

The Railcar Association News Bulletin



EDITORIAL

Life trucks on and units are now starting to be used again on the preserved lines which is a good thing. For those that aren't, socially distanced work parties are now able to tackle outstanding maintenance and restoration tasks, so things are looking up. Just as well as we will need our collective spirit for when the nights draw in and the temperature drops! The dedication that railway preservation has always thrived upon will continue now more than ever!

The new arm of The Railcar Association, bespoke to the new second generation (Pacer) owners, is taking shape nicely. There has been a parallel E-mail group, called "2nd-gen", set up to mimic the highly useful "1st-gen" group that our members use regularly. If you have recently got involved in Pacer preservation we highly recommend joining the 2nd-gen group, free of charge of course, as all communications are likely to be channelled through this. Send an E-mail to 2nd-gen+subscribe@groups.io to get on board!

A quick reminder that this is the penultimate bulletin, so if there are any

musings you have been holding back then send them in for the November issue as it will be the final one! If anyone feels they can take the baton forwards so that the bulletins can keep going and not cease, then please get in touch to christophermoxon8@hotmail.com as there is currently nobody in the frame to do this.

2020 CONVENTION

With great regret we have cancelled the 2020 annual convention, due to the effects of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Whilst restrictions are now lifting, we feel the combination of the forced recovery plan of heritage railways (i.e. no galas) coupled to continued social distancing requirements makes the possibility of a reduced convention not being worth the effort or risk of trying to undertake. In common with so many other railways and event organisers, we feel the best option is to hold back and return 12 months later and attempt an event similar to the one originally proposed. We have therefore requested that our hosts, the Mid Norfolk Railway, accommodate us in a similar manner to as originally proposed, at a weekend

(exact date to be confirmed) in October 2021. As always, more details will be released closer to the time.

NEWS

Dean Forest Railway: The Dean Forest DMU group returned M51914 to passenger duties on the Dean Forest Railway on 5th August following a major overhaul, it had not worked passenger trains since the excellent DMU convention in 2016. It was paired with M56492 which had not been used on passenger duties since 2017. The set performed well thanks to the thorough work carried out by our volunteers and carried a headboard for the 60th birthday of both vehicles. The group is currently providing DMU services to the Dean Forest Railway free of charge to help with the current financial situation.





Epping Ongar Railway: On 1st August trains returned. Covid-19 had resulted in the railway having to curtail services, and the planned schedule for 2020 was seriously disrupted. However, as lock-down restrictions eased the doors opened once more on a very different scene, with the railways' stalwart DMU coming into its own. With the DMBS still undergoing extensive renovation, the unit is currently made up of EOR's own DMS and the 121 driving trailer hired in from the owners who had previously kept it at Colne Valley Railway. This combination is now the backbone of services on the line, and is giving sterling service.

Llangollen Railway: What a difference a couple of months makes. Last time

we were being sounded out as to how many vehicles we could field to help LR reopen (6 or perhaps 7), and how many days a week (4 or perhaps 5). A month after reopening, the initial burst of railcar activity has scaled rapidly back down from 4 days a week in early August, to none in September, and only a handful of dates in October instead of our normal crop of midweeks. Still, this has given time to progress a variety of

jobs around the place.

The Wickham and 104 have covered all the diagrams so far, supplemented on the first day with the 108, but the passenger numbers were such that the 108 was dropped off after the first day. Some days have still seen respectable loadings, but pre-booking doesn't seem to favour our type of operation ("Would you like to book for a steam train or a railcar?" presumably). Aside from the usual minor niggles that develop, things have run smoothly.



On Class 108 51933, the original fire detectors have finally been replaced with 'wiggly wire' types, with the associated minor wiring changes so that the flame switch is redundant and the 'test' button on the panel checks the detector integrity. A metal patch on the cab roof was removed and refitted with some 'Sikaflex' 521 so that the driver no longer needs an umbrella (hopefully - we await rain to find out).

North Norfolk Railway: The railway has taken the decision not to use the DMU's at all this year, although it is noted that plans can always change. Accordingly, the two operational 101

sets E51228/E56062 and M51188/M56352 has remained in the yard "stored serviceable". Regular battery charging and the occasional run up has continued to keep them in reasonable shape whilst the steam hauled compartment fitted trains handle all business. Powercar 51192 remains stored, still awaiting the completion of the railway's Class 31 overhaul to create the space in the works needed for 51192's repairs.

The downtime however has been used for a group of Carriage & Wagon volunteers to undertake improvement works to the guards van area of 51228. This has included: the repair of the sliding corridor end door (the mounts for which had worked loose), modification (shortening) of the emergency ambulance cupboard to better reflect its modern day contents plus create room for the disabled ramp to be stowed properly alongside, re-siting of the fire extinguishers so that more older guards can better access them in an emergency, modifications to the tool cupboard to accommodate more equipment including fire beaters, and finally the installation of two small tables, one of which folds down across

the guards knee when he is sat in his seat. The vast majority of these modifications are being done to tidy up the permanently housed equipment inside the van which will in turn free up more floor space towards the front end for temporary items (such as supplies, buggies and bikes).

RESTORATION NEWS

Class 101 50211 (Denbigh): The cab front gas been welded and the cab has been repainted in blue and grey livery.





Lots of components have been fully restored for the vehicle including the two vacuum cylinders, four aluminium luggage rack backs for the mid saloon and the two works plates. The main focus has been on the middle saloon area, with the aluminium window frames stripped back and cleaned, the roof scraped, rust treated, vents sealed over, dummy vents refitted and the roof area painted. Internally, one of the bulkheads that was removed during its days as a departmental vehicle has been returned to place, along with full repainting of the underside of the ceiling and walls in bitumen. The wooden ceiling panels from the same area have all been stripped back, re-skinned with more resilient plywood, and prepared and repainted along with

all associated beading. As well as the progress on the middle saloon, electrical work to restore all of the multiple working jumper sockets has also been finished, with a fully tested and restored system now there front and back.

Class 105 56456 (Llangollen): The team are back in action, and trying to remember where they left off back in March. Having worked that out, work has resumed on interior fitting, the remainder of the cab electrics, and other fit-out tasks. The old main through wiring was entirely removed, and preparations are being laid for the new wiring. Unfortunately the panelling we had lined up for 2nd class is no longer available in the colour we wanted, so we're back to the drawing board there.

Class 103 56160 (Denbigh): Two corner pillars have been rebuilt, and the gangway end lettered. Although 103's had 16 first and 48 second class seats, the details were copied from a photo of M56160 at Plymouth in the 1970's, so is correctly incorrect!

Class 104 56182 (North Norfolk): With the lockdown in its most extreme form eased but the project leader on furlough, the restoration has been able to progress at a speed it has never seen before.



Class 114 50019 (Butterley):

Restoration of the interior of 50019 has restarted. The floors in the passenger saloons have received their first coat of lino sealant, whilst the guards van is also coming along with its renewed floor and everything else in undercoat.

Class 127 51618 (Llangollen): Work progresses on the bodywork; in this case it isn't just a case of welding in new steel, but all the other jobs that then need to be done around the same area. Various woodwork needs to be manufactured, door jambs trimmed to suit and fitted, door locks, guard's doors re-hung and welded up, guttering reinstated, and so on. The batteries were finally condemned, having nearly reached their 20th birthday - still starting engines, but close to life expiry. One battery box was also condemned when the base of it was brushed up off the floor; a new one is being fabricated from 3/4" ply. The other is reasonable and simply needs a new floor and then repainting.

NEW VEHICLES

Since the last bulletin a further three Class 144 sets have entered preservation. In numerical order they

are 144010 to the Weardale Railway, 144013 to the Telford Steam Railway and 144017 to the steelworks site at Scunthorpe. The latter is particularly significant as it is the first 3-car variant to be preserved, which secures one of the unique Pacer centre cars for the future.

TIME TRAVELLER

Green Era

[Derby Lightweight – Sutton Coldfield – 3/6/56](#)

[Class 108 – Pelaw – 1/6/67](#)

Blue Era

[Class 100 – Lowestoft – 5/76](#)

[Class 101 – Whitby](#)

[Class 105 E51292 – Norwich – 27/4/80](#)

Blue/Grey Era

[Class 101 – Exeter – 18/8/91](#)

[Class 117 B437 – Haresfield – 7/86](#)

[Class 122 55006 – St Ives](#)

“Modern”

[101681 – Llanfairfechan – 5/8/95](#)

[144005 – Scarborough](#)

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 the final bulletin next time, 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 October 28th for Issue 162 (due out November).

GALLERY



79963 at Chappel during a charter, 15/8/20 (M.House)



55006 stabled at Warksworth, 15/8/20 (D.Bickley)



51382 working early services at Bury, 9/8/20 (C.Gallagher)



55012 stabled at Wolsingham, 29/8/20 (D JB)



51401 stabled at the Gwili Railway, 24/7/20 (*P.Dickinson*)



56171 leads a 4-car at Carrog, 25/8/20 (*D.Davies*)



56287 in use on Epping's early services, 30/8/20 (*C.Dye*)



Rarely captured centre car 59517 at Kingswear, where it is used as loco hauled stock, 27/8/20 (*C.Walker*)

