



The Railcar Association Bulletin January 2013



Introduction

Understandably there are a few less contributions in the news section this edition, as many have been busy over the lead up to Christmas and New Year, your editor has balanced this slightly with a meatier-than-usual report from their own railway! There is also plenty in the gallery section to view showing our steeds in action over 2012.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the "Railcar of the Year" award, and congratulations to a certain single coach vehicle which won. It was interesting to see that four of the five of the nominations were single units, a sign of the continued popularity of these useful and self contained vehicles.

Hopefully 2013 will bring good fortune to all those involved in the DMU movement. The year ahead looks to be just as exciting as ever with several vehicles tipped for a return to traffic, including one which should allow us to ride on its class for the first time since the 1990's.

It is pleasing to see another DMU event join the calendar this year, at the Ecclesbourne Valley during August. It will be the first time since the 2009 railcar convention that their extensive fleet will all be in action at once, so will be an event not to be missed.

2013 Convention

The organisers are requesting expressions of interest for the driver experiences, including preferences for the 117, 122 or both. Please send responses to [Ian Butler](#). The group already have five takers but really would welcome more feedback on what people want to do e.g. 122 or 117, North or South of Winchcombe. The group would ideally like to run both sets on a simultaneous Winchcombe to Cheltenham and Winchcombe to Laverton basis, using both sets and swapping over half way through the day. This would provide the opportunity to do the full length of the line on either unit, but would require signalmen to arranged in advance.

Railcar of the Year

Congratulations go to our first winner of the Railcar of the Year award: **Sweden Y7 Railcar 1212**.

Nearly 550 votes were cast from enthusiasts and the public. When the voting started, Mid Norfolk Class 122 M55009 gained an early lead during the first day, securing 33 votes within 24 hours. However this was to be short-lived as Y7 Railcar 1212 and Gloucestershire Warwickshire Class 122 W55003 were tying for first place by day two, and indeed it would prove to be a two horse race for the rest of the competition. By day three, 1212 had gained the lead, and maintained this position for a further five days until W55003 surged ahead after an impressive 47 votes were cast for it on 13th December. W55003 then remained in first place for quite some time until Boxing Day



1212 at Wansford on launch day

when 1212 regained the top position. Despite further support for W55003 which resulted in the vehicle and 1212 being neck-and-neck again on the 28th December, 1212 just pushed ahead on the 29th and went on to take the prize, after securing a flurry of interest from 85 Swedish voters on New Years Eve! It was very interesting to watch the votes evolve over time, and the awards will be repeated next year, when it will hopefully be as popular as this year. Many thanks to all those who took the time to nominate and vote.

Place	Vehicle	Total Number of Votes
1st	Y7 1212	244
2nd	Class 122 W55003	164
3rd	Class 122 M55009	54
4th	Class 100 Sc56097	42
5th	GWR 22	37

A Railcar of the Year page will be included on the website soon which will showcase this and future year's winners. Hopefully in the future we will have a resource to look back on to remember the railcars which were special for whatever reason, so our continued achievements are not forgotten in the mists of time! Next year will probably be of similar format, but nominations will probably be opened earlier to give more time to nominate and vote. Whilst the voting numbers were very successful, not that many people nominated vehicles through to the voting process, so this will be an area we seek to improve on next year to ensure the vehicles which are selected for the final five are done so democratically. Having five in the final seems to have worked well so this format will be retained. It will be interesting to see which vehicle(s) people will view as worthy of the 2013 award.

News

Churnet Valley Railway: Since the last report Class 104/110 set M50455/E59701/M50517 has completed all of its booked running (and more) for the year without failure, concluding another pleasing years running for the owning group. The summer was spent chasing some long running electrical faults including a problem with engines not starting/stopping from the cab buttons. Unfortunately whilst investigating these faults more seemed to emerge including a cab controller/desk going live and a very suspect jumper cable receptacle on one of the cab ends. It is now known that M50455 at least must have at least two earth faults so we live in hope that they can be found as different components are maintained. Some rather crude Network SouthEast era modifications do not always help matters. As part of the investigations a malfunctioning main control switch has been replaced and a buzzer repaired. Luckily non of the above shenanigans have affected the vehicle's availability in service.

Two A exams have been carried out during the year to keep on top of the maintenance requirements for the TRA system which is used, more than usual due to increased mileages linked to unavailability of steam locomotives. During one of these exams it was discovered that some connections inside E59701's dynamo had disintegrated, so a repair was made and the dynamo tested.

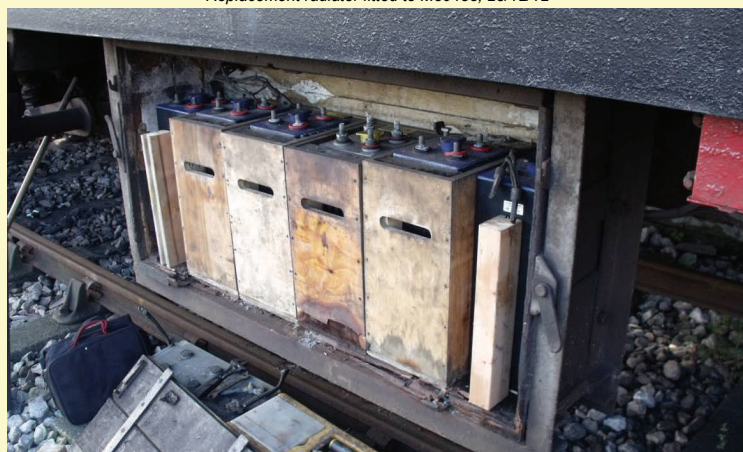
The autumn saw work on the heaters, which involved a refurbished control box being fitted to M50517, a replacement heater on M50455 and replacement batteries to E59701. The end result being four out of five heaters fitted to the 3-car set functioning satisfactorily. A fuel leak was discovered and repaired on an engine on M50455 and a radiator has been swapped on the same vehicle after the original started leaking very badly. Perhaps surprisingly this is the first radiator the group have had to replace, the set running on its untouched "ex-BR" examples all their preservation life.



A rare view of 53437 & M53494 without their tarpaulins, whilst being re-secured at Cheddleton, 3/11/12. These vehicles are now incomplete with several components recently stolen



Replacement radiator fitted to M50455, 23/12/12



Replacement batteries fitted to E59701, 21/10/12

The group were set back considerably when vehicles awaiting restoration and the collection of support vehicles were the victims of a series of serious organized thefts during the summer, on a scale never seen before on the railway. All three of the Class 104 vehicles awaiting restoration (53437, M53494 & ADB977554) were stripped of most of their underframe copper

wiring, which will of course make future restorations much more expensive and time consuming. Indeed, other railways have previously scrapped vehicles in a similar situation as restoration becomes no longer financially viable. Other accessible metal components have been removed from the exteriors, windows smashed for access and the interiors entered. Particularly disappointing is the two powercars, which had hitherto been in poor but complete condition. They will of course now require many more replacement parts when restoration is undertaken. Consequently, the winter so far has been forcibly spend on re-securing the attacked vehicles. In some cases even the protective tarpaulins had been cut off and stolen, we think used to pile the loot onto and then dragged off site!



Long stored M53494 at Cheddleton following thefts, 29/10/12

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway: Services that

W55003 and the Class 117 set are being increasingly employed on are "Schools' Specials"; part of the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum which includes a topic on transport and the group have managed to secure some additional midweek and out of season running to provide services to support this. The 117 was used on Santa Specials between Laverton and just North of Winchcombe for the two weekends and weekday immediately preceding Christmas. In case anyone is wondering why the DMU Santa's did not go as far as Winchcombe, this was to avoid meeting the steam service Santa who had camped out in his Grotto at Winchcombe! GWSR services finished for the season on New Years Day 2013, by which time the DMUs have exceeded the 10,000 mile limit for the year.

Heaters are topical at this time of year. Courtesy of Trevor Daw and Martin Harris, the group have a full complement of 8 working heaters on the units, and relatively few problems. One of their 117 heaters was fitted to our 117 TCL and refused to fire, although it had done so on Trevor's infamous test rig. With the aid of a heater simulator test box (3 lights and some switches!) the problem was quickly attributed to the fact that the glow plug was not energising at the commencement of the start cycle. Subsequently this was traced to the relay panel (mounted under the solebar), which was found to be secure on the vehicle but not forming a weather-tight seal on its mounting box. Removal of the relay panel found that the glow plug relay (the chunky Arrow open relay, SR for the circuit diagram spotters) was not moving freely due to the amount of "foreign matter" that had made its way in. A healthy dose of WD40 and a clean of the contacts was all that was required to rectify the fault. Even Mr Daw seemed impressed! A recurrent heater problem is the carbon fouling of glow plugs, which leads to premature failure. The VMI maintenance schedule that we acquired from the Llangollen group specifies GP checks on a B exam, but we have taken to doing the job more regularly. It is hoped that our heaters can be run on kerosene as opposed to diesel in 2013, in an attempt to achieve cleaner running.



Damaged cylinder (I.Butler)

The group have a container being delivered to Toddington in January which will enable them to catalogue and sort out the spares collection. A reorganisation of the steam shed at Toddington has allowed a 680 under cover, stripped and ready for a rebuild. The group really need some help sourcing a new piston and liner to replace the one that was removed (see right), as they have an eager volunteer wanting to get on with the rebuild.

Dean Forest Railway: The 108 was used to provide services on 48 days in 2012 and the group are very pleased to report 100% availability. Mileage for the year was approximately 1370 miles. A 4-car set was provided on 4 days, a 3-car set on 9 days and a 2-car set on 35 days. On 4 occasions the DMU was provided to replace other planned services, sometimes at short notice. There were five evening fish and chip specials during the year. This year marked the 20th anniversary of the arrival of the DFR's first 2-car DMU set on the line and these two vehicles worked most of the services this year. To provide the passenger services M56492 worked on 48 days, E50619 was used on 43 days, M51914 on 18 days and E59387 on 4 days. A highlight of the year for the group was the introduction into passenger service of unique centre trailer E59387 following high quality restoration work which had taken several years. This vehicle was put into service on the DMU Heritage Railcar day organised by the group, this was the first time they had run a 4-car DMU in passenger service for many years. A lot of the restoration effort in the first 6 months was concentrated on getting E59387 ready to run for the DMU Heritage Railcar day. Effort was then turned towards M51566.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway: As the 2012 season draws to a close, the reduction in timetabled services for the winter period allows the team time to focus on the two DMU projects in hand at the moment (see restoration updates). All of the winter timetable services have been operated using our unique Derby Lightweight single car 'Iris' as this stalwart continues to provide not only reliable and economical traction for the railway but also a warm and comfortable environment for our passengers.

In to 2013 and the railway have scheduled a DMU event dubbed "Multiple Memories" after several of our visitors to Diesel weekends mentioned they would like to see a DMU event. Despite the fact that the railway uses DMU's on a regular basis it is rare for more than just a handful of vehicles to be in service on any one day so we intend to put on an interesting event featuring all of our operational vehicles. Look out for more details to be released in due course!

Wensleydale Railway: Class 110 E51813 & E51842 is now back in traffic having had a mechanical overhaul and is now the railway's main operating set, sometimes boosted to three cars with the addition of Class 117 TCL 59509.

Class 101 50746 has now been withdrawn from traffic for overhaul, having worked tirelessly on the railway from around 2004. Its place has been taken by Class 117 51400 which now forms a hybrid second operating set with Class 101 51210. Both vehicles are in blue livery, 51400 being repainted from green (to match 51210) during the summer.

The other vehicles on the line; including Class 117 TCL 59509, DMBS 51353 and Class 101 51247 are currently stored out of traffic, the latter having now donated a considerable number of spare parts.



51400 goes blue, becoming one of only four Class 117 vehicles painted such, 19/6/12 (B.Wetherell)

Restoration Updates

Class 122 W55006: The refurbishment of W55006 is nearing completion and may even be complete by the time this is read. At the time of writing, the external metalwork has been completed, as too has the subsequent repaint. This vehicle has been in the shed some thirteen months having major bodywork repairs where the corrosion bugs had bitten. Many sections of framework and body-side panels have been replaced including a completely new frame and sheet from the cab windows to the solebar at the north end of the vehicle and a totally new cant rail at the south end. Much work was also carried out around both sets of double Guards doors, as not only was the metal rotten but also the wooden pillars as well making the doors very difficult to close! Much of this work required the removal of many internal fittings, including some of the guards van ceiling and some guards van side panelling. Another large component that had to be removed was the fibreglass dome roof from the south end to allow access to the metalwork. All of this work takes time and the final repaint is an excellent decorative portion to finish off the major work undertaken. At the time of writing work is continuing returning much of the internal fittings and, as mentioned previously, it is hoped that a return to traffic is very close indeed.



A fresh looking W55006, 11/12 (L.Gration)

Class 119 W51073: The other project on going at the moment is 'the bubbles' Gloucester counterpart Class 119 W51073. Remembering that this vehicle was in a much-stripped state after asbestos removal some years previously, the team have been making great strides in recent months towards making this vehicle available for traffic for the first time in preservation. All of the internal panelling as well as the fixtures and fittings in the two First Class saloons are now complete and a firm from Duffield has fitted a new deep red carpet. At the time of writing, the plush first class seats are being prepared for reupholstering and another local firm from Heage is making the curtains, as they are a bespoke fitting. During November, work has rapidly progressed in the second class saloon area to bring this up to the same standard. The side panels have been completed and the luggage racks have been installed. New lino-type flooring is currently being sourced. Following the completion of this area, work will progress into the guards van.



The first class area of W51073 approaching completion, awaiting curtains and seats, 11/12 (L.Gration)

There has been a somewhat two-pronged attack on this vehicle in recent weeks with one half of the team working to progress the inside, whilst others have been working underneath to progress the mechanics of the vehicle. Work has included returning lots of missing components from No.1 engine that has also involved the complete reinstallation of the coolant system, which was simply non-existent. At the time of writing, there is still some work to do on this engine but the team had success as the engine was started up for the first time in 19 years towards the end of November.

Class 101 (Cab) 53211: Some cab gauges have been acquired and restored for use in the vehicle.

Class 103 M56160: Not much to report this time other than the site containing M56160 was flooded during November. Luckily the floodwaters passed alongside the vehicle.

W&M Railbus E79963: After purchase of Waggon und Maschinenbau Railbus E79963 from the North Norfolk Railway earlier this year, a fuller evaluation has taken place at the East Anglian Railway Museum. Its current status is that we are now working up to full restoration to an operational condition. The vagaries of the German manufacture show that the 5 vehicles as built and supplied to BR are unlike any other BR produced diesel type, and must have come as a bit of a shock to the steam fitters on shed at the time having been launched into the 20th century with pliers and screwdrivers rather than hammers and chisels!



56160 perilously close to a flooding river! 28/11/12 (R.Thornton)

Introduced in 1958 and based in the area for working on the Stour and Colne Valley lines as well as the Maldon - Witham line, 79963 has effectively come home. However, we need to correctly identify the vehicle as it was noted that a stamped plate on the fuel tank says its number is 79964! Several photos exist of 79963 at Chappel having worked off the Colne Valley, and numerous others in the Maldon and Saffron Walden areas. It's claim to fame was that it worked the last train from Saffron Walden to Audley End in September 1964, and the Museum is working towards its return to operation for a planned 50th anniversary. This has involved some telephone tennis with various manufacturers regarding bits for the unique ZF electromagnetic gearbox, and refitting many parts to get the braking system operational, which has been satisfactorily air tested. Having not run since 2003, the engine has been run up on test after the compressor drive assembly was rebuilt, but is presently undergoing investigation into excessive oil pressure.

Repairs to the bodywork are planned in and will enable continuation of the interior work, flooring and a fuller evaluation of the rather interesting electrical system. In the meantime we welcome any technical or photographic information to assist in its rejuvenation.

North Norfolk Railway: Railbus E79960 has moved to the Ribble Steam Railway at Preston for a five year hire agreement.

Class 101 DMBS E51228 is in Weybourne workshops. According to the internal newsletter, planned work includes 'fitting 2 new overhauled engines, swapping final drives, freewheel units, wheelsets, new guards doors, repairing windows and a whole host of other tasks'.



51228 with windows removed at Weybourne, 29/12/12 (T.Smith)

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 105 - 8/1964](#)

[Class 115 - Chorley Wood - 15/5/1965](#)

[Metro Cammell Lightweight - Westerfield - 1967](#)

Blue Era

[Derby Lightweight - Westerfield - 1967](#)

[Class 104 - Knapton - 11/1979](#)

Blue/Grey & Later

Canine Partners

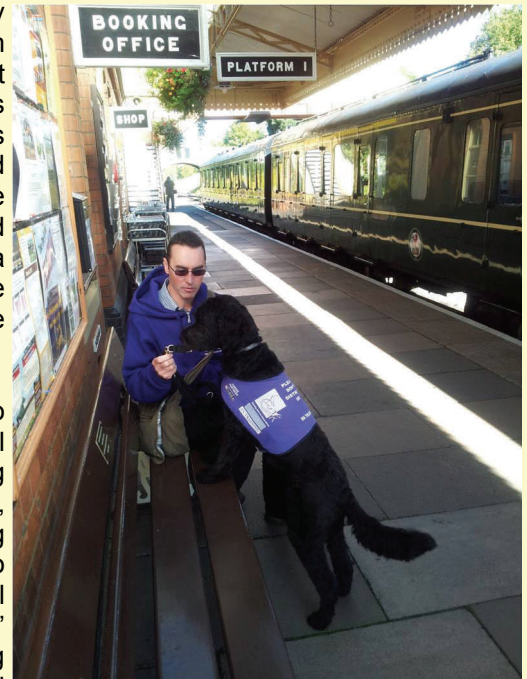
Words and pictures by Gloucester Warwickshire Railway volunteer Claudette Oddy

One of our regular passengers on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway (GWSR) railcar services in recent months has attracted more attention than most. Debbie boasts attractive black hair and a smart purple jacket, and has become well used to travelling up and down the line, taking everything in her stride. This might not sound much, until you discover that Debbie is a dog: a labradoodle puppy (labrador/poodle cross-breed), in training as a Canine Partners working dog.



Debbie and her trainer, Andy Molony travelled originally on the GWSR steam train from Cheltenham Racecourse, but they soon realised that the diesel railcars would be far more helpful for Debbie's training. Initially wary of the noise and vibration of the DMU engines, Debbie has become accustomed to the sound and feel of the ride, which has been a great help in getting her to be reliable and cooperative when travelling on more modern public transport.

Canine Partners dogs are trained to work with adults with physical disabilities, carrying out a fascinating range of tasks right through the day, even opening the fridge door and getting out the milk, or putting the washing into the washing machine. The dogs will accompany their human 'partners' everywhere, and so it is vital that, during their training, the puppies become used



to all forms of transport. Trains present a difficulty because of the gap between the platform and the train step, and because of the sudden loud noise made by ramps used for disabled access. Now, after several visits to Toddington, Debbie is happy to get on and off the DMU steps and disabled ramp on command without a lead, and she settles straight down either in the guard's compartment or next to a seat on the train.

Debbie will finish her basic training early in 2013, and will move on to work with her long-term 'partner'. However, we do expect to see more local Canine Partner puppies with their trainers on the GWSR railcar services in the future.

Article Appeal

The following was received from Traction Magazine and may be of interest to DMU owners

I'm sure that many of you have seen and read TRACTION magazine over the years. As you may know TRACTION is now published by Atlantic Publishers and, as editor, I'm keen to develop regular features about the diesel and electric heritage scene. This is why I'm taking the opportunity to contact various groups involved in the restoration and running of main line locomotives and multiple units.

One of the things that I've noticed, since I took over as editor at the beginning of 2011, is that relatively little material comes to the magazine from the various preservation groups. I realise that groups will have as their main priority working on their

treasured motive power.

However, I feel that publicity for restoration groups could be worthwhile so I'm offering you the opportunity to submit articles and photographs about what is happening especially when something significant like the end of a major overhaul takes place. Articles don't have to be very long - anything from about 1000 words upwards and a few photographs will fill two pages. Obviously if you can write more that's fine.

What we don't need are short news items, as TRACTION is now concentrating on feature articles. We no longer have a news section as we feel this is best left to Internet forums and magazines that mainly cover current events.

If you'd like to be involved and possibly submit material for a regular heritage section in TRACTION please email me with your ideas. Obviously there will be a fee paid for anything we publish. Should you know members of other groups within the heritage movement who might be interested in my suggestion please pass this email on to them.

I look forward to [receiving your emails](#).

Stephen Rabone

Editor TRACTION magazine

Disposals

Another two vehicles have entered the great DMU shed in the sky, this time **Class 127's 51592 & 51604**. These vehicles had relocated to the Mid Hants Railway in February 2012 after spending over 25 years in preservation at the South Devon Railway. Owned by the Red Triangle Society (who still retain their other Class 127 set at the Great Central Railway), ageing membership resulted in the SDR set being offered to the Mid Hants free of charge as a replacement for the latter line's Class 117 set which had been sold to the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway in 2011 and had left the Mid Hants without a first generation DMU. Although the Mid Hants Railway accepted the offer of the Class 127's and held a successful appeal to finance moving the vehicles, more detailed inspection of the bodywork after arrival showed that significant manpower and finances would be required to bring the doors and bodywork up to an acceptable standard for regular passenger service. The decision was taken to therefore scrap the two vehicles, which was completed on site at Ropley depot in December 2012. Spares for class 127 51618 (Llangollen Railway) and Class 122 M55009 (Mid Norfolk Railway) were salvaged from the vehicles before final cutting. The loss of these two vehicles still leaves a relatively healthy Class 127 fleet, with six identical DMBS vehicles surviving in preservation (of which four are currently operational and a fifth under restoration). The total Class 127 fleet now stands at eight vehicles.



51604 at Ropley shed being rapidly stripped of useful parts before final scrapping, 12/12 (J.Joyce)

Mainline

The following have been offered by Dave Henwood showing the Chiltern Railways First Generation fleet in action



55020 at Aylesbury



55020 at Aylesbury



55020 calls at Little Kimble



55020 clears her throat



55020 at Princes Risborough



55020 at Princes Risborough



55020 at Princes Risborough



55020 at Princes Risborough



55022 at Aylesbury



55022 at Aylesbury



55034 at Princes Risborough



55034 interior

Chiltern DMU Diagram (from 10/12/12)

5P10	06:34	Aylesbury - Princes Risborough	ECS
2A83	07:12	Princes Risborough - Aylesbury	
2P82	07:42	Aylesbury - Princes Risborough	
2A84	08:12	Princes Risborough - Aylesbury	
2P83	08:47	Aylesbury - Princes Risborough	
2A85	09:57	Princes Risborough - Aylesbury	
2P88	17:30	Aylesbury - Princes Risborough	
2A49	18:00	Princes Risborough - Aylesbury	

Gallery



55005 & 51321 stand at Shenton, 11/11/12 (L.Pacey)



51321 & 55005 stand at Shackerstone, 11/11/12 (L.Pacey)



50256 & 56343 on the East Kent Railway, 18/8/12 (S.Potter)



56343 & 50256 on the East Kent Railway, 18/8/12 (S.Potter)



M51188 & M79900 stabled at Wirksworth, 2/12/12 (J.Stokes)



Progress maintained: with the front and middle saloon framework repairs and replacement panels now completed, the rear (and final) passenger saloon, including toilet area, has been stripped of its rotten metalwork ready for repairs, 10/12/12 (Llangollen Railcar Group)



W55006's repaint edges closer to completion at Wirksworth, 2/12/12 (J.Stokes)



New metal welded into the drivers side middle saloon of 56456, 5/11/12 (Llangollen Railcar Group)



50645 before the cab end repairs were started at the Great Central Rly (North), 11/2/12 (DC-7C)



51210 & 51400, now in blue, at Leeming Bar, 8/11/12 (B.Wetherell)



51388, 59486 & 51346 stored on the Swanage Railway, 15/4/12 (DC-7C)



51842 & 51813 stand at Redmire, 27/7/12 (A.Gallon)



51942 in store at Blaenavon, 8/12/12 (P.Dickinson)



54270 in store at Blaenavon, 8/12/12 (P.Dickinson)



M79900 stabled at Wirksworth, 2/12/12 (J.Stokes)

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W55003 at the Northern extremity of the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway, about to depart for Hailes Abbey via Toddington, 5/11/12 (N.Carr)



51849 in storage at Groombridge. The vehicle has seen further bodywork deterioration and a graffiti attack, 15/11/12. (M.Jenkins)



51933 & 56504 in service near Corfe Castle, 11/5/12. (D.Harris)



M50455 stabled at Cheddleton, 23/11/12

Forthcoming Events

Date	Railway	Expected Traction
March 16th	East Lancashire Railway	108, 117, 121 & 122
June 22nd & 23rd	Llangollen Railway	104, 108, 109, 127, Steam Auto & Visitor
July 27th	Dean Forest Railway	108
August 9th-11th	Ecclesbourne Valley Railway	DLW, 101, 108, 117 & 122
October 4th-6th	Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway (18th Convention)	117 & 122

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 February 27th for Issue 116 (due out March)