

The Railcar Association News Bulletin



EDITORIAL

This bulletin's editorial could not be more different from the last. In issue 158 we were discussing the preservation expansion being caused by the incoming tide of "pacers" entering our sphere. This issue we are locked down with the nation's preserved railways closed and no railcars, first or second generation, going anywhere far! Please forgive a sparse bulletin as there simply isn't any running to share pictures of, whilst restoration has been confined to the garages of those who were dedicated enough to squirrel away in their cars a batch of "handheld" stuff to restore at home before the closures came! Dwelling on these positives however the "railcar radar" is very much picking up the outright madness of lumps of DMU being restored in our homes – madness I for one am happy to encourage and be proud of! Let us hope that all our readers pass through these troubled times with as little damage as possible so we can return to our railcars in due course.

2020 CONVENTION

Unless you have been living in a cave then it will be obvious that the autumn convention for this year simply cannot

be confirmed in any form in the present situation. Whether it is cancelled altogether for this year (a shame as we have had an unbroken run for over 20 years) or runs at the very end of the year in a reduced format, we simply do not know. Await further instructions as they say.

NEWS

Great Central Railway: A year ago saw the launch of the "the blue set" after a mad dash to get Class 101 DMBS 50203 ready for service (and partner 50266) at the 50th anniversary closure event, featuring 2 working units. A number of finishing items have been completed since that day with a fair amount of running to shake out any issues. 50203 was not modified by BR to have alternators, relying on the dynamo system only on one drive train that is not ideal for heritage use, so we

left that in place but added a standard alternator set up to engine 2 which has worked well. The brake area and the driving cab have now been finished to a good standard. Saloon lino has been replaced where needed and door surrounds completed. Finally a number of seat bases have been recovered in Bournemouth Blue material. The vehicle has performed very well with few technical issues and the annoying wheelflat under the guards seat has largely ground away.



Meanwhile "the green set" has operated throughout the year with no significant issues. Unique buffet car 59575 has now been fitted with a power feed from the adjacent power car to help with more reliable operation of heaters, lights and fridge etc. The buffet car was scheduled for a repaint at Easter this year but obviously that is



postponed. 2019/20 GCR financial year saw the green set run 2,900 passenger service miles and the blue set ran 1,800. with added testing and charter work around 5,500 miles were completed, believed to be a new record for Renaissance Railcars.

North Norfolk Railway: No sooner had weekend services in March started (using Class 101 E51228/E56062) the railway had to shut down and it was all over. All of the units are now stood down awaiting the railway's reopening. During this time, the railway owned set, E51228/E56062, has been sold to the supporting charity, the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Society. This has both expanded the heritage collection of the society (whose aim is

to preserve East Anglian railway heritage) and raised funds for the currently stricken company that is without income due to the forced closure of the railway. The nature of the sale is such that (once the crisis is over) on a day-to-day running basis the routine and operations for E51228/E56062 will not change.

RESTORATION NEWS

Class 101 56342 (Great Central): Work has started on the infamous Class 101 DTCL 56342; so far the ventilator roof patches have been made good which once dry inside has allowed the ceiling and walls in the first class section to be replaced. Internal doors and partitions are being refitted and the necessary parts for re-creating the cab are in stock (*ed note: this progress report obviously covers the period before government restrictions*).

Class 104 56182 (North Norfolk): Just before the railway shut down, the welding repairs and patch re-skinning work was completed in the middle saloon section, making the whole area solid again for the first time in decades. The luggage rack backing panels and ceilings were also removed so that the



roof was ready to be attended to. Post lockdown, as many items as possible have been taken home and are in the process now of being restored. So far, two newly cast works plates for the vehicle have been painted up and the letters picked out in white, and the sprung lids for the rear jumper cable



sockets have been dismantled, overhauled, repainted and reassembled ready for refitting. Projects in progress but not completed yet include the stripping and re-varnishing of all the wooden window gripper bars which hold the glass in place in the middle saloon, and the repairing, re-skinning and repainting of the four ceiling panels, also taken from the middle saloon. These will have boxes built into them for future fitting of a PA system, although achieving all of this with limited facilities is proving a challenge!

MINIATURE GALAS

Given all galas are off, modellers such as Tim Lonsdale are at least able to stage “virtual galas” using their miniature sized fleets. Tim has an impressive line up and can field sets including a Derby Lightweight and classes 101, 105, 108, 110, 114, 117, 119, 120, 121, 123 & 128.





Less varied is the editor's N gauge fleet containing classes 101, 104 & 122.

MOVEMENTS

Class 108 set 51937 & 56484 moved from the Midland Railway Butterley to the Poulton & Wyre Railway at Thornton in March. Although owned by the latter for some years, they had remained at their previous home as contract restoration was being undertaken on an occasional basis. However now they have arrived at their "new" home the railway's own volunteers plan to take on the remainder of the vehicles' restorations. Both have yet to operate in preservation although the powercar has had limited test movements within a yard.



DISPOSALS

In February Class 117 centre car 59522 moved from the Great Central Railway, Nottingham, to an unknown location for final scrapping. It had been stripped

over several years for spare parts for other suburban vehicles at both its latter location and its previous home the Chasewater Railway. 59522's demise is not regarded as significant, its departure leaving (at this time) 21 identical vehicles in preservation.

TIME TRAVELLER

Green Era

[Class 108 - Shaw - 7/66](#)

Blue Era

[Class 101 – Walker – 9/9/70](#)

[Class 105 54429 – Cambridge – 28/2/87](#)

[Class 118 P480 - Penryn – 9/4/82](#)

Blue/Grey Era

[Class 101 – Paddock – 25/10/87](#)

[Class 116 C304 – Taffs Well – 14/4/87](#)

[Class 120 M53712 – Leyland – 27/10/84](#)

“Modern”

[Class 115 – Banbury – 2/89](#)

[142020 – York – 18/11/87](#)

[143005 – Carlisle – 1988](#)

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
- Articles on DMU history
- Recollections of DMUs on the national network.

Feel free to send submissions at any time to railcar@live.co.uk but no later than June 28th for Issue 160 (due out July).

GALLERY



Unique Class 118 51321 under overhaul, 3/20 (*M.Miller*)



50253 during the railcar gala at Wirksworth, 15/3/20



51427 on the Mountsorrel branch, 23/2/20 (*B.Pollard*)

