

The Railcar Association Bulletin September 2012



Introduction

This edition of the bulletin comes just before the annual convention, so it is a rather thinner issue as there has been less time to compile the usual news reports. I'm sure normal service can be resumed next edition, which will also include a report detailing the convention itself, which will hopefully have gone smoothly and been an excellent event. Everyone preparing to attend the weekend has said how they are looking forward to catching up or meeting with other groups.

Readers may have noticed a larger number of movements and disposals in recent bulletins, and an article discussing this phenomenon forms a feature in this edition, discussion on the topic will be encouraged at this year's association meeting.

News

Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway: DMS Sc51017 - The damaged engine is now store with no plans to either replace or repair it at the moment.

DMBS Sc51043 - The letter rack was missing from the brake van when we bought the carriage from BR but a new one has now been made, to the original design, and installed. The refurbished cab windscreen roller blinds have been fitted.

TFRB Sc79443 - No. 1 end gangway rubbing plate is back on. Bodywork restoration has taken another leap forward. Now, almost all of the framework has been repaired on the corridor side and two-thirds of the bodyside has been replaced with new panelling. On the compartment side about two-thirds of the framework repairs have been done and just over half of the bodyside has been replaced. This includes the rotten corner at No.1 end. The underframe has been descaled, primed and painted on approximately half the length of the vehicle. We now have a stock of new key sheeting to use to lay a new floor and the first sections have been cut to size and welded in place, again starting from No. 1 end. One bodyside door was dented and cracked so has been sent away for specialist repair.



Sc79443 undergoing major bodywork repairs, 25/3/12 (J.Horne)



Sc79443 undergoing major bodywork repairs, 11/3/12 (J.Horne)

Great Central Railway: Class 127 M51622 has now operated successfully for the first time in many years after performing faultlessly at the railway's war weekend in June. Work on the vehicle has continued following the gala, with two battery cells being found dead which have been replaced. Also, partner vehicle M51616 is now also making progress, with the brake gear removed for inspection/re-bushing and the air tanks off for testing. Replacement step boards have also been made for the vehicle and the first of the seats have been reupholstered.

Pontypool & Blaenavon Railway: After a donation of some ex-bus batteries, both engines on (Class 117) 51351 were started for the first time in at least the last two years, following a period on a trickle charge. The No2 engine was started first, as this was the one looked at previously. At first the engine wouldn't fire but this was down to the stop solenoid being stuck in the stop position. The solenoid moves to the stop position without issue but wont drop back to the start position. With the solenoid moved by hand a further attempt was made, and after a couple of revolutions the engine fired and soon settled into tick over,

although this sounds slightly slow. There is no visible exhaust on idle. It was noticed that there was a slight diesel leak from the injector pipes, which needed nipping up.

With the No2 engine ticking over, the attention turned to the No1 engine. This engine refused to do anything apart from the Local Start Relay clicking when the start button was pushed. Following a bit of head scratching, referral to the wiring diagrams and a bit of swearing, the Start Isolation Relay (a plug-in type relay installed by the previous owner) was given a gentle thump and the start button pressed again - success - started first time. When feathering the hand throttle two exhaust leaks were noticed and a couple of assistants were covered in rust and water from the exhaust system. This engine runs a bit sweeter than No2.

Moving up to the cab, a check was made of the gauges. The Tacho was showing a reading although the switch looks to be faulty as when changed to the other engine it was not showing a reading. Moving the switch slightly seemed to work and the other engines speed was shown. The No1 Engine at idle is about 75rpm - 100rpm more than the No2, which may give a clue to the rough sounding idle.

Next came the Vac gauge - great - 25 inches without a fuss, brake handle inserted and moved to release, 21 inches registered on the Vac pipe, application made and released, no problems there. Next came the air gauge - 0PSI. Oh well, it was thought, you cannot win them all! A quick look around the vehicle (it is parked next to its paired vehicle) showed all of the (visible) cocks to be closed. Revving the engines a bit had no effect. A fault to be added to the list.

Attention will now turn to getting the engines on 51397 started and putting a case together to get funding from the company to continue the restoration. Oil changes will be required on the mechanical front and a fair bit of bodywork restoration carried out.

Strathspey Railway: Class 117 SC51367 & SC51402 will be operating as the second train on Saturday October 27th & Sunday October 28th.

Class 122 55019

Despite the continuing retraction of operating first generation DMUs on the mainline (mainly from the departmental sectors), a few vehicles have continued to be saved for preservation. The latest is Class 122 DMBS 55019, or 960015 (975042) as it has been known in departmental service. As reported in Issue 108, 960015 was last reported as being moved from Aylesbury to Tyseley in September 2011 to donate components to allow the overhaul of passenger vehicle 121020 and Sandite vehicle 960010. All of these vehicles were owned by Chiltern Railways who now operate all of the remaining mainline First Generation vehicles with the exception of Arriva's 121032.



55019 in store at Tyseley (R. Moxon)

However 960015 has since been sold to the Llanelli and Mynydd Mawr Railway and the vehicle moved to their base at the former Cynheidre Colliery in Wales. The vehicle joins a 2-car Class 117 set and a Class 107 DMCL.

The vehicle had been heavily modified internally during its time as a departmental vehicle, so restoration work will be required before the vehicle can carry a reasonable number of passengers. The interior will be returned to original as far as possible but a compromise may initially be made. It is planned for the vehicle to be one of the railway's principle passenger vehicles when complete.



55019 on arrival (LMMR)

Time Traveller

A regular feature: ten external links to images taken of DMUs on British Railways. If readers find any interesting examples, please send in the links for inclusion next time.

Green Era

[Class 116 - Birmingham Snow Hill - 1957](#)

[Class 108 - Harrogate - 8/1965](#)

[Class 122 - Hatton Bank - 19/2/1966](#)

[Class 119 - Birmingham Snow Hill - 5/3/1967](#)

[Class 104 - M56182 - Leamington Avenue](#)

Blue Era

[Class 116 - Interior - 24/4/1969](#)

[Class 103 - Chester - 29/9/1979](#)

Blue/Grey & Later

[Class 120 - M53673 - Glasgow Central - 1985](#)

[Class 101 - M53307 - Shrewsbury - 1/2/1986](#)

[Class 104 - 53437 & 53479 - Old Oak Common - 1990](#)

Shifting Sands: Should We Be Worried About Our Collective DMU Collection?

Chris Moxon examines the changing dynamics of the UK's DMU's in the 21st Century

The past 12 months have been particularly turbulent for DMU preservation. Casually observing the movements of vehicles reveals that over 40 movements have taken place this year. Although in some railway circles, such as steam/diesel locomotives, this wouldn't be a very large number; but for DMU's it represents a great deal more activity than is normal. By and large (other than single units/Railbuses) DMU's don't tour the country as gala visitors, so movements of vehicles are an indication of more permanent shifts in a vehicle's status.

Disposals Increase - A Good Thing?

At the same time, the number of disposals has also increased significantly. Seven individual vehicles have been cut up during the past 12 months. Should this be taken as worrying sign? Well, with the price of scrap remaining high, several groups/individuals have chosen to act now when it comes to stripping vehicles which often were never meant to run again, but to provide spares to stop better vehicles already in traffic from deteriorating. It is generally argued that DMU preservation is not negatively affected by this practice.

Most DMU's on railways today were preserved during two "gluts" of DMU disposals. The first was during the 1990's following the introduction of second generation DMU's on the



Class 101 50167 is scrapped on the Churnet Valley Railway in March 2012



Many Class 101 vehicles were saved after a glut of mainline disposals in the mid 2000's

national network: this resulted in over 100 vehicles being saved; Class 108's being the most common. The second was during the 2000's when (in comparison to the 1990's) much smaller fleets of Class 101 & 117 vehicles were disposed of, however a far greater proportion of them were preserved. It is therefore of little consequence to the movement to see Class 101, 108 & 117 vehicles being stripped for standard mechanical components and shipped off for scrap while the returns are good. The recent case of the "Dorset 5" Class 117 vehicles is a perfect example of this. Being the most common Class in preservation, the three Class 117 vehicles which were cut have been far more useful proving spare parts, and it is also three less vehicles to rot away or eventually restore.

It is the opinion of many, justifiably, that (like diesel locomotives) there are too many DMU vehicles for the number of railways

we have and one result of this surplus is that there are also too many DMU's in storage deteriorating in condition. Clearance of "no hoppers" is therefore, in this view, a good thing: both improving the balance of restored vs rotten vehicles and allowing rarer types to see more time in service.

When do disposals become unsustainable?

The boundaries become blurred when rarer vehicles in poor condition continue to be scrapped. A worrying batch of scrappings in the early 1990's saw the UK lose its second Class 100 & 103 sets, with several other sets (such as the only Class 105 & 109) under threat. Thankfully, no classes or unique examples of sets were lost. More recently, a Class 103 power car and two Class 116 DMS vehicles have been scrapped, leaving both classes with just a single complete set left. A Class 100 trailer (one of only three) has also been disposed of only this summer.

Combining all of the above, DMU preservation now has just one complete set of Classes 100, 103, 105, 109, 116, 119, 126 and Derby Lightweight. Other vehicles not immediately thought of as particularly rare can also be valuable. The "Common" classes such as the 101 & 108 only contain three centre cars each in preservation. The rarities can be summarised as follows:

- Derby Lightweight: One single unit & One 2-car set remain (all unique)
- Class 100: Only one complete set remains
- Class 101: Three rare centre cars, two TCL's and a unique TSL (59303)
- Class 103: Only one complete set remains
- Class 104: DTCL 56182, TCL 59137 & TBS 59228 (all unique)
- Class 105: Only one complete set remains
- Class 107: Only one centre car, 59791, survives
- Class 108: Three rare centre cars, two TBS's and a unique TSL (59387)
- Class 109: Only one set remains
- Class 110: Only two sets survive, with the centre car (59701) being unique
- Class 111: A single vehicle (59575) survives
- Class 114: Only a single set survives in passenger configuration
- Class 115: Only two TS vehicles survive: essential if an as built 4-car set is ever to be represented
- Class 116: Only one complete set (albeit spread over two locations) remains
- Class 118: A single vehicle (51321) survives
- Class 119: Only one 2-car set remains (they were originally 3-cars)
- Class 120: A single vehicle (59276) survives
- Class 121: Only two DTS vehicles remain
- Class 126: Only one set remains
- Class 127: Only two centre cars remain

Examining the above list, remarkably, only the Class 117 and 122 fleets do not contain types where two or less members remain in preservation*. Clearly DMU's are not as common as the more casual enthusiast may think.

Not all bad news

Without the romance and volunteer force of locomotive preservation, DMU vehicles (much like loco hauled carriages) have always had less support than their more powerful counterparts. This is one reason why some rare examples have been unable to be saved from scrap. However it is not all bad news however, for many of the rare vehicles listed above (the majority in fact) are in the ownership of group's and individuals who preserve the vehicles for what they are, rather than simply as a cheap form of heritage railway transport. A few have also attracted lottery funding, which has been essential in saving some of the unique sets that were in the poorest of condition. The Class 109, 126 and Derby Lightweight DMBS are all shining examples of how unique vehicles can be transformed and maintained for the future. Equally, there are many privately owned vehicles which are unique and in excellent condition and are only in such condition due to the millions of pounds that private owners have



An arson attack in South Wales reduced the (once healthy) Class 116 preservation fleet down to just one complete set



Class 104 M59137 - a unique vehicle, now under restoration



Just a single centre car survives from the Class 120's, unfortunately contaminated with asbestos



Class 121 W56289, one of only two suburban driving trailers, operating at the East Lancs Railway

contributed to their vehicles.

Summary

In conclusion, it would seem that currently the DMU preservation movement is undergoing a reorganisation: lines are having clear outs and DMU sets are being sold, relocated and disposed of. Guardedly, this is a good thing, as ideally most railways should have at least one DMU set in service with only one or two at any time stored or under overhaul. There seems nothing wrong with stripping common DMU's to keep the core fleets safe.

However, this is the real world, and with limited resources restoration queues will inevitably remain (an article on this single sentence could easily be written). In the case of these vehicles, key examples of each class ideally need to be retained for the future, to one day enable the UK to collectively be able to offer a "perfect fleet" of at least one type of every DMU in good operating condition in the future. A utopian statement perhaps, but arguably this is the shared goal that each and every DMU preservationist is working towards in their own way.

**To stop things getting too complicated, only conventional First Generation DMUs have been included in the article, but many other oddities such as Railbuses etc also exist under the association's umbrella*



Class 109 E56171 & E50416 - an extremely rare set but fully restored and in the hands of a secure DMU group, maintaining the vehicles in service

Movements

Class 100 56317 has moved from the Great Yeldham Transport Museum (an ex aircraft hangar in which the vehicle has been stored since 2008) to a haulage yard in Stoke-on-Trent. 56317, one of only three surviving Class 100 trailer cars, appears to have been a victim of a dispute and has consequently been sold for scrap. It was intended to restore the vehicle undercover at Great Yeldham but unfortunately this seems not to be the case. 56317 is now in temporary store.

Class 101 51192 & 56352 has moved from the East Lancashire Railway to the North Norfolk Railway during August. The move was not unexpected, as the ELR had advertised the set as running its last gala at the line back in March, but its destination following departure from the ELR had previously been a mystery. Owned by the National Railway Museum, this Class 101 set (which has never been to York) has so far spent its entire time out stationed at the East Lancashire Railway, who have a good relationship with the NRM. The set has joined resident Class 101 E51228 & E56062 at the NNR, which currently sees the most use of any individual vehicle on the railway, and has lately been struggling with the demands being made from it, requiring support from the line's Railbus and loco hauled diesels. The arrival of a second Class 101 set brings many obvious benefits to capacity and maintenance of the first generation DMU fleet.

Class 101 51432 & 51498 has been moved from the private Ministry of Defence site at Shoeburyness to the Swanage Railway in Dorset. The move, conducted in early July, follows a period of three years where the vehicle was made available from its owner for hire to other railways on a restore & run agreement. With presumably no takers, the two vehicles are reported to be intended as a source of spare parts. The set, still in Regional Railways livery, has never operated in preservation and has been in store for many years since withdrawal from the mainline. The set was latterly operating as L835, one of a pair which were moved from the London area to Manchester to support the small fleet of 1016xx units which became famous for being the last fleet (other than isolated examples of bubble cars) to operate in passenger service on the mainline (up to 2003). Along with stable mate L840, the ex London sets were unusual (when compared to the other 1016xx sets) in that the first class was never downgraded, so were always a target for enthusiasts. After withdrawal, L840 was scrapped in South Wales but L835 survived at Shoeburyness, however its future is now uncertain. Neither vehicles in the set are unique in preservation.

Class 108 51950 & 52062 have relocated to the Telford Steam Railway from the Gloucestershire & Warwickshire Railway after a prolonged period for sale. In common with most of the preserved Class 108's, the two-car power twin set was saved in the early 1990's where it was restored to allow the growing Gloucestershire & Warwickshire to operate services during the low season when steam was not economically viable. Eventually however the set fell out of use, with supporting services given over to the growing collection of diesel locomotives. In storage ever since, the set was put up for sale by owner Andrew Goodman. Purchased by the Telford Steam Railway, the set arrived at its new home in early July with the intention of being returned to service soon. The 108 joins a Class 104 set which has been providing passenger services (albeit in a hauled stock capacity) for the past few years.

Class 115 51655 has moved from storage to a private site in Perth. The vehicle has been sold from scrap merchants EMR to Squirrel Self Store, a self storage firm, who intend to use the vehicle for additional office space at their Arran Road base. Originally preserved at the Lavender Line with fellow vehicle 51677, 51655 had been resident at the Epping & Ongar and Barry Island Railways before it was sold for scrap in 2011.



51655 in its new, undercover, home

Class 117 51339 & 51382 has ended its loan spell at the Gloucestershire & Warwickshire, where it has been based since March 2011. Previously in storage at LH Group, the 2-car set has now moved to Peak Rail, which hasn't had resident DMU's since the extensive Class 108 fleet was disbanded in 2008. This is thought to be the last of a large number of DMU arrivals/departures for the Gloucestershire & Warwickshire (15 individual movements in the past two years!) as the only remaining vehicles on the line are the operational Class 117 and 122 sets owned by members of the railway. The plans for this set now at Peak Rail are currently unclear, although the lack of run round facilities at the line's new Matlock terminus are well suited to any future DMU operation.

Class 122 55019 has moved from Tyseley into preservation at the Llanelli and Mynydd Mawr Railway (see separate article detailing the move).

Class 141 55513 & 55533, as predicted in the last issue, moved again from Llangollen to its usual base the Midland Railway Butterley. Its visit to Llangollen was a short term arrangement in order to star at their June Railcar Gala, and accordingly the second part of the move to return the vehicles to their base was completed during July. Although owned and operated by the Llangollen Railcar Group, the set has always operated at other railways, initially the Midland Railway and later at the Weardale Railway. The vehicles have moved back to the former railway after the community service at the Weardale was discontinued.



55019 enters preservation (LMMR)

Railbus LEV1 has moved from the North Norfolk Railway to the National Railway Museum's Shildon site on Friday 10th August. Restored to operational condition at the NNR, the vehicle unfortunately saw little use outside of galas whilst on the line, despite being very much geographically appropriate (it was used on the mainline on Norfolk/Suffolk branch lines). Future plans for the vehicle re currently uncertain, however it can't be denied that it is the perfect size to operate the short distance shuttles currently offered at Shildon.

Disposals

Class 117 51395 has been cut up on site at the Dean Forest Railway during August. It is the last of the "Dorset 5" vehicles to be either disposed of or re-homed. The vehicle had been stripped at both the Midland Railway Butterley and the Dean Forest Railways to aid a number of restorations. 51395 was not historically significant, with fourteen identical vehicles remaining in preservation.



51395 at the end at the Dean Forest Railway, 17/8/12 (C.Lings)

Gallery



Class 104 M50479 at the Telford Steam Railway, 9/7/12



Class 104 M50531 at the Telford Steam Railway, 9/7/12



A Class 104 cab roof dome lurks at the Telford Steam Railway, 9/7/12



The newly arrived Class 108 W52062 at the Telford Steam Railway, 9/7/12



Class 101 50164 nears the end of its contract overhaul at the Midland Railway Butterley, 14/7/12



Class 127 M51591 at the end of a day's work at the Midland Railway Butterley, 14/7/12

Forthcoming Events

Date	Railway	Expected Traction
September 7th-9th	Great Central Railway (17th Annual Convention)	101, 127 & Diesel Locos
October 20th & 21st	Mid Norfolk Railway	101, Possibly 122, 421 & Diesel Loco(s)

Submissions

Hopefully the contents of this bulletin was both interesting and informative. If you know anyone who could provide similar material found in this issue for future bulletins, please make yourself or them known to railcar@live.co.uk The following types of submission would be most welcome:

- Photographs of vehicles in service
- Restoration articles
- Reports on special events
- Requests for information
- News & images of recent DMU activity
- Anything that featured in the pre 2004 bulletins
- Anything that may be of interest to readers

Feel free to send submissions at any time to railcar@live.co.uk but no later than October 30th for Issue 114 (due out November)