

The Railcar Association News Bulletin



EDITORIAL

Welcome to Issue 143. With the summer holidays drawn to a close once again the larger lines are reverting to their lower season timetables which rely heavily on Railcars, whilst the smaller lines tail town operations giving more time for restoration and maintenance work. Either way plenty of work to be getting on with! Behind the scenes the Annual Convention plans are starting to be drawn together and it is fast becoming apparent that this one may be a little more special than usual simply due to the number of "firsts" and variety of attractions on offer, not least the first visit of the unique Class 109 set away from its home rails. I hope to see many of the fraternity there as it should be a good event!

Chris Moxon

22nd ANNUAL RAILCAR CONVENTION

Friday 3rd - Sunday 5th November

The 2017 annual Railcar Convention returns to the East Lancashire Railway this year, 17 years after the last convention there. It promises to be a good event which is firmly following a gala format this year. Railcars will be

taking over the 12 miles of line between Rawtenstall and Heywood for two days of running, interspersed with other attractions over the weekend.

An exciting line up is planned which all being well should see the most varied DMU line up to be seen at a gala since the memorable 2004 Railcar50 event. Subject to availability on the day and the successful completion of major overhauls the sets are as follows:

-Star Visitor Class 109 2-car 50416/56171 (Normally based at the Llangollen Railway)

-Possibility of a second visitor (TBC)

-Class 104 2-car 50455/50517 (Returning after bodywork overhaul carrying BR Blue for the first time in preservation)

-Class 105 2-car 51485/56121 (Making its public debut after a 20 year rebuild from scrap condition)

-Class 110 3-car 51813/59701/51842 (The return of an East Lanc's favourite following almost 15 years away)

-Class 117 2-car 51339/51382 (It's final runs on the railway)

-Class 122 "bubble car" 55001

-Class 504 EMU (static display only)

With a maximum of two visiting units, three restoration debuts and a swansong run before moving on, the planets are well and truly aligned making it an event not to be missed.

As is now traditional, Friday is closed to the general public with some sets in service operating Driver Experiences for Railcar Association members. Further details of which sets will be available and details of how to book will be added in due course. We can confirm that the Class 105 will not be one of the sets in use on experiences.

Saturday is planned to be the main day for events with an intensive railcar service in operation all day. Tail loads using a BR CCT and LMS Stove-R will be in operation, as will a Class 40 drag (40135 dragging a matching Blue 104 has been requested).

The AGM for the Railcar Association is planned for the Saturday afternoon, more details to follow. Included in the meeting will be a talk from an ex Cambridge depot supervisor on the Kings Cross suburban DMU fleets, which included many Class 105 sets making it very fitting for this event.

The traditional convention Fish & Chip evening special will operate on the Saturday evening. Details on how to book will be added nearer the event. The organisers would appreciate it for anyone already planning on attending the event and booking on the Fish & Chip special, to send an [E-mail](#) giving a quick expression of interest. This will assist the caterers and organisers in gauging the demand for this evening special during the planning stages of the event.

Sunday will see more intensive railcar services in operation all day with tail loads and Class 40 drag.

NEWS

Chinnor & Princes Risborough Rly: Stalwart "bubble car" W55023 has now been withdrawn from service awaiting overhaul.

Ecclesbourne Valley Rly: Class 122 55006 is now back in traffic after having its number 2 end vacuum cylinder refurbished and refitted.

Gloucestershire Warwickshire Rly: The bodywork repairs, repaint and interior refresh of Class 117 DMBS

W51363 has been completed by the line's Carriage & Wagon department, and the Class 117 3-car set has now been returned to its more normal all-green configuration, having been running recently as a Blue/Green mixed set whilst W51363 was out for repairs. This set continues to see very intensive use being the only operational DMU running 100% of the railcar diagrams.

Llangollen Rly: The usual summer running commitments have been fulfilled including a 6-car Thomas event formation. General maintenance of the running sets also continues. In the workshops, class 108 51907 has received a set of newly trimmed seats. The major news however has been the start of severe corrosion repairs to



Class 127 51618. The first section has been removed and assessed!



Mid Norfolk Rly: The passenger carrying debut of latest arrival, Class 101 56347, was made on Bank Holiday Weekend when the vehicle was operated in push/pull formation with a steam locomotive along the railway's little used Northern extension from Dereham to Hoe. This was a useful set-up as there are no run round facilities on this section.

Midland Rly Butterley: 141113 has been repainted (retaining its West Yorkshire Red/Cream colours) and returned to service (see image next page).



North Norfolk Rly: The Class 101 set M51192/M56352 continues in service 5 days a week. Despite the intensive use, some of the niggles which have been plaguing the set have been resolved, the most important being the recommissioning of the unloader valve. The National Railway Museum (who own the set) inspected the railway and their unit and were satisfied with the work which has gone into them during the loan period so far and how it was presented. The railway are hopeful that the loan of the set will be extended by another five years in the near future.

North Yorkshire Moors Rly: The Class 101 set will be in service on October 1st, 2nd-7th, 9th-12th and 14th-20th

West Somerset Rly: A heavy overhaul is planned for the Class 115 3-car set this coming winter. With the WSR the only current operators of Class 115 vehicles there will likely be no Class 115's operating in preservation for some time.

RESTORATION NEWS

Derby Lightweight 79018 (Ecclesbourne Valley):

79018 has now entered the new part of the shed. The vehicle has been stripped of most of its underframe components for refurbishment. Cleaning and painting underneath the vehicle has taken place. Refurbishment has started on the air system. Investigation into the blue square conversion has also begun.

Class 103 56160 (Denbigh): Two months of good progress on M56160. The remaining 'shore supply' wiring fitted by the Battlefield Railway has been removed. Jumper dummies and air pipe have been fitted to the gangway end, which has been cleaned and received its first coat of Rail Blue. The missing bracket for the drivers side horn has been fabricated, allowing the horn to be refitted. Sole bars have had a second coat of gloss, and lettered.



The second man's side battery box doors were repaired and repainted. The damaged 1st class window frame has been repaired and the windows cleaned. The missing ventilator has been painted and fitted to the roof. Finally the covers for the underframe electrical boxes have been cleaned and primed.

Class 104 50455 (East Lancs): Overhaul work and repainting into BR Blue continues. All of the timber door surrounds are now fitted and weather strips are following suit. However the biggest milestone has been the refitting of the fibreglass cab roof dome after many months of repairs. The cab front is now looking more complete again and reassembly can now progress.



Class 104 56182 (North Norfolk): Seat re-upholstery of the middle saloon is now completed and the final (rear) saloon is now well underway. The end to this long task is now in sight! Work on the vehicle itself has also restarted after a lull. The roof above the first class section has been stripped of all the old BR paint taking it down to bare metal. The areas that had surface rusted have been treated and the roof is now ready to receive new paint. The two gutters each side have also been stripped of all their own paint and are currently in bare aluminium. Work to construct a replica 2-character route indicator box for the new cab front has also started, it is being made using a much modified mechanism that was salvaged from the Southern Electric unit 4-VEP that was scrapped at the Churnet Valley Railway some years ago!



Class 104 50517 (East Lancs): M50517, M50455's partner at the ELR, is now receiving contracted bodywork repairs and a repaint. Progress has been rapid with the vehicle already welded up, sanded down and primed.

Class 117 51397 (Pontypool & Blaenavon): Restoration work has restarted on the railway's Class 117 set. The DMS vehicle, 51397, which has not yet received much work (the last period of restoration focussed on the DMBS), was started for the first time in a couple of years as part of an inspection with

both engines running within seconds of the appropriate start button being pressed.

Class 121 55027 (Ecclesbourne Valley): The Permanent Way conversion continues. The outer domes have been refitted, work is progressing on the doors and cab interiors. The NRN radio antennas have also been removed.

W&M Railbus 79963 (East Anglian Rly Museum): The heater wiring is being replaced and new engine temperature monitoring equipment fitted.

A TRIP TO WINCHCOMBE

Dave Henwood

Today we are at Winchcombe Station, Gloucestershire, and I am here to indulge, indeed wallow in some genuine Thames Valley nostalgia. The train you see here is a Class 117 DMU and was based at Reading for about 30 years from 1961 onwards, and in that time has operated countless services and covered hundreds of thousands of miles from London Paddington, with

destinations throughout the Valley and out to Bedwyn in Wiltshire, Banbury, Oxfordshire, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire and out as far as Worcester and Hereford.

Within that time, L425 as this set was known has also been loaned to Tyesley Depot in Birmingham, with at least one photograph known to exit of her at Redditch in the West Midlands. Today, she lives out a peaceful existence – rumbling along at a maximum 25 mph between Toddington and Winchcombe with occasional trips south to Cheltenham Racecourse.

What you see here is great stuff, it is memories, not just mine but memories of something that happened regularly on the pre-nationalised railway. It happened for many reasons, partly

because it was possible for the Driver to be 'seen at work' through the glass dividing screen. It happened partly because there was a sliding door enabling and indeed encouraging one-to-one contact between Driver and passenger... and the scene depicted here is particularly thought provoking I think.

But most of all, this contact happened by choice, and therein lies the difference between the era depicted here and that which know today! Train Drivers today are not encouraged to interact with the passenger in the way seen here, partly because they cannot do so now that the forward view is denied to the public and partly because the whole ethos of that interaction is discouraged on the grounds that it might distract the Driver in the course of their duties.

It is possible of course, that there may be some truth in that but I do find it sad that things have changed in the way that they have. If I told you that my earliest memory of a Cab Ride with the Driver was between Bourne End and Marlow would you believe me?

Of course you would, it is such a wonderful memory, I couldn't and wouldn't make it up. I would only have been about 5 years old and, sat at the front in a DMU just like this one; the Driver slid back the door and invited me up front. Mum let me go of course, she was after all sat right behind me and the very limited memory of the event that I have tells me that this was a regular thing for the old Slough-based crews to do.

In today's much more safety aware environment, with Black Box Data Recorders and regular CCTV downloads – on the national network such treats are impossible to replicate -- but on heritage railways such as this, it is like time has stood still and by prior arrangement with the operators, the memory I have of that first cab ride 43 years ago on the Marlow Branch can be re-enacted just as though nothing has changed at all.





DMU Group West Midlands/30742 Charters Night Photography Shoot at Arley Station Friday 29th September

Three Car Unit (52064/59250/51941) will be used.

Start time 18:30 (Bewdley Station) with Finish around 22:30.

Proceeds gained from the shoot will be donated to the DMU Group WM for the upkeep of our Class 108 Vehicles,

There will be 30 spaces available at £45 per photographer and booking details can be found here; <http://mailchi.mp/3cdc751bee65/dmu-evening-shoot-2>

UPDATE 20/07/17: There are currently 19 Places for photographers still available

Photo Copyright: Mark Miller

MOVEMENTS

Class 117 51372 has moved from **Titley Junction** to the **Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway** in a surprise buy of two DMBS vehicles. This line now has FOUR Class 117 DMBS vehicles (and only one DMS) so it will be interesting to see what the future holds for set formations!



The National Railway Museum's **Class 108 set 51922/51562** has been in storage at **Allely's Haulage Yard**, but has now moved on to the **NRM's York site** where they will be prepared for display there.



TIME TRAVELLER

Green Era

[Class 101 – St Combs – 21/11/63](#)

[Class 105 - Carlton & Netherfield – 20/5/66](#)

[Class 108 – Urmston – 1967](#)

[Class 115 – Croxley Hall – 18/8/66](#)

Blue Era

[Class 101 – Banbury – 8/76](#)

[Class 105 – Sheffield – 23/2/86](#)

[Class 128 M55990 – Manchester Victoria – 8/9/72](#)

Blue/Grey & Later

[Class 110 – York – 7/5/85](#)

[Class 116 W50855 – Rhymney – 16/9/79](#)

[150144 – Birmingham New Street](#)

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
- DMU modelling articles
- Articles on DMU history
- Recollections of DMUs on the national network.
- Requests for information
- News & images of recent DMU activity
- 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 October 29th for Issue 144 (due out November).

GALLERY



51360 at Todington, 19/8/17 (*K. Gale*)



E51427 tails a 4-car set at Quorn, (*C.Kirton*)



SC51402/SC51367 calls at Broomhill, 22/7/17 (*B.Faulkner*)



M55005 gleams in the sun at Shenton, 25/7/17 (*K. Baldwin*)



E59701 running in a Class 117 set, 17/8/17 (*N.Carr*)



E51813 receives surgery at Bury, (*K.Dowd*)



W79978 looking sad at the Colne Valley, 8/8/17 (*P.Hughes*)