

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



## EDITORIAL

Welcome to Issue 147. This month sees reports on the scrapping of three 2nd generation Class 141 vehicles, at 35 years of age and less than 20 years after entering preservation. They have been effectively replaced by a 60 year old Class 108 set and form a warning to all that DMU's do not have the sacred position in the public's eye that steam traction enjoys. It remains the case that if vehicles require large investment then disposal is a very real possibility. We are fast approaching the time of mass withdrawal of BR era 2nd generation stock and it is possible that pacer stock may be available cheaply in the near future. The results on our heritage lines could be varied and there may be interesting times ahead. I can see lines which have established first generation DMU groups being unaffected; with reliable and well presented 1950's era traction available I personally cannot see the boards of those railways wanting 1980's stock to spoil their steam-era atmosphere they have worked hard to create. However what of the less established lines and the lines who own their own DMU's and have run them with little maintenance for the last 20 years? Such lines often have little

loyalty to their first generation DMU's and may be faced with the choice of overhauling their existing stock for £50,000 or selling them off and replacing them with an operational Class 142. With many lines struggling financially, we may see a shift across to the second generation types with the displaced first generation stock at risk. My personal view is that second generation types should be preserved, but ideally in moderation. I do not feel that there is "room" to accommodate a repeat of the mass preservation that we saw with the Class 101, 108 & 117 fleets. The last 20 years has seen the preserved Class 141 fleet half as they have struggled to make their mark in a steam dominated heritage sector, and I would not wish for the class to become extinct. Hopefully there will be room for all, with sensible numbers of 142/143/144 vehicles saved for posterity without endangering rare or unique first generation examples.

*Chris Moxon*

## NEWS

**Bodmin & Wenford Rly:** The railway has successfully sold its Class 108 2-car set which has now departed the line

for pastures new. This leaves the newly arrived Class 121 single unit 55020 as the operating unit with long term spares donor Class 108 51947 still lurking in the sidings.

**Chinnor & Princes Risborough Rly:** Class 121 55023 has undergone a number of running repairs and currently remains operational. It is awaiting its turn in the queue for shed space to enable a full external re-paint, internal refurbishment and underframe works. It is currently planned to commence these works in late 2018.

**Ecclesbourne Valley Rly:** Class 108 DMBS 53599 has received repairs to seal a leaky roof. Other vehicles have remained in service without much of note, although they did have to battle the "Beast from the East" on several operating days! The timetable for the



Multiple Memories Event on the 19th/20th May is now available on the EVR website.

**Keith & Dufftown Rly:** The 2018 season did not start too well, on the fourth day of operations the No1 engine on 50628 suffered severe failure. Upon investigation a valve and spring were found to be broken causing major damage to the engine only 1 year on from overhaul. 51568 & 52053 took over service during the failure. Fortunately, we had a spare engine which only required minor works, so 50628 was back in service within 3 working days.



**Midland Rly Butterley:** A great deal of work has been done recently on the

Class 127 to get it back into regular service. On M51591, a big push has seen the No1 engine reassembled and it is now back in one piece, or at least there are no parts left in the brake van! Testing is to be undertaken once the repaint and roof repairs have been completed, the repaint itself has been undertaken outside owing to prolonged contract works occupying the shed. The repaint to M59609 was completed in 2017 and it just needs new numbers applying. A roof repaint is required and planned for this summer. As for M51625, following a recent visit by vandals both fuel tanks and supply pipes have been damaged and were left to drain the diesel into the ground. Repairs are needed to get this vehicle back in operational condition, one heater has proved problematic in recent years and requires replacement, a spare has recently been overhauled for a swap in the near future. A few areas of paint are to be attended to and a re-varnish is planned in the warmer weather.

**North Norfolk Rly:** The railway continues to survive operating just one DMU set, currently formed with hired in powercar M51188 and National Railway



Museum owned trailer car M56352. NRM powercar M51192 is currently out of service having its seating reupholstered and it is also waiting for manpower to become available to have its failed No2 engine looked into. The railway's other set, E51228/E56062, is still undergoing overhaul and there is hope that it will re-enter service at some point later on in the year.

**Whitrope Heritage Centre:** BRE / Leyland demonstrator RB004 has had some attention and has been returned to working order. It will be performing passenger runs at Whitrope again this season.



## RESTORATION NEWS

**Derby Lightweight 79018/79612 (Ecclesbourne Valley):** 79018 has had some work its air system after re-assembly. Further air parts are still to be fitted. 79612 interior work has re-started including partition glass for first class area.

**Class 101 56347 (Mid Norfolk):** Work has been progressing on getting this vehicle back in action as a DMU trailer with fully operational controls etc... this is now reaching completion. Yellow half panel has now been applied. All the jumper cables have been cleaned, horns unblocked and finally the destination box has been replaced with one from another vehicle. Whilst

carrying out this work it was discovered that the vehicle is fitted with final drive protection. This will mean that drivers will need to drive this slightly differently but not a major change. A few final jobs need completing but we are on track for this vehicle to return as a DMU at the MNR's bus weekend.

**Class 103 56160 (Denbigh):** M56160 has had the gangway end step iron fitted, and battery box signs painted and temporarily fitted as I'm hoping to have them scanned and 3D printed. The roof panel above the header tank is quite corroded, so it has been measured and a replacement ordered. More site fencing has been completed as has the security and workshop lighting.

**Class 104 56182 (North Norfolk):** The main focus recently has been on the six exterior doors. Although all of the "door components" were restored two years ago, the steel skins had been set aside as they were waiting to be included in a much bigger shot-blasting job in order to get a "ahem" advantageous price. This happened in late February meaning that they could be progressed.

The shot blasted doors were repaired and metalwork replaced where necessary. Two doors required no attention, two required small patches around weak spots such as the edges and door handles and the final two were very badly gone and ended up being replaced from the waistline downwards. These latter two required a few days work getting the flat steel to contour cleanly to the curved Class 104 profile that these doors are formed to. With repairs completed, the skins were painted on the insides and then re-fixed to the wooden frames (which were restored two years ago). Much sanding and filling followed before primer, undercoat and gloss were built up eventually leading to six gloss green doors. Other items which have been stripped, tested and repainted have included the two horns (high and low tone) and associated horn valve which lives in the driver's desk. Finally, the vehicle's dynamo has been removed from the vehicle and electrically investigated. It was found to be OK so the inside components have not been disturbed other than a high pressure air line to blow the accumulated carbon from the inside of the casing. The outside was then needle gunned and

repainted gloss black. It is not quite finished yet however, as the original belt pulley has been removed from its spline and a replacement is being machined from a lump of steel approximately 60% of the original in size. Rough calculations suggest that the new pulley will start charging the batteries at 12mph (compared to 17.5mph unmodified) and at 25mph the dynamo will "think" it is doing 47.5mph. However only "live testing" will tell us for sure at what speed things really start to happen! It is hoped that the modification will have the effect of increasing recharging times of the vehicle's batteries, as it is a known problem in preservation that trailer cars do not move long or fast enough to replenish the charge that is used by lights and heaters, leading to flat batteries!

**Class 114 50019 (Butterley):** Significantly this is now the main focus of the volunteer workforce at Butterley once again, unfortunately it was also damaged in recent vandalism and attention to fuel and coolant pipework is needed before becoming operational, internally modifications have been completed to facilitate wheelchair

accommodation in the main passenger area, this now needs panelling out and trim to complete, the ceiling replacement is now significantly complete and all interior panelling has been made ready to be fitted. Work in the summer should see the interior panelling complete and a new lino floor laid throughout the passenger compartment, the brake van floor will be removed once the passenger compartment nears completion as its currently storing all the bits that need to go back in the passenger area.

**Class 114 56006 (Butterley):** Repairs to the cab desk wiring are in progress, switches and buttons are being replaced as required, the cab is all that remains to be completed.

**Class 115 59659 (Butterley):** Once the repaint of the Class 127 vehicles are complete, 59659 will return to the yard for continuation of the bodywork repairs and a repaint, materials for which have been obtained. Also with a view to continuing the interior restoration next year, materials are being ordered and obtained in readiness, it is expected that the majority of the doors will require new timber frames, and all

seats require new moquette.

### **Class 117 59511 (Strathspey):**

Restoration has restarted on this vehicle having been paused for a few years, with work started on the roof to seal the vents and checking the roof over for any other leaks or damage. Once remedial work is complete the roof will be painted grey.



**Class 121 55024 (Chinnor):** Internal refurbishment is now in the final stages of restoration. New floor covering has been installed through the unit, replacement seats have been refurbished and recovered. Six forward facing and four side facing seats have been installed in what used to be the luggage area. A servery and four tables have been installed in the main passenger compartment with a low-level partition. Glazed partitions



behind the driver have been installed at both ends of the unit. The underframe has been fully examined and remedial works carried out. One engine has been fitted with a replacement head. Externally the unit has been re-painted in BR Maroon and at the time of writing, lining out is about to commence. We have kindly been donated two destination box's which have been overhauled and will be installed shortly. Current plans are to return the unit to service later this year. It is looking likely that 55024 will be the second of the group of six heavily modified departmental Class 121's to be returned to a passenger carrying unit in preservation, so quite an achievement! (the first was the Swanage Railway's 55028 in 2009)

### **W&M Railbus 79963 (East Anglian Rly Mus):**

79963 approaches the final stages where the engine and gearbox have been on extended offload run up tests to ensure system integrity. The drive shaft was refitted followed by a small test run under it's own power in late April, which was a large milestone. However there are still many other jobs to do and one key item missing is a set of control operating handles. If there is anyone who has knowledge of a spare set it would be greatly appreciated.

### **WANTED**

The Midland Railway Butterley are looking for a number of original style curved inverter covers (aluminium) for the fluorescent lighting in 115/127 vehicles (possibly others) as shown [here](#), alternatively complete light fittings happily accepted. Contact [Gareth Coleman](#)

### **MOVEMENTS**

Class 101 56342 moved in April from the Midland Railway Butterley to the Great Central Railway to join the Renaissance Railcars fleet and full restoration.



## DISPOSALS

Class 141's 55503, 55510 and 55523 were all scrapped on site at the Weardale Railway in March. 55510 had never run in preservation and was a spares donor for 55503/23 which itself was also cut up, as repairs required to return them to service were to prove too



costly for their owners. The unit had been out of use for several years and now just 141108 and 141113 remain preserved, half of the original fleet saved.

## RETURN OF REFURBISHMENT

One of the least represented BR liveries within preservation is the short lived "Refurbishment" livery of white with a blue waist stripe. The only example to run in preservation carrying this scheme was the Class 114 set at the Midland Railway Butterley which carried it for about ten years from the mid 1990's to the mid 2000's before being returned to green livery. The most probable reasons it isn't more popular is thought to be the same reason that BR didn't proceed with it in the first place: white is a very difficult colour on a rail vehicle to keep clean!

Recent research has highlighted some of the vehicles within our preserved ranks which can legitimately carry this interesting livery, as records suggest these vehicles were genuinely painted as such by BR. Below is a list of Class 101 vehicles which are "authentic white strippers":

- 50193, DMCL, Great Central
- 50204, DMBS, North Yorkshire Moors
- 50321, DMCL Great Central
- 50338, DMCL, Barry Tourist Rly
- 51187, DMBS, Cambrian Rly
- 51188, DMBS, Ecclesbourne Valley
- 51189, DMBS, Keighley & WV
- 56062, DTCL, North Norfolk
- 56342, DTCL, Great Central
- 56343, DTCL, Wensleydale
- 56347, DTCL, Mid Norfolk
- 56408, DTCL, Spa Valley

## TIME TRAVELLER

### Green Era

[Met Camm Lightweight](#)

[Class 101 – Skegness – 21/7/63](#)

[Class 105 M50808 – Weeton – 20/8/61](#)

[Class 122 – Combpyne – 3/64](#)

### Blue Era

[Class 101 – Shildon – 31/8/75](#)

[Class 103 – Rhyl – 4/9/80](#)

## Blue/Grey & Later

[Class 108 – Rotherham – 12/3/90](#)

[Class 110 – Peterborough – 6/85](#)

[Class 117 B430 – Newlands East – 2/6/85](#)

[Class 142 142015 – Exeter St Davids – 17/2/86](#)

## 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
- 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](mailto:railcar@live.co.uk) but no later than June 29th for Issue 148 (due out July).

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All units and events subject to availability, Llangollen Railway reserves the right to cancel or amend any details.

## GALLERY



55033 sits it out as Castle Headingham following a horn fault, 28/4/18 (*R.Moxon, taken with permission*)



55005 leads a Shackerstone departure, 22/4/18, (*M.Miller*)



51188 and 51228 in Weybourne yard, 20/4/18, (*C.Moxon*)



51880 brings up the rear of the Class 115 formation at Bishops Lydeard, 27/3/18, (*D.Henwood*)



55024 coming together at Chinnor, 24/4/18 (*J.Flynn*)



22 lurks in the shed at Didcot, 11/3/18 (*A.Browning*)



51104 receives attention in the shed, 4/18, (*A.Thompson*)



A view of W51363's brakevan, 10/3/18, (*D.Henwood*)

