



670 Warwick Road, Tyseley, Birmingham B11 2HL
www.friendsofvt.org.uk

Steam in Trust Newsletter No. 32 – January 2024



70 members of the BR Class 8 Steam Locomotive Trust who gathered at Tyseley on a wet and windy December 3rd for a briefing on the status of the project, witnessed a magnificent sight – 71000 Duke of Gloucester in steam, on Tyseley's turntable, for the first time in 11 years. The majesty of the loco, although in its birthday suit for this event, is a joy to behold. Furthermore, on December 18th the Duke's boiler passed its initial steam test, achieving 250psi, a great result for all who have worked with grit and determination on the project since 2015. Roll-on the first Duke-hauled train in 2024. Photo: Denis Chick

Message from the Chair

Dear Member

Welcome to Steam in Trust Newsletter No. 32, the bi-annual newsletter for Members of the Friends of Vintage Trains. The Committee would like to wish all Members a very happy 2024 and thank you for your continued support throughout 2023. We also acknowledge those members of our railway family who are sadly no longer with us.

This printed newsletter is sent to all of our members, including those who have opted to receive it by email, since we are including the notice of our AGM alongside the latest Vintage Trains tour program - our constitution requires that all members receive a printed copy of the AGM notice. The audited accounts will be presented at the AGM.

The Friends have been busy since the last issue of Steam in Trust, including arranging two further social events for members, discussed in detail in this newsletter. Do come along to either or both of these to meet other members and also discuss any aspects of the Friends with your Committee, who are always represented at our events - we are always pleased to meet as many of our members as possible.

We also have an important message from our membership secretary, Sharon Salter – please see the shaded box on the next page

We always welcome contact from our members – see the *Contact Us* page on our website at www.friendsofvt.org.uk for our contact details and, as always, thank you for your continued support.

Paul Hatton, Chair

MEMBERSHIP FORMS

Our Membership Secretary asks that members return the renewal reminder form **with** their renewal, **including if renewing by Bank Transfer** to the Friends' account. We need the completed form to be returned to enable the correct information to be added for any payment received. This especially manifests itself if a donation has been added to a renewal and paid via Bank Transfer; if the form isn't returned Sharon has to guess what the payment is for. She is also unaware that a payment has been made until our Treasurer sees the transfer, who is also unsure of who the transfer is from and for what reason it has been made.

Thank you

Corrections/feedback from previous Steam in Trust (Issue 53)

An eagle-eyed reader queried the engine number of the ex-LNWR Super D in the photo caption in Ray Churchill's article on page 29. It states that the engine pictured is 49725. Having checked all of his Ian Allan ABCs from 1948-1958, they all agree that the highest number used by this class of locomotive was 49674, including classes G1, G2 and G2a. Ray confirmed that it was a typo and should have read 49275.

What's On?

Our ever-active Social Secretary, Neil Ewart, has arranged two socials associated with the Severn Valley Railway at Kidderminster for all fully paid up members of The Friends of Vintage Trains. This is a new venue for us but will be well known to many members. It also offers the opportunity for members who live south of Birmingham to more easily join our socials.

The first of these is on Wednesday 28 February. The morning will see a talk from Mike Corbett, a Friends of Vintage Trains member and volunteer. Towards the end of a career spanning over fifty years Mike was engaged by the National Railway Museum as project manager for the period of final restoration of Flying Scotsman to operational service in early 2016. We will then have a lunch break after which we welcome Ray Churchill and



50049 on jacks in the Kidderminster Diesel Depot on 17 May 2019

Photo: Al Wallace

Ray Poole in conversation with Les Ross. All three will be well known to many of the Friends, so this will be an entertaining and informative discussion. Numbers are limited so members may only bring one guest. Doors open at 11.00 with Mike's talk at 11.30.

On Wednesday 22 May we have arranged a VIP visit to the Severn Valley Railway Diesel Depot. Numbers for this visit are strictly limited to twenty on a first-come first-served basis so members will not be able to bring a guest.

Details and an Expression-of-Interest form for both visits are available from our web site at www.friendsofvt.org.uk or email Neil Ewart (neilewart88@gmail.com) or call him on 07805 817711 for more details.

We are also planning another film morning at the Electric Cinema in Birmingham later on in the year – details will be on our website and in our monthly email update to members when we can confirm arrangements. As always, we will be dropping into The London and North Western Wetherspoons on New Street station for refreshment and socialising afterwards.

Interested in the current Tyseley Stock and Workshops list? We publish these in Steam in Trust but much can change in the six months between issues. These are regularly updated by Geoff Middleton and the current ones can always be found on our website at www.friendsofvt.org.uk

Tyseley Depot Tours

2024 sees the continuation of Guided Depot Tours on Saturdays from April to September. This year, Group Depot Tours from societies and organisations are also to be invited to apply on other dates subject to depot access and guide availability on other dates. Please see the Vintage Trains website from early February for details. Additional volunteers for training as depot guides will also be welcomed.

The Friends at the Warley Model Railway Exhibition

The Friends were, as is tradition, at the Warley Model Railway exhibition at the NEC on 26 and 27 November. We shared our stand with the Friends' adopted project for 2023/2024, the Sutton Miniature Railway, where the second appearance of a Sutton Park loco was a great attraction.

We had calendars for sale and some VT merchandise, including the new VT mugs. Whilst touring other stands it was noticeable that only one other was selling calendars; many visitors were complimentary about our calendar but said they just do not buy them anymore. In the light of this the Friends will not be producing any more of our own merchandise in future. However, we distributed 500 Vintage Trains tour brochures and were involved in a lot of conversations about VT so our focus in future will be on promoting the Friends and Vintage Trains alongside each other.



Members of the Friends and the Sutton Miniature Railway project with Sutton Belle at the NEC. Photo: Simon Edmunds

Remember to visit our website at www.friendsofvt.org.uk which is regularly updated with news of member benefits, social events, latest news from the Friends and Vintage Trains, volunteering opportunities with Vintage Trains and much more.

Tyseley Station developments

We welcome Michael Cridge as a fully fledged member of the team and thank all those who have given up their time to get involved.



During winter things have been a bit quiet although a large number of bulbs have been planted ready for spring. The volunteer group has continued to regularly remove graffiti from several places on the platforms. It's a curse all stations are facing and there does not seem to be an answer.

On behalf of the Friends of the Shakespeare line and the rail companies involved in Tyseley station we wish all users of the station, and those just passing through, a Happy New Year.

Latest news from Vintage Trains

Highlights include:

- Thanks from the Friends and Vintage Trains to all of the teams involved in the 2023 Polar Express season which delighted some 16,000 people once again.
- On 16 September VT hosted a special site tour as part of Birmingham Heritage week. This was well attended, necessitating two tour groups in the afternoon. The Friends were present to help with arrangements, especially hosting visitors in the LMRCA before and after the tours
- On 16 March *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* will haul the Shap Mountaineer tour over Shap Fell both ways, unassisted by a diesel locomotive. The train will be diesel hauled to Carnforth, where 5043 will take over haulage to Carlisle and return to Crewe. This tour is a rare opportunity to travel behind



*The Polar Express passing through Widney Manor.
Photo: Denis Chick*

one of VT's Castle Class locomotives unassisted by a diesel and the only expected solo opportunity with 5043 in 2024.

- The 2024 Shakespeare Express program, starting on 7 April, includes 3 new departure stations; Derby on 26 May, Worcester on 30 June and Leicester on 14 July.
- The Vintage Trains March to December 2024 Steam Tour program is included with this newsletter. A series of Diesel tours are also being planned for early July and mid August Call the Vintage Trains office on 0121 708 4960 or visit the Vintage Trains' website at <https://vintagetrains.co.uk/> for more information or to book seats on any of the VT tours, including the diesel tours

And finally ...

Please take note of the 2024 AGM on Sunday 24 March from 10.30 a.m., full details of which are on the enclosed flyer. The Annual General Meeting is your opportunity to have your say in the running of the Friends and we look forward to seeing as many members as possible at our AGMs.

We end with some archive photographs. Michael Hughes, one of the Vintage Trains archivists, has a wide selection of archive photographs related to Tyseley and Vintage Trains. We include a couple of them here:



LNER A3 Pacific Flying Scotsman with Cider Express headboard alongside Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway No 1 outside Tyseley sheds. It is believed that this was taken before 1980.



Here we see 7029 Clun Castle in Tyseley Roundhouse in steam on the turntable. 1966.

Welcome to new members

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

Mr G Bellingham, Mr C E Pontifex and Mr, C Hartley-Woolley

Volunteer Working

We believe that some members are unaware that FoVT volunteers, particularly committee members, work individually from home. We are not on site working together in an office. So we ask our members to please help us manage things (such as your membership) by returning forms or documents as soon as possible.