

# ***The Railcar Association News Bulletin***



## EDITORIAL

Welcome to Issue 157 of the Railcar Association's News Bulletin. Last time I wrote of two announcements, one good and one not so. Well I'm pleased to note that the re-booted bulletin celebrates a decade of service with this issue. Over the past ten years 60 newsletters have been produced, every other month, resurrecting the original idea that ran for 97 issues over eight years from 1996-2004. As the "new" editor for the 2010-2020 period, I have had time to reflect the changing scene and the different functions that the bulletin has performed. The original bulletin was formed during the "mania" period of the 1990's where the bulk of the railcars preserved today quickly entered preservation. With vehicles being disposed of, parts exchanged, new groups forming and the internet itself still getting into its stride, the original bulletin was key to communication between like minded individuals within preservation. In contrast, the "rebooted" bulletin served a different purpose, to be a window upon a more mature preservation scene and to share news and articles between not just the owning groups, but general enthusiasts as well.

A great deal has changed since 2010, not least personally for me. In January 2010, I was 18 years of age, still in education and a small "assistant cog" in the machine that was the group looking after Class 104's on the Churnet Valley Railway. I took on the bulletin after previous editor Stuart Mackay moved to concentrate less on contemporary DMU restoration and more on the historical research side. I tied this in with becoming more involved with the association, particularly the annual conventions. However at that time I had more time to take on these roles. Ten years on, I find myself working full time (also in preservation!) and in any spare time leading the restoration of a (different) Class 104. Whilst my interest remains high, time seems no longer so plentiful to dedicate to these responsibilities...

As some people who know me will agree, I like to have things "right" and satisfaction diminishes if quality is dropped with too many compromises made. Over the past year or so I have noticed my production of the bulletins has become increasingly late, often rushed with content copied and pasted quickly. I no longer feel I am able to do

it justice, so I therefore intend to finish producing the bulletins by the end of this year, the November issue (162) being the last. I am not fully departing "the scene" and will remain involved updating the association website, in the conventions, and of course attending unit events! As I am still adding photographs and information to the website the normal channels remain open so any updates/photos remain welcome.

Finally, if anyone out there feels they would like to step forward to replace me as editor so that the bulletin continues beyond Issue 162, I would of course be more than happy to hear from you!

## RAILCAR OF THE YEAR 2019

Congratulations to the winner of the Railcar of the Year award: Class 121 W55024. 2019 saw the return to passenger service of single unit "bubble car" W55024, at the Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway. Since being preserved in 2013, the vehicle had been under restoration which was particularly complex owing to the severe modifications made to the vehicle during its time as a route learner and sandite vehicle. The normal

restoration of exterior bodywork and mechanical aspects was completed along with a complete rebuilding of the missing interior, using reclaimed parts from other vehicles obtained over the years, married to brand new parts. This completed the vehicle was repainted, pleasingly retaining its unique maroon livery applied during its departmental life. This nod to 55024's previous life also made it different to the many other green liveried single units preserved. In April 2019 the vehicle was relaunched into service, carrying passengers for the first time since 1993! It was nominated for the quality of the restoration work, which provided a very presentable and usable vehicle for many years to come, plus the remarkable feat of the departmental back conversion, only the second time in preservation this had been achieved on a Class 121.

As if quite often the case, the pattern for the whole competition was displayed within the first 48 hours, it becoming obvious that initially was to be a two horse race between the Chinnor single unit and the Great Central 101. An unusually high surge of votes came in very quickly, and these two shot above

the others. However the votes for 55024 continued to climb and climb and it took the top position for the remainder of the month. Further votes continued to trickle in, an unusual surge, mid way through the voting period, saw another 115 votes added to 55024's total, propelling it into the record books with 556 votes by the close of play.

During all of this, the two Class 108 sets were having a smaller race by themselves which proved to be far more narrowly won. With a difference of just one vote, the Llangollen 108 set just pipped the Weardale set. Well done to the restoration teams responsible for the work done to all the nominations, and particularly the winners at Chinnor. 55024 will be running throughout 2020 at its home railway for anyone wishing to sample the vehicle.

736 votes were cast in total, making this year the most popular year on record. 55024 well and truly smashed the record for the most voted for vehicle in the award's history, attracting more than double the number of votes of the previous record holder: Swedish Railcar 1212. 55024 won fair and square with 75% of the votes cast in its favour.

55024 becomes the first Class 121, and indeed the first suburban build vehicle, to win the award. Many thanks to all those who took the time to nominate and vote.

## NEWS

**Llangollen Railway:** Class 104 50454/50528 has had the majority of labour on its 'M' exam this Winter, finally wending towards a conclusion, with a reasonable collection of 'arisings' to tackle when time permits. The aim is to have it back in traffic for the early season midweeks.

Class 108 51933/54504 stands serviceable for next season, though hopefully won't be needed until the weather is a bit warmer, as the heating is hopeless!

Class 109 50416/56171 also stands serviceable.

Class 127 51618 continues to receive bodywork attention in the shed, with attention extending to the next window panel on the driver's side.

**North Norfolk Railway:** With no DMU running at this time of year, times have



been quiet with both operational sets “winterised” and parked in the yard. The only work undertaken has been the removal of an engine from E51228, which will shortly be replaced by a “ready to go” example which has been steadily rebuilt over the course of 2019. The removed engine has not failed dramatically, but had started to get smokey so it has been removed as a precaution and will receive a minor “health check” before being shelved as a spare for E51228 & M51188.

#### **North Yorkshire Moors Railway:**

Daisy was out and about between Christmas and the New Year running over 500 miles without problems between Pickering and Grosmont. Due to serious bridge replacement at Goathland, the set is not expected to run now until June.

### **RESTORATION NEWS**

**Class 100 56097 (Butterley):** A lot of time has been spent fettling the sliding lights, along with the luggage rack backing pieces. Various cab components have also been fitted and wired in, though the old desk has been refitted for now until we work out which holes in it we actually want.



**Class 104 56182 (North Norfolk):** A major milestone was reached just before the New Year: the completion of “phase 1” of the exterior restoration. This was possible after the completion of the final bodywork preparation and exterior painting of the first class saloon, along with installation of the front cab windows. During the shunt to get the next (centre) section undercover, the opportunity for posed photos was too good to miss! Work has now started on the dismantling of the middle saloon ready for bodywork/ welding repairs during 2020.

**Class 105 56456 (Llangollen):** 56456's restoration continues as time permits, with a start made on cutting new panelling for the first class. The ceiling

has nearly reached the back of the vehicle, with only one panel left to do: this will await the rear wall and end door being reinstated.

**Class 108 50645 (Ruddington):** Cab framework repairs and skin replacement is progressing well on the Class 108 DMCL at the Great Central Railway Nottingham.



## NEW SECOND GENERATION VEHICLES

The second generation revolution (?) has begun with the first of the preserved Class 142 sets now delivered. These join the Class 140, two Class 141's and the various prototype railbuses already preserved. 142001 has joined the national collection at Shildon, whilst 142029 & 030 have both found a new home at the Chasewater Railway. It is expected for several more Class 142's and at least

one Class 143 and Class 144 to follow once the latter are released from mainline service. The Railcar Association website will be updated as the new vehicles come on stream.

## MOVEMENTS

**Class 127 51616/51622** is in the process (at the time of writing) of being moved from the **Great Central Railway** to the **Helston Railway** in Cornwall, having been sold to new owners.

## FOR SALE

Four 3-phase column lifts (7 ton capacity) and 4 chassis stands to suit plus all cables (mains supply, hand held controller, column linking cables etc.). They were purchased in November 2016, serviced and staff were trained on using them but never did as it was found to be too dangerous moving them out of the workshop onto the car park for outdoor lifts. Originally supplied by the manufacturer as reconditioned items to Forget-me-not Travel but only saw very limited use with them. Buckland Coaches bought them when they ceased trading. Two of them have had the lubricating pots knocked off whilst in storage (These are a screw-in consumable item which lubricates the

screw hoists and are normally changed at each service).

Believed to be suitable for lifting coaches/railcars (minus bogies). Located at Buckland Coaches, near Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 2TW – purchaser will have to arrange removal.

Price = £1,500 + VAT. Tony Buckland (01728 747093)

## TIME TRAVELLER

### Blue Era

[Class 100 – Chester – 5/81](#)

[Class 103 – Crewe – 19/5/81](#)

[Class 105 – Kings Cross – 1974](#)

### Blue/Grey Era

[Class 101 – Saughton Jcn – 29/3/86](#)

[Class 108 – Wigan Wallgate – 13/6/80](#)

[Class 110 – Buxworth – 18/8/86](#)

[Class 120 – Rufford – 25/7/85](#)

## **“Modern”**

[Class 101 54405 – Cambridge – 6/88](#)

[Class 101 – Glasgow Central - 1988](#)

[142004 – Miles Platting – 22/7/87](#)

## **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](mailto:railcar@live.co.uk) The following types of submission would be most welcome:

- Photographs of vehicles in service
- Restoration articles
- Reports on special events
- Articles on DMU history
- Recollections of DMUs on the national network.

Feel free to send submissions at any time to [railcar@live.co.uk](mailto:railcar@live.co.uk) but no later than February 27th for Issue 158 (due out March).



## GALLERY



50164 waits to depart Pickering, 3/19 (*K.Felstead*)



Undercover maintenance beckons for E50321, inside the shed at Swithland, 1/12/19. (*B.Pollard*)



M50455 arrives into Bury, complete with a suspicious driver!  
29/12/19 (*C.Baines*)



55028 on driver training runs, 21/12/19 (*N.Lloyd*)





W55001 at Bury Bolton Street, 23/11/19 (*R.Purcell*)



M79964 shortly after returning to traffic, seen at Oxenhope, 24/11/19 (*R.Purcell*)



Rarely photographed demonstrator vehicle RB002 in Ireland, 13/10/19 (*M.Jenkins*)



M50517 leads an all-blue set through Burrs Country Park, 5/12/19 (*F.Richards*)



