

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



## EDITORIAL — Chris Walker

Even less running time at the start of this year than in previous years but work still goes on to repair and restore railcars around the UK. Whilst working restrictions curtailed some activities plenty was still happening as can be seen in these pages.

The sharing and flow of information between like minds helps the standards rise and encourages those new to railcar preservation (be it 1st or 2nd Gen) to tackle even more complex jobs.

I am in no doubt that a number of people have retained their mental health and sanity a lot better by being active—long may it continue.

Here's to the start of a return to some sort of normality—whatever that may be.

## NEW VEHICLES INTO PRESERVATION

142023 was preserved at the Plym Valley Railway in January 2021.

142006 was preserved at the Llanelli and Mynydd Mawr Railway in February 2021. It is notable for being the only ex-Arriva (Welsh) Class 142 set to escape scrap, also meaning that now, at least one example of all four interior "sub types" has been saved, a good result for Class 142 preservation.

142006 on 27/2/21 *South Wales Railcar*



Cover picture: 56352 at Weybourne on the North Norfolk Railway *Chris Moxon*

## VEHICLES SCRAPPED

Work has started at quite a pace to dismantle the interior and see what could be recovered/reused/recycled. One of the first items to go was the dome, to be retrofitted onto a damaged Bubble car. Dome and ceiling *Chris Bull*



Stripped interior of 52044 *Chris Walker*



## RESTORATION NEWS

### DMU Group West Midlands:

Subject to conditions at the time on March 15<sup>th</sup>, there is a planned shunt at Bewdley to extract our pair of 108 bogies for use as accommodation bogies. While our next power car 51941 goes into SVR C&W works for overhaul of bogie brake work items and many new pins and bushes. After this we would like to see 50933 or centre car 59250 follow on for brake work renewal

### Strathspey Railway, Blue Square Group:

Unfortunately none of us have been able to get up to the Strathspey Railway to work on our class 117 based at Boat of Garten—we've been running in February for many years but not this year



Views of the cab and control desk area of M79612 *Chris Lings*

### Ecclesbourne Valley Railway:

M79612—In between working on the Maintenance Shed Improvements and extension, I've managed to work on to the cab area of the trailer car. A lot of effort for not a lot of visible changes. To make space for the windscreen demister duct, the first attempt at wiring terminal rails had to be relocated and the copper air pipes for the horn and wiper controls adjusted. Now I've rediscovered the cab desk drawing, I've been able to carry out some un-modifications from ultrasonic days back to more or less yellow diamond layout. The steel cladding around the gear controller (made by Tim Stubbs from an original he got out of a scrap Lightweight at Norwich many years ago) was fitted along with similar for the modified blue square throttle controller buried in the desk. All of the 'Bakelite' panels for the Driver's desk are now trial fitted. These were cut from sheets of 3.0mm Phenolic Paper from Attwater & Co which seems to be a good match. I've loosely re-assembled some of the desk in its unfinished state for photos (needs screw holes countersinking, steel panels finishing off and painting and the minor job of wiring up and testing.

## North Norfolk Railway:

With the railway remaining shut down Class 104 M56182 has stayed inside the shed taking up space that paid staff would normally need to maintain and restore Mark 1 coaches. This extended stay has allowed the two bogies to be stripped down, assessed, overhauled, stripped, repainted and reassembled. This long process is now complete on both bogies which have been built back up as frames with brakegear but without wheelsets. These require tyre turning and are currently awaiting attention on the lathe. Once turned, there will be a final push to re-wheel the bogies and fit the final pieces of brakegear and the dynamo before refitting to the vehicle.



(L) Bogie inside the shed at NNR  
*Chris Moxon*

## Denbigh M56160:

The underside of the cab roof and panning have been de-rusted and painted



(Above, top R and bottom R)  
*Richard Thornton*



M56160 has had its destination box glazed and refitted, and the blind mechanism repaired. The passenger communication valves and pipework have been removed for attention





## South Devon Railway:

2020 saw the arrival of the Class 117 from Long Marston, there's been lots of rumours of what it was used for over the years, its safe to say that its not got evidence of camera's being fitted everywhere, and hasn't been owned by the MOD for a long time now. Whilst a lot of the testing that it was used for at Long Marston has been kept a secret, due to it being used for Rail Development, most of them weren't present except for the odd Buffer Beam Modifications to allow the "Crash Claw" to be mounted.

The 117 has been a priority for me during lockdown, trying to get the electrical systems back, and stop some of the water leaks! There's two main areas where cant rail rot has taken hold, these are now ready to be dealt with, all the interior's around them removed ready for the welding to begin. The priority for the moment is to get 51352 operational as soon as possible to go with W55000 for this season & then get to work on 51376 which currently has no engines fitted.

A prototype Headcode box has been made which needs modifications and gearing fitted before ordering blinds



The headcode boxes have been un-blanked due to the panels leaking badly so the decision was made to remove them, make good and get Autoglass in to fit the glass with new rubbers, as they offer a lifetime warranty on it! so hopefully it'll be leak free.

I've taken to trying to rub down a panel a time back to bare metal each day I'm up, which has revealed all the liveries the vehicle's been in since new!



W55000's B Exam was started last year, but due to the lockdowns & the discovery of a leaking head-gasket progress has been slow. Hopefully when we were back out of lockdown we can progress the head gasket change & finish the exam and do a few other bits ready, Sadly it doesn't look like there will be any booked work for either units for a little while, which isn't a big surprise in the post Covid planning.

## Mendip T&RS Cranmore:

Set L231—work continues at a steady pace (within ongoing restrictions of course) on both 51909 and 56271, both have had further electrical work carried out over the last few months including the beginning of the installation of sanding equipment – adhesion on the steep inclines is an issue on wet days and when the farmer has been using the cattle crossing (mud and dung are good lubricants it seems...), while we have mastered the art of driving in low adhesion it seemed sensible to add sanders while carrying out other work – once the system is functional we will see if it has been a worthwhile exercise and share our findings!

51909 is now ostensibly complete again after its major cab surgery, the new desk is in, all controls have been refitted and successfully tested. Work continues to refit trim strips, windscreen surround timbers, new door cards, new draught welts etc.

A full door exam to VMI 602 was carried out last month on both cars, no serious issues were found but some faults required attention.

One door on 56271 is scheduled for more work, the rest of the issues have already been attended to with the exception of fitting some new draught excluders.

The set is booked in to the shed for an exam during March - having not run in service since October 2019 we'll be giving it a good once over to ensure all is well for its return to traffic later this year if restrictions are lifted as indicated.

Much remains to be done though as ever including laying new Altro flooring in the cabs and wheelchair accessible saloon in the former van area of 51909 – this should be done soon now that other cab works have been completed

Both drivers footwells now have full panelling for the first time in at least a decade as new sections have been made to replace long term missing ones, some still require painting when the weather permits. The footwell flooring has been replaced with chequer plate to provide durability and should now outlive all of us who work on the unit!

Finally our logos and lettering have now arrived so the set's period of anonymity will soon be at an end!

51909 and 56271 unusually nose to nose for testing of jumpers during rewiring of 51909s cab *Ian Stoute*



### Dean Forest Railway:

The planned final drive wheelset swap was successfully completed on a bogie from 51566 and following brake gear inspection/overhaul the bogie is almost ready to go back underneath. An overhauled Brake Cylinder will be fitted as it is so much easier to do when a bogie is out from underneath



A replacement engine is also required so attention was focussed on recently purchased 50632 which had two with the same mountings (680/1) Reliving things I hadn't done since my apprenticeship and after a number of obstacles overcome (Fuel Pump Control Rod stuck on one), the engines were slowly coaxed into life—oil bath air cleaners were removed and hot air blown into the intake as an incentive to start - they were not too happy after 12 years of idleness BUT start they did and we went home with a great sense of achievement.

Rocker Gear and Injectors were removed for inspection and cleaning—with three injectors not sealing on their Copper washers there was a lot of carbon to clean off—before being re-assembled. No 2 engine now ran better than No 1 which decided it wanted to expel the contents of its sump when given some throttle. Having already. Advice was sought from a well known Midlands based friend and that encouragement together with setting the tappets ended with No 2 running beautifully albeit with a slight lubrication issue on 1, 2 and 3 rockers. Next on the cards is an oil flush and change.



Above: winding mechanism from 56492 *Alan Pace*

Below: 50632 No 2 engine rockers 3, 2 and 1 *Chris Walker*



## West Somerset Railway:

Authority received on 25/2/21 from the Board following a review for our small group of volunteers to return to work with COVID restrictions in place on Class 115 TCL 59678. They are currently addressing corrosion at the roof/gutter interface where after stripping off a previous 'temporary' repair revealed a large hole where metal used to be! The picture below (*John Leach*) show work in progress to replace a portion of the roof section, which has since been welded in and the next job is to properly re-attach the missing gutter portion, ensuring that it is properly sealed against ingress of water. The aim is to undertake a number of repair jobs on the vehicle in order to make way for more substantial work to be carried out on one of our 2 Class 115 power car bodies.



Class 115 power car 51859 suffered a 'transmission' failure during 2019. Over the 19/20 winter period a spare gearbox from the chassis of long-scrapped 51663 was removed and sent to GB Marine at Atherstone, who had been recommended as a reputable company for overhaul. They sourced numerous spares and presented us with a reconditioned gearbox which has since been fitted, but we have had little opportunity to test 'in anger' over the length of our railway. They sent back a bonus -.when

Both pictures *Fenton Fouracre*

Since then we've sent the 'failed' box off to them but this has revealed a very different story. VERY worn gears and other components. The attached photos [courtesy Fenton Fouracre] demonstrate that once the lid is off of the can of worms, they are more snake size than you could imagine!! GB have not said for definite whether they have enough components to actually make it serviceable and we are currently awaiting information from them. A third 'box' that has been delivered there more recently is showing more promise, so we're keeping our fingers well and truly crossed!





## Llangollen:

Since 19/12/2020, we have been offsite until permission was received from the Railway for us to return at the end of February. Trial running is currently scheduled for 10th April, with passenger operations due to restart on 24th April, so we need time to prepare for those. Having only been back onsite for a couple of weekends since the previous Welsh 'firebreak' and the subsequent English lockdown in November, it's late October since we've had chance to make any significant progress - we just hope that things carry on in the right direction this time. A start has been made on the Winter exams for the three sets that could run from 10th April. Things haven't quite gone to plan so far, with a vacuum cylinder on 50528 leaking off too rapidly, water ingress issues over the guard's van in 51933 getting worse and leading to the ceiling being covered in black mould, and a dirt trap under 54504 being split by the frost. The screws in the trim holding the glass into the sliding door into the 1st class saloon in 56171 also took to chewing up the trim holding the glass into the partition, and vice versa; strange that nearly 20 years after restoration they have started doing it, but that's 60-year-old vehicles!

51618 meanwhile sits in the shed awaiting its bodywork to progress, but reactivating the other three has to take priority.

At Butterley, progress continues on 56097, with brackets being welded in to support the seats; heater ducting has been excavated from its many years of storage, straightened out, and refitted with suitable heat-proof insulation behind. Wall insulation is also going in. Plans have been made and parts bought to wire up the rear four jumper sockets to the rear junction box, and the last remaining section of the original wiring has been stripped out.

Nostalgia for some: an upholstered seat for Class 115 M59659  
*Gareth Coleman*



## 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 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 April 30th for Issue 165 (due out in May).

## TIME TRAVELLER



101658 at Chester on  
1/5/1999



Ex SPTE 53160/51245 at Llandudno  
on 11/03/1992



CI.121 probably 55034 at  
Worcester on 11/04/1992



116/127 hybrid set T327  
53102/59598/53865 at Matlock  
on 14/3/1992



CI.117 set 702 53156/51398 at  
Bedford on 08/03/1999



IRIS 2 RDB977693 (ex 53222)  
and RDB977694 (ex 53338) at  
Bletchley on 01/03/1994

All pictures *Alan Pace*



50266, 50203 with a BG tail load collecting Christmas artifacts and lighting on 2/1/21 at the Great Central Railway *Bruce Pollard*