



Spring 2026
Issue 58

STEAM IN TRUST

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The Stratford and Moreton Tramway's 200th Anniversary

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6233 Duchess of Sutherland on September 1 2007, returning from Bristol having hauled VT's Bristolian from Snow Hill earlier in the day. Note the brick bridge at Dorridge station now replaced under the regauging programme for modern intermodal box wagons.

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We welcome new members Mr P Spence, Mr W Tyrrell, Mr R M Stiles and Mrs P Stiles, Mr R Collins, Mr K Lloyd and Mr R Bailey

Reminder to members - when renewing your membership, please return the cut-off slip to Sharon our Membership Secretary at the address shown at the top of the renewal letter. This enables your details to be checked and shows the length of membership you want; it is especially important if paying by bank transfer. Sharon would like to say "Thank You" to members that include a stamped addressed envelope for their membership card to be sent, this helps us with the ever rising cost of postage.

If you lose your card and require a replacement, please enclose a stamped address envelope to cover this additional postage cost.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Front Cover: 60103 "Flying Scotsman" passing Widney Manor on 20 February 2026 Shakespeare Express. **Photo: Denis Chick**

Inside front cover: 6233's designer William Stanier followed his father and started as an office boy at Swindon Works in 1891, aged 15. His experience in all areas of design and engineering, with influence from Dean and Churchward, got him the job of Works Manager in 1912, a post he held until moving to the LMS in 1925. This year is the 150th anniversary of his birth on 27 May 1876. **Photo: Denis Chick**

Back Cover: A 1930s Great Western Railway holiday travel poster advertising St Ives, Carbis Bay and Lelant, Cornwall. **Original Artist: Herbert Truman**

Friends of Vintage Trains Chairman's Report

Welcome to the Spring 2026 edition of Steam in Trust. Now that the clocks have gone forward and the evenings become brighter, we are encouraged to get out and about and enjoy the world of Heritage Steam, both with Vintage Trains and the many heritage railways around the country.



Ron Whateley

We are sad to note the passing of three of the Friends' honorary members - Ron Whateley, affectionately referred to as Member No. 1, began working at Tyseley in 1968 cleaning locomotives before taking on the role Museum Curator. In 1970 Ron became the first Vice Chairman of the Standard Gauge Steam Trust, the predecessor to the Friends of Birmingham Railway Museum, a post he held for 18 years in its various guises. Ron also took the lead in organising many of Vintage Trains' Open Days in the early years.

We also say goodbye to John Gadd, a long standing volunteer, and to Brian Price who often visited Tyseley depot and enjoyed spending time in 'Chuffs'.

We send our condolences to the families of these three long-standing Members.

The 2026 Annual General Meeting on Sunday 22 March at the Tyseley Working Men's Club was well attended by around 50 members. The AGM ratified the minutes of the 2025 AGM, which can be found on our website. A summary of the past 12 months and a look into the future was then presented by your Chairman, followed by the Financial Statement from our Treasurer, Janet Corbett.

The Committee has been strengthened by the addition of Gill Smith, a past Chair of the group. Gill is probably known to many of our Members as she was firstly the treasurer of the then Vintage Trains Society – the Friends in its previous guise – and then, from 2004-2014, its Chair. Gill is returning to Birmingham after some time living away and we are pleased to welcome her back to the Committee.

Due to pressure of work, including being Operations Manager at New Street Station, Fraser Pithie stood down from the Committee but is keen to stay involved with the Friends. We are grateful to him for continuing to freely offer his expertise as requested.

Gill was unanimously voted onto the Committee and the rest of the Committee unanimously voted in en-bloc. The three officers (Paul Hatton as Chairman, Mary McCullough as Secretary and Janet Corbett as Treasurer) were then unanimously elected.



Your Committee. Back row, left to right:
Denis Chick, Janet Corbett, Mary McCullough,
Gill Smith, Sharon Salter
Front row: Neil Ewart, Paul Hatton,
Chris Schroeder

The AGM was then followed by a complimentary buffet and an afternoon presentation from Anthony Coulls, Senior Curator of Rail Transport and Technology at the National Railway Museum, York, who gave us his reflections on Rail200, and especially the community involvement that grew up around the celebrations. The train-related events

have been widely reported but the community aspect less so; this was a real eye-opener to that aspect of the Rail200. We also hope that the rail replacement buses between York and Darlington didn't let Anthony down on his return travel from the AGM.

Away from the AGM the Friends are still actively supporting Vintage Trains and the volunteers.



**One set of the new batteries in place in the Kitchen Car.
Photo: Alan Brookes**

Financially we made a £5000 donation to Vintage Trains for badly needed replacement batteries for the Kitchen Car, which has the most intensive power requirements. This also enables the strongest remaining batteries to be cascaded to the rest of the fleet. Whilst batteries are not the most glamorous of projects this will make the carriage fleet lighting more robust for both passengers and volunteers.

On a more practical side, after the replacement of the Eagle Pullman curtains that featured in the previous edition of Steam in Trust, Mary McCullough and Sharon

Salter have turned their attention to the well-worn lampshades on the Pullman table lights. After much cleaning and polishing some are showing a marked improvement but some will need replacing. These are not off-the-shelf items so some painstaking replacement of the plastic shades on the existing frames is exercising Mary's and Sharon's skills but they are rising to the challenge. Details such as these really impact the first (and lasting) impressions that the dining customers have of the VT fleet.

We congratulate Vintage Trains on winning two prestigious awards recently. Vintage Trains won the Heritage Railway Association's Manisty Award for Excellence, which is named after preservation pioneer Captain Peter Manisty, at the HRA's annual awards ceremony held in Llandudno in North Wales on 7 March. The award recognised Vintage Trains' success in operating the replica Locomotion No. 1 in a recreation of the first locomotive-hauled train journey.

At the West Midlands Tourism Awards on 18 March Vintage Trains were awarded Silver in the category 'Experience of the Year' award for the Shakespeare Express. Even being nominated was a great achievement so to come second was outstanding. Vintage Trains was up against some strong competition including the whisky tasting experience Grain and Glass and The Royal Shakespeare Company's behind the scenes tours. The winner was the Cotswolds in a Day Tour.

Congratulations to everyone who made both of these awards possible; the Vintage Trains team, the volunteers, our members who support the Friends and hence Vintage Trains, and everyone who travels with Vintage Trains.

Paul Hatton, Chair of FoVT and Editor of Steam in Trust.

We thank Vintage Trains for offering a members-only Depot Tour on the morning of Saturday 9 May. Numbers are strictly limited, so we require advance registration via any of our contact details on the inside back cover if you are interested. We will be having a social drink in the Working Mens Club across the road after the tour; all are welcome to join us.

Tyseley Station Update

After the mixed winter weather which greatly inhibited work on the Tyseley Station flower beds, its nice for the gardening team to be able to get out and begin the weeding and preparation for the summer planting. In truth the spring beds have looked very colourful, particularly the hardy perennials such as the pink *Bergenia Cordifolia*, more commonly known as Elephant's Ears (pictured here), which have put on their best ever display. All the beds have survived the winter weather and coped so well that the silver leafed *Cineraria* has again had to have another hefty shave in order to keep it in check.



Neil Ewart, who leads the team, reports on any site issues like tiles that may have broken off the wall, or crumbling plaster and paint on the flowerbed walls, to Shantel Carty, the Community Engagement Manager for West Midlands Trains. Working with Shantel has ensured that problems are quickly dealt with and this relationship has really helped to improve the appearance of the Station and resulted in a drop off in graffiti and anti social behaviour whilst also seeing a growth in passenger numbers using the station.



Train passengers and Train Guards often comment on how nice it is to see the stations all along the North Warwickshire Line looking so pretty and one local resident to Tyseley told the team that she regularly takes her young grandchildren to see the trains at Tyseley Station and whilst there talks to them about the colours of the flowers and the textures of the plants. Who knew that the Tyseley beds would become such a useful educational tool!

If anybody would like to help the small and dedicated gardening team, particularly during the summer months when the beds take a fair bit of watering, then please get in touch with Neil Ewart via any of the contact details on the inside back cover of this magazine, your help will always be welcome.

Photos and article by Mary McCullough

We included a Membership Form with the recent Newsletter. Without our members we would not be able to continue our activities, including producing Steam in Trust, offering support to Vintage Trains and running events for our members, so please show Steam in Trust to friends and family and encourage them to join us. The membership form can also be downloaded from our web site at friendsofvt.org.uk/about/joining-fovt/

Vintage Trains Update The Scottish Experience

Writing this in April, it already seems remarkable that only two months have passed since “Flying Scotsman” paid its extended visit to Tyseley for duties over the February 2026 half-term. How did this all come about, and why did we do it?

The idea was first mooted during the 2025 season by our Chairman, Michael Whitehouse, since operating services with such an iconic locomotive would undoubtedly be a major attraction and could generate valuable income for Vintage Trains Limited.

So how did the project develop from a loose idea into a fully formed operating plan? The answer is: with the involvement of many volunteers, members of staff, negotiations with several organisations, and a fair measure of good fortune. At this point, I should acknowledge my sincere thanks to both the National Railway Museum (NRM) and Northern Steam Limited (NSL), who as owner and custodian of the locomotive respectively were absolutely key in making this event possible. Negotiation with NRM and NSL confirmed that the locomotive was available around the February half-term.

Internally, we agreed that February half term would be an ideal period for operation. As this would be the first time we had operated it on the main line, we agreed that shorter trips would offer both a sensible safety margin and the ability to run multiple services each day.

We also had the opportunity to operate on Valentine’s Day. Dining trains on the Saturday seemed a natural fit, using existing Shakespeare paths, followed by several days of shorter excursions from Moor Street using a Polar Express-style format. With a proposed operating model in place, the next step was to reach a formal agreement with the locomotive’s custodians.

What followed was a period of detailed legal negotiation — and, as is often the case, this took longer than anticipated and proved a tense phase since a signed agreement was essential before tickets could be placed on sale. By this stage, we were approaching the Christmas period, and there was real momentum behind the need to release tickets before the end of the Polar Express. Thanks to goodwill and cooperation on all sides, contracts were signed in time. Meanwhile, Alastair Meanley visited the locomotive to ensure it was suitable for the planned operations.

With the agreements in place, a service format agreed, and cost and income projections prepared for the five days of operation, the final piece of the puzzle was to set up the website, along with signing off a coordinated marketing and PR plan. By 19 December, we were finally ready to put the trains on sale. Once tickets became available, it was astounding to see how rapidly sales commenced and continued throughout the Christmas period. One might argue that other steam locomotives are equally deserving of iconic status — but quite simply, none comes close to “Flying Scotsman”’s cachet in the mind of the general public.

The event could only be delivered with the full support of our operational teams, volunteers on train, at the stations and at the depot, and the cooperation of NSL, NRM, West Midlands Trains and Chiltern Railways. As the week itself arrived, the professionalism of everyone involved truly shone. While hosting the world’s most famous locomotive was undoubtedly a privilege, I will admit that I was also relieved when it finally departed for its next engagement.

Will we do something similar again in the future? Watch this space.

Nick Ralls, Managing Director Vintage Trains

Tyseley Locomotive Workshop Report

LOCOMOTIVES IN THE WORKS

A snapshot of some of the highlights and variety of what is happening in the Works.

5551 "The Unknown Warrior" new build – work is progressing attaching the cylinders to the frame, machining springs and hanger bolts.

4936 "Kinlet Hall" – the frame has been re-wheeled, coupling rods refitted and the assembly returned to the West Somerset Railway. The boiler is now awaiting funds for repair completion prior to return to the West Somerset Railway to enable the locomotive assembly to be completed.

4709 "Night Owl" new build project progress is continuing. The frames are in the workshop for the fitting of horn blocks and front-end frame.

80104 – following repairs, hydraulic and steam testing, the boiler has been returned to the Swanage Railway.

4588 – boiler testing following re-tubing is due to commence shortly.

41708 – the new back-end frame plates have been welded in position. The next step is to re-wheel the frame - anticipated by April.

3840 "County of Montgomery" new build frame assembly is progressing– the footplate angles have been fitted.

7822 "Foxcote Manor" – the firebox stays are being removed to enable the copper firebox removal to progress.

44521 – following completion of repairs to the frame, cylinders and axleboxes, the complete assembly has been returned to the Great Central Railway. The front barrel requires fitting to the boiler.

70013 "Oliver Cromwell" – the boiler has been retubed with final work required prior to steam testing

44596 "Bahamas" - following expiry of "Bahamas" 7-year boiler certificate, the Bahamas Locomotive Society has contracted with Tyseley Locomotive Works to undertake the boiler overhaul. The Society volunteers have been undertaking the preliminary stripping of boiler components, the boiler tubes have been removed, and lifting of the boiler is due in March.

48305 – the boiler is to be removed to enable repairs to the firebox.

THE TYSELEY COLLECTION

7029 "Clun Castle" having reached the end of its 7-year boiler certificate, is now out of service for an intermediate locomotive overhaul. All the boiler small tubes have been removed for replacement and other firebox repair work is to be undertaken. New superheater elements are required. A thorough internal and external boiler inspection by Ashdale Engineering was successfully completed by the end of February. A Piston and Valve Examination is also in progress requiring all valves and pistons to be removed, and new rings fitted.

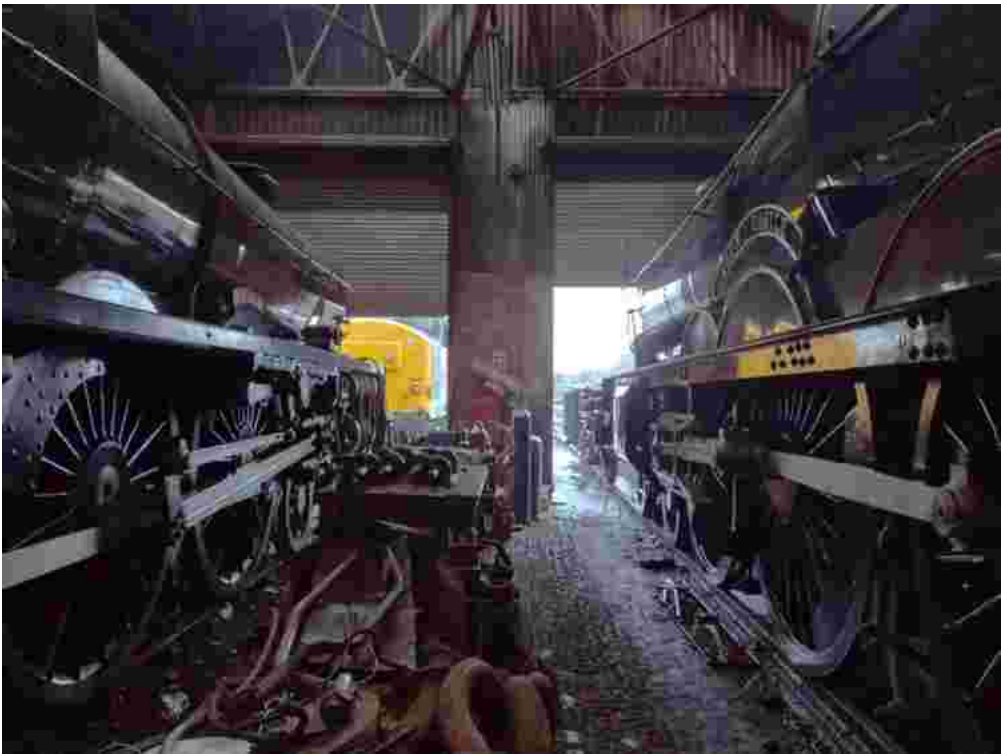
5043 “Earl of Mount Edgcumbe” is operational and is undergoing winter maintenance. A Piston and Valve Examination is scheduled. The withdrawal of the locomotive from operation for the significant major work of driving wheel tyre replacements due to flange wear remains forecast to be required by the end of 2026. This will require significant funding for transporting the new tyres, which are in stock, and the locomotive’s driving wheels to a specialist workshop which has the equipment and expertise to carry out the exacting tyre change work.

4965 “Rood Ashton Hall” - There is no recent progress to report.

Class 47 47773 - is operational following in-house repair to the ACR1 control unit and engine governor (top hat) diaphragm change, the latter being supplied by Locomotive Services Ltd.

Class 37 37240 The locomotive is operational but requires a new set of batteries to be fitted.

Class 08 13029 site shunter is operable following the installation of a replacement Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR) and repairs to the radiator tank. A new set of batteries is also required.



7029 “Clun Castle” and 45596 “Bahamas” side by side both undergoing 7-year boiler attention in Tyseley Shed in February 2026. The removed valves from “Clun”, in preparation for attention and new rings, can be seen on the bench between the locomotives

Central Door Locking (CDL)

Following successful introduction of CDL to VT's operation passenger vehicle fleet in 2025, the final modification process of external indicator light installations adjacent to passenger doors are now in progress. A recent ORR inspection has expressed satisfaction with the installation programme.

Other coach repair and restoration progress

Mk1 First Class Open (FO) 3141 is a new addition to the VT fleet having been owned by West Coast Railways and Riviera Trains. The coach has previously been installed with controlled emission toilets and TLW is installing CDL. The coach is currently air braked operation only but is to be dual brake operation by design and restoration of vacuum brake equipment prior to service with VT anticipated towards the end of the year. The coach exterior is receiving some corrosion attention and painting.

Mk2 TSO 5212 repairs are progressing with fibreglass ends to reseal.

A combination of volunteers and skilled staff continues to undertake a variety of repair and restoration work to enhance internal and external carriage presentation and function. In recent months, volunteers have contributed to the restoration of two Commonwealth bogies by stripping components, cleaning and painting. New axlebox pedestal manganese steel liners are required and a collaboration of heritage customers is an option to reduce supply costs. When completed the bogies will enable relevant coach bogie rotation for a maintenance and repair programme to commence.



Mk1 FO no. 3141 in the Carriage Shed showing some bodyside primer application in preparation for vehicle painting.



Volunteers Beresford Dickens and Ralph Sanders in the initial stages of stripping components from a Commonwealth bogie prior to clean and painting.

Text and all images - Mike Corbett

Tyseley Depot Guided Tours

By the time you read this article we hope to be at the start of our 2026 depot tour season. Following the recent depot roof repairs that reduced our 2025 public depot tour dates we now hope to enjoy a full season of Saturday tour dates with 2 tours at 10.30hrs and 14.00hrs on each date.

Planning a tours programme is not without its issues, particularly when waiting for (VT) trip dates to be finalised with Network Rail so that we are able to plan depot tours when there is no VT trip on that date. This has the benefit of Tyseley Locomotive Works staff being available to ensure depot running shed access for the tours, and on some dates our visitors are able to enjoy a Shakespeare Express (SE) steam locomotive being prepared.

We anticipate participation in our highly successful annual Birmingham Heritage Week (BHW) depot tour date in September which is exclusively booked via the BHW website. Depot tour public dates for April, May and June are on the Vintage Trains (VT) website and also enabling Group/Society applications via the VT booking office. Last year we undertook an October public tour date coinciding with schools half term and the last SE of the season. This year a 24 October Saturday public tour date may be added subject to demand/guide availability.

Continued depot tour catering support from FoVT is very much appreciated. The annual FoVT depot tour date is now planned for Saturday 9 May so watch out for details.

I am pleased to advise that thanks to my request for additional tour guides and with the support of the VT volunteer coordinator (Tony Watson) we have new potential guides who will be joining us as observers on the initial tours. An increased number of guides will improve our flexibility as each public tour requires four guides to cover all activities including meet and greet with car parking etc.

Photos and article by Mike Corbett: Guided Tours Team Leader



Volunteers Brian Davis and Geoff Massey progressing completion of a replacement signal box window frames in time for the depot tours.



Sadly not for viewing on our depot tours, this unusual shot was taken as Flying Scotsman departed Tyseley Depot during its February visit.

Vintage Trains Tours Update

The magic of the Polar Express brought the 2025 Vintage Trains Season to an end, with yet another successful year of moving thousands of families between Birmingham Moor Street and the North Pole. The railtour programme came to an end a few weeks earlier, with guest locomotive, A1 Pacific no. 60163, "Tornado", working the ever-popular Christmas White Rose to York Christmas Market. This marked the first tour for the A1 Steam Trust's famous new-build locomotive operating for Vintage Trains and marks the beginning of a relationship that will be built upon in 2026.



*"Tornado" at York on the Christmas White Rose.
Photo: Daniel Adshead*



60103 on the Valentines Shakespeare Express. Photo: Martyn Osborne

Over the short 'shut down' period after the madness of the Polar Express, the coaches underwent their usual annual deep clean and maintenance in readiness for the first tours of 2026. Once again featuring a guest locomotive, the National Railway Museum's 60103, world famous and universally popular "Flying Scotsman" opened the 2026 season. Operating on the Valentines Shakespeare Express, three trains operated between Birmingham Snow Hill and Stratford-Upon-Avon offering breakfast, brunch, and Pullman dining services, as well as tourist seats where passengers could enjoy the North Warwickshire countryside and a snack from the buffet bar.

The "Flying Scotsman" extravaganza continued over the February half term week with 3 days of shuttle trains between Birmingham Moor Street and Dorridge, completed by another two 'three train' Shakespeare Express on Saturdays 14 and 21 February. The railtour season then commenced in earnest on Saturday 7 March with a new entry, 'The Welsh Chieftain' to Cardiff. Vintage Trains own 37240 piloted LORAM's 37418 from Birmingham to Cardiff via the picturesque Heart of Wales line and returned via the ever-popular Welsh Marches line.

Express steam trains got back underway on Saturday 28 March with the Shap Mountaineer to Carlisle. Hauled by the A1 Steam Trust's 60163 "Tornado", the train ran from Birmingham to Carlisle via the fearsome Shap Fell and then return over the glorious Settle to Carlisle railway. Diesel enthusiasts were able to enjoy the Cambrian Coast Line on the Cambrian Coast Express on Friday 17 April, featuring 37240, 47773 and one of Network Rail's ERTMS fitted class 97/3s from Shrewsbury to Pwllheli. Passengers had the option of a ride on a special train on the Talylyn Railway, as well as visiting the excellent Narrow Gauge Railway Museum at Tywyn Wharf.

A Castle Class locomotive will haul the North Wales Coast Express to Llandudno for the annual Victorian Transport Festival on 2 May.

After this there is The Golden Hind, a season highlight on Saturday 23 May. After a run down from Birmingham to London Paddington behind a member of the home diesel fleet, the Diesel Traction Group's superb Western Hydraulic locomotive D1015 "Western Champion" will take a hopefully non-stop unassisted sprint to Plymouth via the Great Western Main Line, the Berks and Hants, into glorious Devon along the famous sea wall and thence over the fearsome South Devon Banks. The train will retrace its steps from Plymouth to London Paddington and back to Birmingham Snow Hill.

The ever-popular Whistling Ghost to Minehead returns on Saturday 30 May, featuring a Castle Class locomotive from Birmingham Snow Hill to the West Somerset Railway and West Somerset Railway motive power from Bishops Lydeard to Minehead and return. Perennial favourite, the White Rose to Scarborough will run with a Castle Class locomotive on Saturday 4 July, whilst the Cathedrals Express will visit Liverpool behind steam power on Saturday 11 July and Portsmouth on Saturday 18 July. Saturday 12 September will see the return of double-headed Castle Class locomotives over the South Devon Banks on The Mayflower to Plymouth.

The Shakespeare Express returns to Birmingham and Stratford-Upon-Avon on Sunday 21 June, 26 July, 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30 August with all new catering options added, including afternoon tea in First Class and a revamped Pullman service on the lunch-time circular, now branded the 'Shakespeare Pullman', including a pick-up at, and return to, Henley-in-Arden.

The 'extended' Shakespeare Express returns to Derby on Sunday 26 April and Sunday 25 October, as well as Worcester on Sunday 17 May and Sunday 8 November.

There are some exciting additions to come into the programme too, so keep an eye on the Vintage Trains website for more details. Tickets are selling fast, so don't delay in booking and as always, we are on the look out for new volunteers, so if you would like to join the team, contact us on stewards@vintagetrains.co.uk for more details.

Vintage Trains Train Team

In partnership and with thanks to Transport Museum Wythall, Vintage Trains are offering an exclusive new option to the Shakespeare Express and Shakespeare Pullman experience with a vintage bus tour of Stratford-upon-Avon. This exclusive tour is limited to just 50 seats and is only available to Shakespeare Express and Shakespeare Pullman ticket holders on selected dates.

All Shakespeare Express and Shakespeare Pullman passengers will also have access to an exclusive discount when visiting Shakespeare's Birthplace.

More details of both of these offers are available from Vintage Trains when booking your ticket.



The Stratford Blue bus from Transport Museum Wythall. Photo: Denis Chick

60156 “Great Central” at Doncaster

On 28 March A1 60163 “Tornado” headed the Shap Mountaineer, making a thunderous ascent of Shap to Carlisle, before returning via the stunning and world-famous Settle & Carlisle line. Here Michael Hughes, one of Vintage Trains archivists, takes a look at a previous A1 locomotive, 60156 “Great Central”.

60156 “Great Central” was completed on 19 October 1949 (after nationalisation). It was originally painted in British Railways express passenger blue, lined in black and white, with the early lion-and-wheel emblem on the tender. Initially allocated to Kings Cross, it was transferred to Grantham (35B) in 1951. It emerged from “The Plant” (Doncaster Works) in 1952 with a replacement boiler, BR express passenger green livery (still bearing the early emblem), and was named “Great Central”.



60156 at Doncaster Locomotive, Carriage and Wagon Works, widely known as “The Plant” in 1961 for a general overhaul. This was when its last boiler was fitted.

The loco returned to Kings Cross (34A) in October 1955. In 1959, it moved north to Doncaster (36A). Transferred to York 50A in February 1964, it spent its final year mainly operating on York passenger services. In May 1965, it was sold for scrap.

“Great Central” had served for just 15 years and 6 months and carried eight boilers.

The A1s were designed by A H Peppercorn and built between 1948 and 1949. Twenty-three were constructed at Darlington, and twenty-six at Doncaster. They featured three cylinders, with the inside cylinder mounted off-centre, and Walschaerts valve gear. They had 6 ft 8 in driving wheels and a working boiler pressure of 250 psi. BR classified them as 8P6F.

The A1s were designed to haul heavy express passenger trains on the East Coast main line. They could manage trains of 15 coaches at speeds of 70mph on level track. With double Kylchap chimneys and improved draughting, they could operate effectively with lower-quality coal, as during the post-WW2 years, the best coal was exported.

Dieselisation meant the end of the A1s. There were few alternative duties for these powerful locomotives; they were all scrapped by 1966.

Michael Hughes, Vintage Trains Archivist

Flying Scotsman visit

A volunteer's view



This February half-term Vintage Trains were pleased to offer an exciting journey behind the world-famous "Flying Scotsman", including a special dining train for Valentine's Day.

Tickets went on sale only six weeks before the first train which included the Christmas and New Year period so it was a hectic time for all concerned. There were many unknowns to consider - is she still popular?, will there be lots of

people out watching?, will the tickets sell in cold wet February?, how much promotional support do we need to order? - all these and more occupied the early weeks of the year.

In the end, everything sold out; merchandising, promotional literature, and in the Buffet, all the snacks and refreshments - the only things left in the Buffet in reasonable numbers after the tours are cans of beer and Irn-Bru!

Bookings, though not a sell out over the five running days and nineteen trains, were more than reasonable, with around 5300 passengers carried, 2500 meals and nibbles consumed, and many happy smiling customers. It was highly successful from the volunteers' and Vintage Trains' perspectives. Working with Chiltern Railways and West Midlands Trains was most enjoyable, and with the rest of our stakeholders on the catering and cleaning side, plus the train crew at Tyseley of course, the volunteers formed a formidable team to get the job done. And the Piper was a great success.

Yes, it was challenging, tiring, long days and hours, and there were lessons to be learnt. Some thought all the trains were going to Stratford, and others thought food was included for everyone, so perhaps the message at introduction could have been more straightforward. But many saw the words 'Flying Scotsman' and just wanted to get involved!

Over the event the volunteers put in around 2000 hours, using 34 volunteers, and with a core team of around 10 experienced 'long stay patients' who did all 5 days, and the 8 to 10 days of preparation prior to that. A very large commitment, with little time for the volunteers to really appreciate it. But it is the camaraderie that makes it worthwhile, the happy smiling faces, the photos by way of a memento, and the fact that we have played a very large part in making it memorable for our customers and the public.

More work, long days, and not enough of us, so if you can spread the word that we need more young, strong, committed volunteers to join us, please do. To find out more about volunteering with Vintage Trains follow the 'Volunteering with VT' link from the Friends home page at friendsofvt.org.uk.

The Vintage Trains Volunteers

Recollections of ‘The Shakespeare Limited’

Martin Leech, one of Vintage Trains’ train stewards, has forwarded his memories of Flying Scotsman at Stratford in a previous time. As Martin says, it is difficult to identify the locomotive on his photograph, but it is such an evocative image that we include it here - knowing Martin, we can take him at his word that it is 4472 “Flying Scotsman”.

In February ‘Vintage Trains’ was graced with the presence of “Flying Scotsman” at the head of our Shakespeare Expresses; what an honour for the locomotive! Whilst usually relying on Swindon built locomotives for the Vintage Trains’ Shakespeare Express it has been hauled by occasional guest locomotives from other regions but, until this year, not 4472! Now I am sure it will have been the subject of many photographs taken over the week between Birmingham and Stratford upon Avon during this visit; in fact, I may have managed to take one myself. Not that it matters as I already have a picture of it on a headboard with the word ‘Shakespeare’ as part of the wording.

I refer of course to the ‘Shakespeare Limited,’ that used to travel up from Marylebone on summer Sundays in the mid 1980’s. Usually just one train on the day and while the passengers spent several hours in Stratford spending their money, the locomotive would turn at Hatton Junction before returning to London in the early evening. The choice of locomotives was quite varied and I witnessed Sir Lamiel, Clan Line, Sir Nigel Gresley and Mallard on these trains. I believe that Duchess of Hamilton may have done it as well and I do know that Flying Scotsman managed it at least once, the subject of the photograph here.

It was, if I remember correctly, the last train of the season and the September light was failing fast. I was on the road bridge at the top of Hatton bank and with the sun setting quickly in the west I decided with an ‘arty’ view of it as it accelerated up towards me. I was quite pleased with the resultant picture but on reflection there is nothing in it to prove exactly which engine it is. You will just have to believe me!



Martin Leech



The recent Vintage Trains season with 60103 “Flying Scotsman” was a very special occasion when the locomotive was welcomed into Birmingham Moor Street Station with a bagpipe serenade. John McGee, from the Shirley Pipe Band, played a medley of tunes when the famous locomotive reached the buffers, and excited passengers applauded John when the final notes were played. It all made for a very fitting tribute.

Meet Joe Bevan, a young VT volunteer



**Joe Bevan celebrating 200 years of train travel at
The Greatest Gathering in August 2025**

Joe has been interested in railways for as long as he can remember – but he does not know why. There is no family connection to railways. The only thing he can think of is that, when he was a baby, his Nan and Grandad used to take him to Coventry by train.

His earliest memory of trains is sitting at Nuneaton, watching the electric locomotives hauling Virgin Trains coaches through the station. He also remembers being excited by the very first Pendolino trains on a trip to London.

From around 16 years of age, he was confident enough to travel alone. He visited Nuneaton station every Monday for about five years; he was a ‘proper trainspotter.’ However, he then went to university to study politics, and his interest in trains ‘was in the background.’

Joe started volunteering with Vintage Trains around 2016. His interest was sparked by a chat with Les Ross, followed by a meeting with Mary McCullough.

In the early days, he was mentored by Al Wallace, but his ongoing studies, Covid-19, and part-time work at his parents’ estate agency caused his involvement to be intermittent. He was also applying for jobs in the civil service and local government.

But the Covid lockdown had an unexpected side effect. Joe’s interest in railways was reignited. Lengthy socially distanced walks led him to the railway, and he started taking more photos of locomotives. When lockdown ended, Joe began applying for jobs in the railway industry. His first job would have been as a trainee guard with East Midlands Railway – but the second lockdown hit and EMR’s offer was withdrawn.

Joe continued volunteering with Vintage Trains, which strengthened his railway experience. In 2021, he applied to GB Railfreight. The late Adrian Knight helped prepare him for the interview. He started as an office assistant – and is now a controller. As Joe says, ‘Vintage Trains is a great way into a railway career.’

He loves both his jobs; he enjoys the camaraderie of the railways at GB Railfreight and Vintage Trains. He has taken on the role of negotiating the all-important station access agreements that allow VT’s passengers to board and leave the trains!

Joe’s favourite Vintage Trains journey is The White Rose to Scarborough – it brings back memories of the longest trip he used to take with his Nan and Grandad.

Michael Hughes, from a conversation with Joe Bevan

Station Access: a crucial part of running a charter train on the main line



Joe Bevan, Vintage Trains' Station Access Coordinator, beside BR Class 47 47773 "The Queen Mother" with the headboard from the Vintage Trains' White Rose tour to York on 17 June 2022. Photo: Michael Hughes

An important, but often overlooked, aspect of running charter trains on the main line in Britain is that of Station Access. Stations provide the interface between the passenger and the train, so each time Vintage Trains calls at a station a process must be followed by Joe Bevan, their Station Access Coordinator, to ensure that the correct provisions are in place.

Each station on the national rail network is operated by a Train Operating Company (TOC) so to call at a station VT must have an up-to-date agreement in place. To date, VT has agreements with all the UK's major TOCs and the majority of the smaller ones. In some cases, agreements exist but VT has yet to call at any of these TOC stations. Most of these agreements were activated when Vintage Trains started running its own

trains, but the agreements are time limited, so require regular renewal. At that time, the Station Access Coordinator (SAC) will receive a request from the TOC concerned for it to be updated; this is passed on to a Trustee to sign and return. These agreements guarantee VT's permission to call at specific stations across the network.

When a charter train is formulated, the SAC will begin the process of requesting access at stations for that train. Most of this work is done electronically. A form details the stations being requested, whether they are for pick up/set down or operational stops and the number of passengers to expect (this does not need to be exact). The form also includes space for the locomotive(s), the number of coaches, and the 'paths' that are being used. If Network

Rail has issued a Special Traffic Notice (the document detailing the timetable for a specific train), timings and platforms should also be included (if no Special Traffic Notice has been issued, then indicative times must be used, usually from the Website and experience of past tours).

The SAC and Train Manager will also decide if any 'additional services' need to be requested. The most common is for the removal of bagged rubbish from the train. This is usually at the destination station and will be requested along with the number of bags. If 'additional services' are requested, the SAC will be expecting an email or telephone response to detail whether the request can be serviced and what arrangements must be adhered to on the day to ensure a smooth transition. Arrangements will be conveyed from the Train Manager to the steward responsible, and on the day, any issues will be directed to the Train Manager, who will pick up with the SAC in the debrief.

Photo-stops are also covered in Station Access Requests, ensuring that the operators are aware of our presence and in some cases provide extra staff to cope with the higher than usual number of people that may be on the platform. The volunteer steward team also plays a part in this, patrolling the area near the locomotive to ensure that all requests from the railway

are adhered to. As part of the request, details of any Station Host stewards will be included, so the operator is aware of our enhanced presence.

In the rare event that access is declined, the SAC will speak to the TOC concerned to see what issues are preventing acceptance and a solution worked through. A TOC may also wish to make VT aware of other charters operating on that day, or fixtures that may make a station busier than usual.

After a train, the SAC will report to the office what access was requested, for billing purposes. Each TOC has their own process, some by train, some by quarter and some by month. They may contact the SAC to arrange a Purchase Order (PO) number, whilst others will go directly to VT accounts to arrange payment.

The SAC submits a regular report to the VT Management, indicating the costs involved for each train, so these can be factored into future tours.

So, whilst Station Access is one of those parts of a train that many volunteers and passengers do not see, it is an important part of the process of delivering a smooth train for VT passengers.

**Joe Bevan, Vintage Trains Station
Access Coordinator**

The Tyseley Cat

I'm sure everyone has heard about station cats, well did you know at Tyseley we had the depot cat?

I started to work for Vintage Trains as a steward on the Shakespeare Express in 2006. As a steward you were expected to work on the coaches, cleaning and tidying up ready for their next working. This was usually on a Tuesday morning. The site at Tyseley is quite large so you very often went weeks before you would see the cat.



Out for a walk.

The first time we met up I had been to the office for some leaflets to go in the buffet on the train when to my amazement I saw a cat just outside the museum. It was a tabby cat, lovely, clean and in good condition. It stopped, looked at me and then wandered off in the opposite direction to do whatever cats do. I laughed and went off to deliver the leaflets to the buffet on the train. It was weeks before our paths crossed again but this time it stopped, looked at me and rolled over onto its back for a bit of fuss before wandering off again. I used to call her Cinders but I didn't really know what her name was.

I enquired from people on the site and asked where it came from and did it have a name. Nobody seemed to know or what its name was although I've since learned it was Puss Puss. No matter, this was a well-loved cat, wanting for nothing, well fed and watered with plenty of shelter in the Works, the volunteers' cabin or the purpose built kennel the workshop lads made for her.

We shared many happy moments together over the years but one day I realised that I had not seen the cat for ages. After many days of searching, I found out one of the lads in the Works, Dave Thornton, had taken her home where she lived out the rest of her life in retirement, as a pet!

Puss Puss lived a long and happy life until she crossed the rainbow bridge aged 16. RIP Puss Puss.



Enjoying a moment in the sun.

Memories of the cat inspired me to write a poem:

Have you seen the Tyseley Cat
That lovely little tabby cat
The one that used to roam the site
Looking out for rats and mice

Have you seen the Tyseley Cat
Does she have a name you ask
I do not know is my reply
You'd better ask another guy

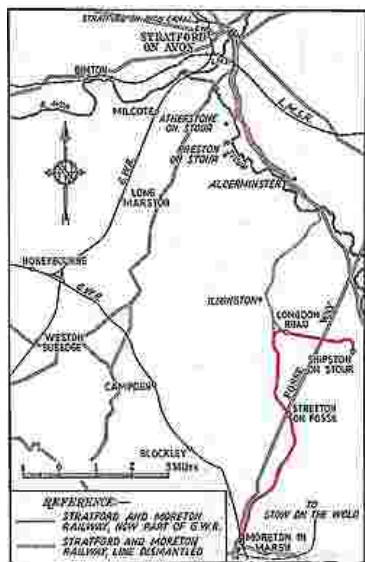
Have you seen the Tyseley Cat
Was she a friendly cat you ask
Yes, she was, is my reply
Just feed her first, was my humble cry

Have you seen the Tyseley Cat
Has she got a home you ask
Yes, in the cabin on the site
Cos it's dry both day and night

Have you seen the Tyseley Cat
Yes, she moved home sometime past
Where's she gone, where does she roam?
She packed her bags, for a lovely new home.

The Stratford and Moreton Tramway

The long lost first railway in Stratford-upon-Avon



Did you know that Stratford-upon-Avon had three 'railways' running into it? Persons of a certain age may remember both the GWR line and the LMS line, each with a relatively large station and each with goods and locomotive servicing facilities. But what about the third?

The Stratford and Moreton Tramway opened in 1826. This was the first railway to be opened in Warwickshire, part of a grandiose scheme known as the Central Junction Railway linking the Midlands with London. It would run via a canal from Birmingham to Stratford-upon-Avon, a tramway from Stratford-upon-Avon to Oxford, with the last link being river barges down the Thames. When the section from Stratford-upon-Avon to Moreton opened, goods traffic was conveyed by licenced traders in their own wagons and were also allowed to convey passengers on payment of a licence costing £12 per annum. The Birmingham to London

plan never materialised; only the section from Stratford-upon-Avon to Moreton-in-Marsh was built along with a later branch to Shipston-on-Stour.

The Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway took over the tramway in 1847 and following its own later takeover by the GWR the line was upgraded to Stratford-upon-Avon to take mainline wagons; albeit still horse drawn, as the original act of Parliament forbade the use of steam locomotives. The tramway did not prosper and fell into disuse between the Shipston branch junction at Longdon Road on the Fosse Way (where the station house still exists) and Stratford-upon-Avon. It was formally abandoned in 1926, exactly 100 years after it opened.

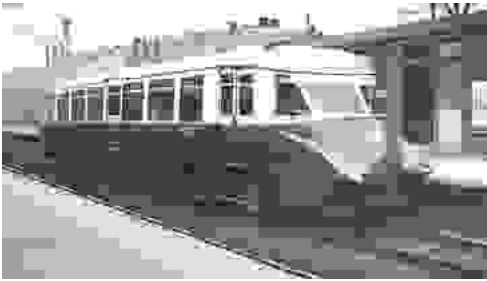
The branch from Moreton to Shipston fared better. It was upgraded to a conventional steam railway, becoming the Shipston branch of the GWR. A passenger service ran until 1929, but freight was more successful, the branch closing as late as May 1960.

Remnants of the line are still visible in Stratford-upon-Avon - the footbridge/cycleway across the river adjacent to Clopton Bridge was a tramway bridge, a brick arched bridge survives on the embankment next to 131 Shipston Road (just along from the Old Tramway Inn) and an old horse-drawn tramway wagon from Thomas Hutchings Newbold Lime Works is preserved on a short section of stone-sleepered track in Bancroft Gardens near the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre.



The GWR's 'Flying Bananas' Part 2

In the previous issue of *Steam in Trust*, we carried the first part of a 2-part article from Rob Ferris, one of the Vintage Trains archivists, describing the design, construction and early days of the Great Western Railway's fleet of streamlined diesel cars, nicknamed 'The Flying Bananas'. In this second part we focus on the operations of these cars.

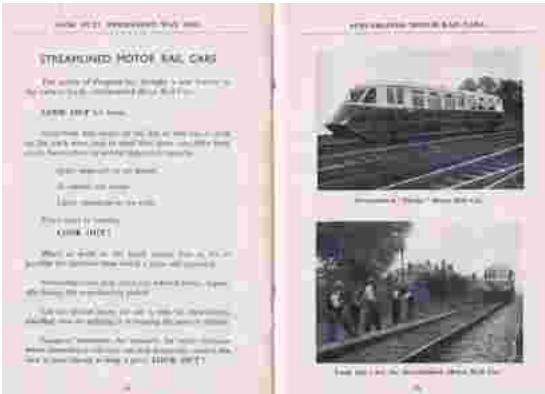


Diesel Railcar No.5 at Spring Road Platform.



Diesel Railcar No.6 at Tyseley in 1937.

The Suburban Streamlined Diesel Railcars operated morning business services between Malvern and Birmingham via Worcester, and Oxford and Hereford via Kingham, Worcester and Malvern. Throughout the day they operated a further fifteen services reaching a variety of destinations including Princess Risborough, Didcot, Henley-in-Arden, Stratford-upon-Avon and Broadway. These services are shown on the 1935 Summer Timetable.



4a

Through Express Business Services

BY STREAMLINED RAIL CARS
(ONE CLASS ONLY—LIMITED ACCOMMODATION)

BETWEEN
BIRMINGHAM (Snow Hill),
CHELtenham SPA, GLOUCESTER,
NEWPORT AND CARDIFF
MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS (Inclusive)

BIRMINGHAM (Snow Hill)	dep.	8.15	9.5	3.40	p.m.
CHELtenham SPA (Malvern Road)	...	10.6	4.41	...	...
GLOUCESTER	...	10.18	4.53	...	...
NEWPORT	...	11.11	5.52	...	...
CARDIFF (General)	...	11.27	6.10	...	...

CARDIFF (General)	...	8.15	p.m.
NEWPORT	...	9.10	4.50
GLOUCESTER	...	9.27	5.6
CHELtenham SPA (Malvern Road)	...	10.18	5.55
BIRMINGHAM (Snow Hill)	...	10.20	5.54

Will not convey local passengers between Cheltenham Spa and Gloucester nor between Newport and Cardiff.

BUFFET FACILITIES

New Services by
STREAMLINED RAIL CARS
(ONE CLASS ONLY—LIMITED ACCOMMODATION)

WEEK-DAYS ONLY.

See page	See page
8.15 a.m. Oxford to Kingham ... 178	8.15 a.m. Worcester (Shrub Hill) to Malvern Wells ... 200
9.10 a.m. Kingham to Oxford ... 179	8.54 a.m. Malvern Wells to Birmingham (Snow Hill) ... 182-203
10.20 a.m. Oxford to Hereford ... 178-200	10.15 a.m. Birmingham (S.H.) to Henley-in-Arden ... 208
2.5 p.m. Hereford to Oxford ... 179-203	10.45 a.m. Henley-in-Arden to Birmingham (S.H.) ... 209
4.50 p.m. Oxford to Princes Risborough ... 33	11.40 a.m. Birmingham (S.H.) to Worcester (F. St.) ... 185-210
6.37 p.m. Princes Risborough to Oxford ... 32	1.0 p.m. Worcester (F. St.) to Malvern Wells ... 201
8.0 p.m. Oxford to Didcot ... 51	1.15 p.m. Malvern Wells to Worcester (F. St.) ... 203
	2.33 p.m. Worcester (Shrub Hill) to Broadway ... 179-206
	3.45 p.m. Broadway to Stratford-upon-Avon ... 207
	4.55 p.m. Stratford-upon-Avon to Oxford ... 179-206
	7.42 p.m. Oxford to Worcester (S.H.) ... 178

G—Saturdays excepted.

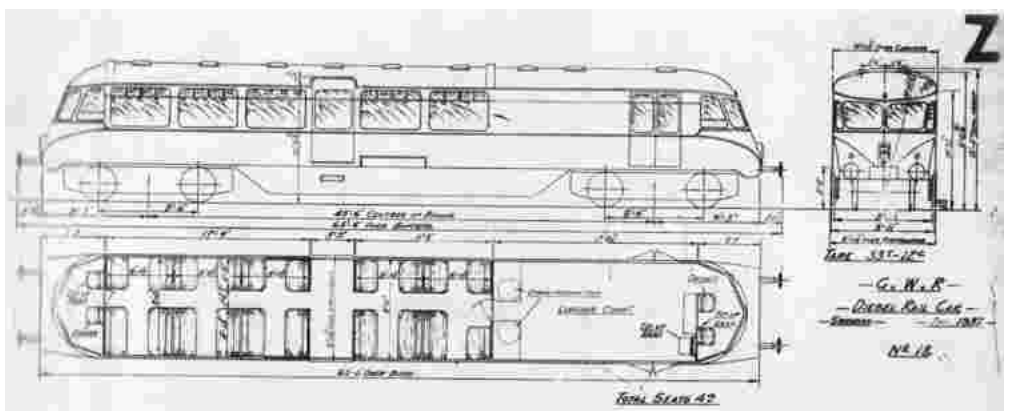
The Streamlined Diesel Railcars also became popular for excursions at weekends. They were hired for various Society trips, Football Club excursions and even transported the bride and groom with their guests to a wedding. On Sunday 18 August 1935 the Great Western Railway advertised a five hour Mystery Trip from Worcester (Foregate

Street) Station using one of the new Streamlined Diesel Railcars. This Excursion took 75 passengers first to Evesham, where there was brief stop and then on to Stratford-upon-Avon, where there was an hour and half lay-over before returning back to Worcester.

With seven Diesel Railcars now in service, a specific section was added to the Permanent Way staff's safety handbook, which emphasised the potential quiet approach of the Streamlined Railcars. In addition, the new edition of the GWR General Appendix to the Rule Book issued in August 1936 also contained a section detailing the standard working of Streamlined Railcars. These were subsequently amended twice in 1937, as more potential risks were identified. One addition (GA1) required the use of a standard Red Tail Lamp instead of relying on the Railcar's on-board electric light, which might be unavailable in the event of a fault on the vehicle.

The Great Western Railway ordered another ten Streamlined Diesel Railcars in January 1935 for delivery in 1936. All ten had the same chassis and twin engine arrangement, but while the first six (Nos.8 – 13) would be basically repeats of the existing Suburban Streamlined Diesel Railcars, the next three (Nos.14 – 16) had slightly less seating capacity (63 passengers) with the space used for a single lavatory. All these Diesel Railcars were completed and operational by April 1936, but none of them initially operated in the Birmingham area. Diesel Railcar No.12 which had been allocated to Oxford Shed on 11 February 1936 was moved to Tyseley Shed on 11 November 1939 and Diesel Railcar No.10 which had been allocated to Banbury Shed in on 14 January 1936 was also moved to Tyseley Shed on 30 March 1940. The final Diesel Railcar of this batch (No.17) was a special experimental design for the conveyance of parcels traffic in the west of London, where rapid acceleration was required if delays to the congested suburban passenger services was to be avoided. This diesel Railcar was provided with a set of double doors at each end, in addition to the central sliding door. Racks were provided against the walls inside and the vehicle was rated to carry 10 tons.

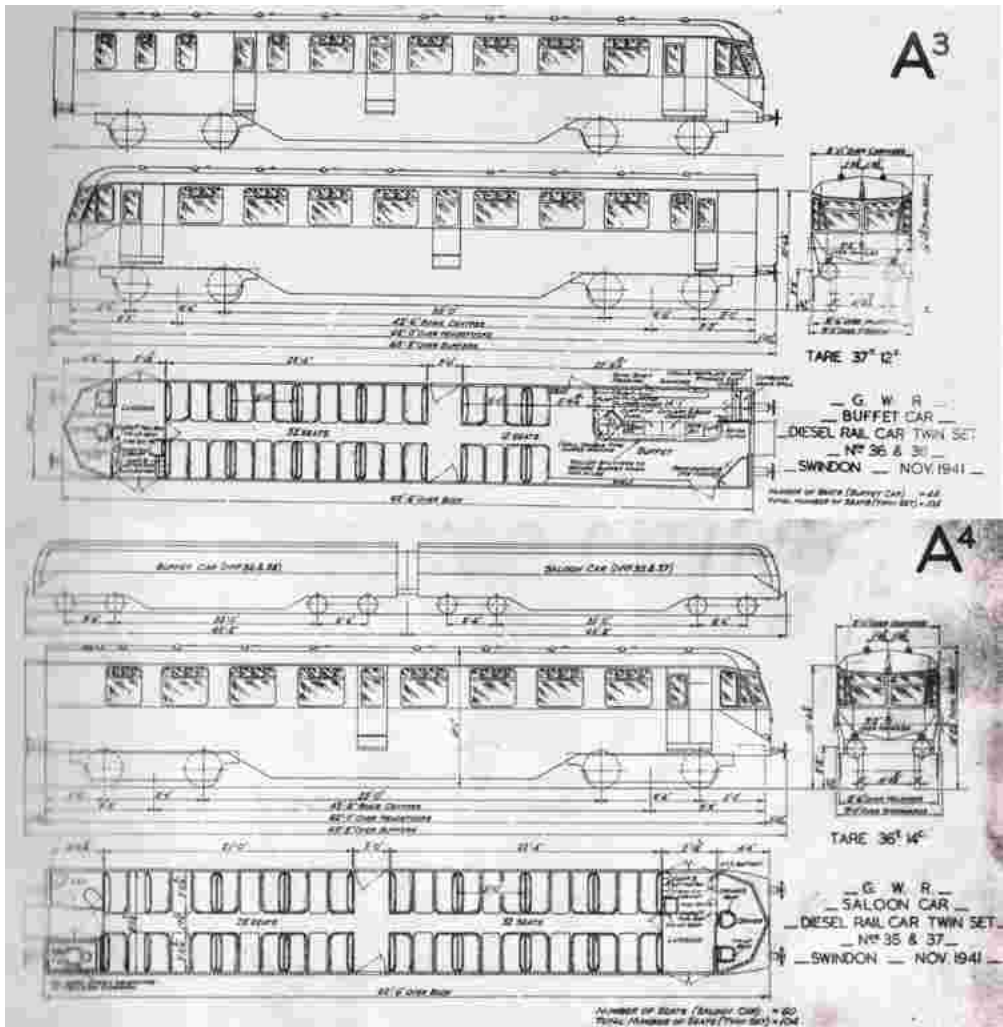
The Great Western Railway went on to order an improved Diesel Railcar in October 1935. Diesel Railcar No.18 was delivered in April 1937 and was designed to haul a tail load of up to 60 tons. This Diesel Railcar was provided with a five speed gearbox, instead of the four speed version on the previous Railcars. Standard buffers and draw-gear was provided at both ends and in order that the Diesel Railcar could be attached to one or more trailers and driven from these trailers, special electro-pneumatic controls were employed, which could be coupled easily to the trailers.



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World War. While most were a similar design to Diesel Railcar No.18, the last four in this batch were specifically designed as replacements for the Diesel Railcar Express Services with additional capacity as well as a buffet bar and toilets. The increase in capacity was achieved by forming a pair of Diesel Railcars as a twin coupled set with a gangway connection between them. Alternatively, a specially converted coach could be inserted to further increase the trains seating capacity. The first converted coach was a 70 foot all third coach (No.4705), but in 1948 a 57 foot composite (No.6582) was substituted to provide some first class accommodation.

The first Diesel Railcar twin set (Nos.35 and 36) was allocated to Stourbridge Shed on 16 November 1941 and these entered service on the Birmingham – Cardiff Express Service two days later. It appears however that there were teething problems with this twin set as it had returned to the AEC Works at Southall in December 1941. The second Diesel Railcar twin set (Nos. 37 & 38) also spent some time at the AEC Works, before both were



again allocated to Stourbridge Shed on 28 February 1942. After the end of the war, passenger demand on the Birmingham – Cardiff express services exceeded the capacity of even the augmented Diesel Railcar twin sets and conventional trains with steam motive power was required for the express service and the Diesel Railcars were transferred elsewhere. First to go was Diesel Railcar twin set Nos.35 & 36, allocated to Reading Shed on 7 September 1946 and then on 2 November 1946 two of the original Express Diesel Railcars (Nos. 2 & 3), which were transferred to South Wales Sheds. Diesel Railcar twin set Nos.37 & 38 was allocated to Bristol Shed on 28 December 1946 and finally Diesel Railcar No.4 went to Newport Shed on 25 January 1947.

These two Diesel Railcar twin sets were the forerunners of the modern Diesel Multiple Units (DMU), which we see today on the West Midlands Lines.

Three Great Western Railcars have been preserved. One of the original Streamlined Express Diesel Railcars (No.4) is part of the National collection and since 2015 has been displayed as a static exhibit at the National Railway Museum in York in its original livery. The other two are Diesel Railcar No.20 (under restoration at Kent & East Sussex Railway) and Diesel Railcar No.22 (at Didcot Railway Centre).



Robert Ferris, Vintage Trains Archivist

The bibliography and the images, which may be easier to read at their original size, can be found in the Publications section of the Friends website at www.friendsofvt.org.uk

Where are they now?

Over the years Tyseley Locomotive Works (TLW) has played host to many locomotives, whether it be to service, water, coal, store, repair or to attend one of Tyseley Open Day Weekends. In this occasional series we will look at the history and status of some of these locomotives.



A fine array of locomotives on the turntable at Tyseley at the Open Day on 25 October 2015.

Some of the repair visits would be over a period of days, weeks, months, or even years if the locomotive in question required a complete strip down, replacement parts and then a full rebuild again, sometimes to a standard that would enable it to travel at speeds up to 75mph. TLW carries out other work such as 10-year Boiler Certification and fitting any new systems that are required for main line running such as Train Protection and Warning System (TPWS). Examples of the work carried out on these magnificent locomotives could be seen around the turntable at past Open Days.

One of the locomotives that will be known to many regular travellers with Vintage Trains is 4936 "Kinlet Hall". 4936 was built at Swindon Works in 1929. Withdrawn in January 1964, 4936 was finally bought by the Kinlet Hall Locomotive Company in 1981 and moved to Peak Rail at Matlock where restoration began. It then moved to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway in 1985 followed by the Llangollen Railway in 1992. In 1996 it moved to TLW for final restoration and the fitting of the necessary systems required for mainline operation. It returned to operational condition in February 2000. In 2006 it was fitted with On-Train Monitoring Recorder (OTMR) equipment at Tyseley to allow it to continue to operate on the mainline. 4936 has worked trains for Vintage Trains including 'The Shakespeare Express', and excursions

on the mainline including 'The Ely Explorer' from Tyseley to Ely on 19 July 2008 as well as working on many preserved lines including the Severn Valley Railway and the East Lancashire Railway. It changed ownership in 2016, the new owner arranging for it to be overhauled at Tyseley Locomotive Works. The frame has now returned to the West Somerset Railway, where it is to be based, for final assembly following the completion of the boiler retubing at Tyseley to enable it to steam again.



4936 "Kinlet Hall" on The Turntable Road about to come off shed to work The Shakespeare Express on 17 July 2011.

Photos and article: Al Wallace

Quiz Corner

Al Wallace found this photo of a derelict signal box amongst his photographic collection. Can any of our readers identify it?



See the Endnotes section for the answer.

A previous article has described the history of the Stratford and Moreton Tramway (SMT), opened in 1826. To celebrate the bicentennial of the opening the Tramway a group of railway historians, railway modellers and local history groups are planning a series of exhibitions coordinated by The Stratford Society (www.stratfordsociety.co.uk).

At Stratford, The Stratford Society held an exhibition of local heritage in 2025. It is hoped to repeat this event in 2026, and proposals are being considered for a SMT200 display including a model of the Tramway Bridge, with working/moving coal waggon and horse, an interpretative display of the SMT history and a video slide show. Additionally, and separately, a local history enthusiast has plans for an outdoor event with a reenactment of the Inaugural Train, market, fair, and other activities and displays.

There are many other related assets available through The Stratford Society such as historical articles and a video slide show including the Harry Cowan Canal Basin model, with then and now photographs.

Contact The Stratford Society via their web site to find out more.

Book Review

Wiltshire WISDOM by Bob Meanley

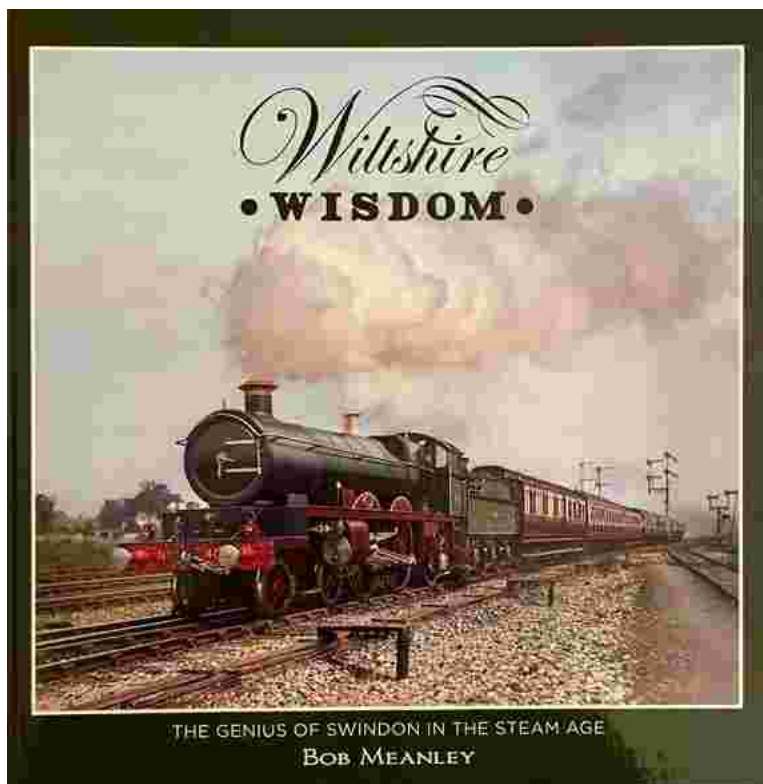
Wiltshire WISDOM by Bob Meanley, former Chief Engineer of Vintage Trains and number one GWR engineering guru, explores the remarkable story of the Great Western Railway's Swindon Works, once the industrial heart of railway engineering in Britain.

Meanley vividly charts the rise of the works, its chief engineers, their pioneering locomotives and the generations of skilled men and women who shaped its proud identity. Blending technical insight with human stories, he captures the scale, discipline and community spirit that defined Swindon's railway town. Richly detailed yet accessible, the book is profusely illustrated with black and white

and skilfully coloured images and it illuminates how innovation, craftsmanship and loyalty powered the GWR for over a century. This thoroughly researched book, using some of the most valuable archives available, including those of the STEAM museum in Swindon, is an engaging tribute to industrial heritage and the people behind it at Swindon. It is by any definition, a magnum opus.

Published by Lightmore Press at £75 and probably the most expensive book you will ever buy, this is a truly flagship publication, a coffee table book that you will dip into for a long time to come and is very much worth every single penny.

Denis Chick



Letter to the Editor, from Ray Churchill

We are always pleased to receive communication from our members. Ray Churchill, well known to many of our members, sent us a letter following the Chargeman Engine Driver article in the previous Steam in Trust. Thank you, Ray.

Following on from a previous magazine I'd like to put another "four pennorth" in. Whilst I agree that a driver may be fetched off the footplate for whatever reason and redeployed as Chargeman of cleaners etc, the title Chargeman Engine Driver is a complete misnomer to me. Once off the footplate the title engine driver is dropped because it no longer applies. The title becomes Foreman or Chargeman Cleaner. When I started at Bescot there was one driver who had failed his eyesight test but they gave him a job of Messroom Attendant, not Messroom Attendant Engine Driver. There were several drivers who had reached retirement age but were kept on as shed labourers. They were not shed Labourer Engine Drivers. In a strange way, these old boys saved my bacon. I had been at Bescot less than a month when several of us cleaners received a letter telling us that we were to be made

redundant and if we wanted to remain in the line of promotion (to eventual driver) then we would be transferred to Saltley Depot (21A). I was devastated, if I chose to go to Saltley how would I get there when it came to working shifts, I had no transport? Was I looking at the end of my career when I'd hardly just started? Unknown to me Bescot ASLEF rep Driver Ronnie Ward knew and went to see the 'Gaffer', or to give him his correct title, the District Motive Power Superintendent. Apparently, Ron said that while he was employing ex drivers over retirement age then he shouldn't be making cleaners who were in the line of promotion redundant. I don't know what else was said but the 'Gaffer' relented and we were allowed to stay at Bescot (in my case for 44 years). A very big thank you was bestowed on Driver Ronnie Ward when next I saw him.

Ray Churchill



Ninety years ago, GWR Castle Class 4-6-0 5043 entered service at Old Oak Common shed in London. Originally named "Barbury Castle", 5043 was renamed "Earl of Mount Edgcumbe" (after one of the GWR's aristocratic directors) in September 1937.

Robert Ferris, one of the Vintage Trains archivists, found this picture in a collection of old negatives. It depicts 5043 (with a single chimney) on a GWR express train, probably just before the Second World War.

Workshop and Stock Lists

Notes

From time to time Locomotives and Rolling Stock may be loaned out to other railway centres for static display or to operate services. Mainline 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. 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 and Site Tours.

Coaches in Vintage Trains mainline fleet TY01 are vacuum braked and steam and electric heated.

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	Overhaul as funds available
5043		Earl of Mount Edgcumbe	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1936 Swindon	Operational
5080		Defiant	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1939 Swindon	Overhaul as funds available
7029		Clun Castle	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1950 Swindon	Operational
7752			57xx 0-6-0T	1930 Swindon	LT No. L94 Stored
9600			57xx 0-6-0T	1945 Swindon	Stored

Other Company Steam Locomotives

No.		Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
670			LNWR Bloomer	1987 Tyseley	Replica as funds available

Industrial Steam Locomotives

No.		Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
		Henry	0-4-0ST	1901 H/Leslie	at Barrow Hill
1	P	Cadbury No 1	0-4-0T	1925 Avonside	
No 1			0-4-0ST	1941 Peckett	
7289	P	Fred	WD 0-6-0ST	1945 RSH	at Shakerstone

Industrial Diesel & Petrol Locomotives

No.		Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
299099	P		88DS 0-4-0 DM	1950 Ruston & Hornsby	at Turntable
347447	P		LWS 0-6-0 DM	1957 Ruston & Hornsby	at Turntable
376	P	Princess Margaret	0-4-0 DM	1948 Andrew Barclay	at Turntable

BR Diesel/Electric Locomotives

No.	Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
13029	08021 D3029	08DE 0-6-0	1953 Derby	Site Shunter
37240	D6940	37DE Co-Co	1964 EE/VF	Operational
47773	D1755 47161/541	47DE Co-Co	1964 Brush	Operational
144019	55819 DMS 55855 MS 55842 DMSL	144 Pacer	1987 Derby	Top Bank

Coaches

No.	Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
311	Eagle - 99971	MK1 Pullman Kitchen 1st	1960 Metro Cammell	NRM/TY01
335	Car No.335 - 99361	MK1 Pullman Kitchen 2nd	1960 Metro Cammell	TY01
349	Car No.349 - 99349	Mk1 Pullman Parlour 2nd	1960 Metro Cammell	TY01
3110	99124	MK1 FO	1963 Swindon	TY01
3141		MK1 FO	1963 Swindon	TY01 awaiting overhaul
5157		MK2 TSO	1966 Derby	TY01
5177		MK2 TSO	1967 Derby	TY01
5179		MK2 TSO	1967 Derby	Top Bank
5183		MK2 TSO	1967 Derby	Top Bank
5186		MK2 TSO	1966 Derby	Fuel Sidings 2
5191		MK2 TSO	1966 Derby	TY01
5194		MK2 TSO	1967 Derby	Fuel Sidings 1
5198		MK2 TSO	1966 Derby	TY01
5212		MK2 TSO	1967 Derby	TY01
5314		MK2a TSO	1968 Derby	at Turntable
5420		MK2a TSO	1969 Derby	Top Bank
9101		MK2 BSO/Buffer	1966 Derby	TY01
17018		MK1 BFK/Bar Car	1961 Swindon	TY01
17090		MK2a BFK	1968 Swindon	at Turntable
35470		MK1 BSK	1963 Wolverton	TY01
96100		GUW/Water Carrier	1959 Pressed Steel	TY01

G Middy 18-04-2026

Locomotives in the Works

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 Locomotives Works. Visitors are only admitted to works site on Tyseley Open Days or organised site tours.

No.	Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
5952	Cogan Hall	49xx Hall 4-6-0	1933 Swindon	6880 Society
5551	The Unknown Warrior	Patriot Class 4-6-0	New Build	LMS P Project
5164		5101 2-6-2T	1930 Swindon	EM Fund
789		F5 2-4-2T	New Build	Holden F5 Trust
45596	Bahamas	Jubilee 7P 4-6-0	1934 Glasgow	Bahamas Loco Society
5637		56XX 0-6-2T	1925 Swindon	Swindon & Crickelade
4588		4575 2-6-2T	1927 Swindon	Peak Rail
41708		1F 0-6-0T	1880 Derby	Barrow Hill Engine Soc'
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	0-6-0T	1929 H/Clarke	stripped at Turntable
7027	Thornbury Castle	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1949 Swindon	Boiler for 4709
48305		8F 2-8-0	1943 Crewe	GC Rly + DC Rly Trust

G Middy 16-02-2026

GWR Rolling Stock

No.	Description	Dia	Lot	Built	Notes
438	6ton Travelling Hand Crane	6228		GWR Swindon 1888 Order D2323	Alloc Northern Div CE Dept
438	Crane Match Truck	W9		Cravens, Sheffield 1913 Rhymney Rly Iron Mink No.1138	Absorbed into GWR 1923 & renumbered No.100938 Converted to Match Truck ~1948
35938	20ton Goods Brake Van - Toad	AA23	1451	GWR Swindon 1943, BR conversion to Mess Van	In BR service at Tyseley Depot 1966
42194	15ton Well Wagon – Hydra D	G22	745	GWR Swindon 1913	Brown vehicle for use in fast passenger trains
43958	Shunters Truck	M1	246	GWR Swindon 1900	Alloc Swindon Loco Dept Underframe renewed ~1930
60911	10ton Ballast Wagon – Starfish	P14	793	GWR Swindon 1914	In BR service at Taunton
125912	12ton Vac fitted Covered Goods Van - MINK A	V23	1145	GWR Swindon 1935	In BR service at Tyseley Depot 1966
126984	12ton Motor Car Wagon – MOGO	G31	1210	GWR Swindon 1934	In BR service at Acton

Other Rolling Stock

No.	Description	Dia	Lot	Built	Notes
139	30ton Steam Crane		Wks No C58	Cowans Sheldon 1959	Allocations Newport (1960), Worcester (1970)
DB998526	Match Wagon			Cowans Sheldon 1959	
44064	6wheel Milk Tank	1994	1306	LMS 1940	United Dairies
W93178	General Utility Van	811	73041	Pressed Steel 1958	No.86178 until 1984
M93533	General Utility Van	811	30402	York 1958	No.86533 until 1995
W96100	Water Carrier (ex GUV)	811	30565	Pressed Steel 1959	No.S86734 converted to Motorail Van W96100 1988
B281137	20ton All steel Mineral Wagon	1/114	2602	BR Shildon 1954 (2 side doors & end tipping)	One side door removed Shildon 1979 (Order A234)
B900907	25ton Well Wagon – Crocodile	743	2879	BR Swindon 1959	
B949578	45ton Steel Slab/Coil Wagon	1/411	3423	BR Swindon 1962	Worked from Abbey Works, Port Talbot
954154	Goods Brake Van	1/506	3129	BR Faverdale 1958	
954302	Goods Brake Van	1/506		BR	Underframe only

End Notes

Did you identify the signal box in Quiz Corner? The photo is Longbridge East Signal Box. There was also a Longbridge West Box. see Longbridge section of Warwickshire Railways at www.warwickshirerailways.com/ for pictures and history of them both.



This was a Midland Railway Signal Box design. The single line from Longbridge to Halesowen was jointly owned by the Midland with the Great Western Railway, with the Midland providing the signalling equipment. Thanks to Al Wallace for the photo, with additional text from Rob Ferris.

Denis Chick has found a photo taken in his British Leyland days as part of a Railway Magazine photoshoot. Longbridge was still in full flow by rail with coal and sand coming in to feed the foundry, oil too. Outbound

it was cars off to world markets. Here a Class 25 shunts alongside BL's Aveling and Porter diesel mechanical 0-4-0 shunter 'Frankley'.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

First, an apology for the problems associated with the film show at Henley Station on 25 March. All trains along the North Warwickshire line were cancelled for most of the day due to signalling issues, leaving several members (including your Chairman) waiting for several hours for non-existent trains at various stations along the route. Congratulations to the few intrepid members who managed to reach Henley and enjoy a shorter film show. Undeterred, we will be offering another film show at Henley in the future; details will be on our web site and in our next monthly email update.

On more cheerful news, we have a couple of events coming up soon.

On **Monday 9 May** we have our annual members-only Depot Tour - details in the Chairman's Report

On **Wednesday 13 May** we will be at Codsall Station for an informal social. No need to book, just come and enjoy a few beers in this historic Grade 2 listed station conversion. Codsall is served by hourly direct trains to/from New Street.

BACK COVER IMAGE

Railway company posters, emerging in the 1830s and peaking between 1923 and 1947, evolved from text-heavy notices into iconic, artistic advertisements that promoted holiday destinations and fostered a national culture of travel. The "Golden Age" (1923–1947) featured bold Art Deco styles. We feature one of the GWR's posters, promoting their Cornwall route, on the back cover.

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

Benefits of Membership

Receiving our magazine *Steam in Trust* and regular newsletters, reduced admission fee for Tyseley Open Days, and free entry including a guest to the majority of social events organised by the Friends.

Subscription Rates

	1 Year	5 Year
Junior (5 – 18)	£9	£40
Adult (19 – 64)	£25	£110
Partners (2 adults)	£40	£180
Family (2+2)	£45	£195
Senior (65 and over)	£20	£65
Senior partners (2 adults 65 and over)	£35	£125

Committee

Paul Hatten – Chair

Mary McCullough – Secretary

Janet Corbett – Treasurer

Neil Ewart, Chris Schroeder, Sharon Salter,

Denis Chick, Gill Smith

Contact Us

We welcome contact from all of our members.

To contact us, either use the **Contact Us** form on our website at www.friendsofvt.org.uk, send an email to enquiries@friendsofvt.org.uk, drop us a letter at the address above or leave us a message on 07827 899341.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

We at The Friends of Vintage Trains take your privacy very seriously. We will store your data securely and will not distribute, for profit or otherwise, your personal details outside our organisation. If you no longer wish to receive any printed or email communication from the Friends, please contact us either through the contact form on our website or in writing to the address above asking to be removed from the postal and email lists. We will update our records immediately. Please indicate your membership number with your request, if possible.

Vintage Trains Charitable Trust

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Michael Whitehouse – Chairman

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Richard Cadge, Mark Gaskell, John Minards

Sipho Ndlovu, Richard Thorne, Bill Reeves,

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Secretary: Gary Moulder

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Registered as No. 7668 with the Financial

Conduct Authority under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act.

Directors:

Michael Whitehouse – Chairman

Vic Michel – Deputy Chairman

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Vintage Trains Ltd

Train Operating Company, registered in

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Directors:

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