Bo-Bo	1967 EE Vulcan Foundry	BR Blue

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Locomotives in the Works

No.	Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
6880	Betton Grange	68xx Grange	New Build	6880 Society
5952	Cogan Hall	49xx Hall 4-6-0	1933 Swindon	6880 Society
4936	Kinlet Hall	49xx Hall 4-6-0	1929 Swindon	JJP Holdings
789		F5 2-4-2T	New Build	Holden F5 Trust
80104		4MT 2-6-4T	1955 Brighton	SLL
7802	Bradley Manor	78xx Manor	1938 Swindon	EM Fund
4588		4575 2-6-2T	1927 Swindon	
41708		1F 0-6-0T	1880 Derby	Barrow Hill ES Society
3840	County of Montgomery	County 4-4-0	New Build	Churchward County
4709		47xx 2-8-0	New Build	"Night Owl"
65	B+W Engineering	0-6-0 T	1929 H/Clarke	Stripped at Turntable
7027	Thornbury Castle	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1949 Swindon	Boiler for 4709
7822	Foxcote Manor	78xx Manor 4-6-0	1950 Swindon	FM Society

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Some short contributions were received after the design of this issue was completed at our printers. Here they are, collated as late-breaking news.



Photograph: Dick Potts/Vintage Trains Archive



Photograph: Joe Bevan

On 7 October Vintage Trains celebrated the centenary of the GWR Castle Class with a railtour with 7029 *Clun Castle* to Lincoln via London King's Cross – this was the first departure of *Clun Castle* from King's Cross Station for over 50 years. Here we show *Clun Castle* at King's Cross Station alongside a historical photograph from the Vintage Trains archive of *Clun Castle* at King's Cross Station.

Neil Ewart, our ever-active social secretary, has been in contact with the Severn Valley Railway (SVR) at Kidderminster about holding a future social event at the SVR Railway Museum at Kidderminster. These discussions have proven positive and we are hoping to have a social there in early February with the new manager of the SVR as our speaker. More details will be in our next newsletter in early February, and on our web site.

Kidderminster has a frequent train service from Birmingham and beyond; holders of West Midlands travel passes only need to buy a ticket from Stourbridge Junction to Kidderminster for off-peak travel.

We are interested in our members' thoughts on this venue; if you have any comments, positive or negative, the please let us know using any of our contact details on page 2.

Are you interested in the wider history of railways, especially throughout the Commonwealth? The Commonwealth Heritage Forum is putting on a series of talks *Railways across the Commonwealth* about railways and the Commonwealth, starting in November. Talks include *Railways at the dawn of the Commonwealth* and *Leeds Engines of Empire*.

See <https://www.commonwealthheritage.org/join-our-autumn-lecture-series/> for more details of the Commonwealth Heritage Forum in general and this series of talks in particular.

7752 IN WORKING LIFE AND IN RETIREMENT



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