



The Railcar Association Bulletin January 2010



Introduction

Welcome to the first of a new series of Bulletins produced for *The Railcar Association*. Over the years from 1996-2004, nearly 100 bulletins were produced. Unfortunately they ceased in September 2004 (just before the fantastic Railcar50 event) at Issue 96. Recent discussions between members highlighted the desire for this bulletin to return, and this is the first of what I hope will be many.

The revival of the bulletin is one of several decisions that have recently been made as part of a major update of the Railcar website, which remains the association's main presence for the wider community as well as being the core for communication between railcar preservation groups. Great effort has been made by several members to implement these changes, and it is hoped that others are in favour of what has been done already and what is still to come over the course of 2010.

The "new generation" bulletins (post issue 96) of which this is the first are to be in Portable Document Format (PDF). Some advantages to this are easy printing plus the option to store them on a computer. Both are useful if you do not have internet access all the time or if you have group members with no computer access (however an internet connection is advised to make use of the links that can be found in the text). It is planned for these PDF's to be available to download on the bulletin page of the railcar website. It is planned to have six bulletins each year (every other month)

A look back at issue 1 reveals in the introduction a request for information from groups which I will echo here. The effectiveness of these bulletins relies entirely on submissions from individuals and groups all round the UK (and possibly beyond!). Images and news are particularly welcome, as many would be surprised just how much happens to our DMUs if only news and progress was shared! Other submissions such as vehicle adverts, questions, requests, solutions, new suppliers etc are also welcome. As many have said before: the more information we can share, the better our movement becomes. Many thanks to those who have supplied material for this issue.

Finally, submissions and feedback are always welcome at railcar@live.co.uk. Enjoy the issue!

News

Liberia Class 126's: Photographic proof has emerged that three Class 126 Swindon Inter-City cars survived into 2009. Five of the 79XXX series DMBS vehicles (with full width cab) were exported to operate work miner's trains on the LAMCO system in Liberia. Although one was known to be scrapped following a collision, their remote location and a civil war meant that the fate of the other four were previously unknown. Unfortunately the images show extensively stripped shells and their future is far from certain as it has been reported that the mine & railway have recently changed hands, the new owners (Arcelor Mittal) being busy clearing up the site since the images were taken in March 2009. Images of the vehicles are available [here](#) & [here](#) with a picture of two during happier times [here](#). Additional coverage of the LAMCO operations along with further images of the vehicles whilst operating can be found in [this interesting article](#).

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway: Class 101 E51505 has received a replacement No2 engine after the old one failed in October 2007. The replacement is a refurbished 680-1595, currently pending final testing. Class 117 W51360 has had a roof repaint in September and remains in traffic with Class 108 M56224 which is expected to need a replacement ceiling soon. Class 122 M55006 has had bodyside work on the Guard's van end cab and a paint touch up in that area. The vehicle is pending major bodywork and full repaint. The restoration of Class 119 W51073 (the only vehicle currently not in traffic at the EVR) continues and is detailed in a separate article in this bulletin.

Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway: The remains of Ex Plymouth Laira Sandite car, [Class 121 DTS 56285](#) (977486), were finally cut up in October. The vehicle had never run in preservation and had been at the Northamptonshire Ironstone Railway since January 2000. Although one of only three such vehicles preserved, the vehicle was in poor condition and had been stripped of several parts. Now two Class 121 DTS vehicles remain, at the East Lancashire and Colne Valley Railways. Thankfully both are in operational condition and paired with bubble cars, as nature intended!

Park Royal DMBS Scrapped: Class 103 DMBS M50397 has been cut up after a period of several years uncertainty. The vehicle had become extremely dilapidated following years of storage and the shell held few of its original parts. It leaves Helston Railway based M50413 as the only surviving Class 103 power car.

Swanage Railway: Class 121 W55028 is now in service on the line, and has been used in a variety of ways. The vehicle has been a useful addition for 2009 as Class 108 51933/56504 was out of traffic for much of the year and 117 DMS W51388 was also taken out of service for repairs. Many services in the latter half of the year have been operating with W55028 paired with 117 DMBS W51346 (as shown in the image showing the pair working trains over October half term week). Previously the 121 was also used as both an off peak option and to strengthen the 117 set.

Class 126 nears Completion: Unique Class 126 3-car set Sc51043/Sc59404/Sc51017 now has a full set of seats since the interior of Sc51017 was completed. The guards interior of Sc51043 has also been returned to original condition. It is hoped to recertify the air receivers in the spring.



W51346 & W55028 having departed Corfe Castle for Swanage

Class 119 W51073



It has been a year now since the small DMU team at Warkworth decided to embark upon their biggest ever project - the transformation of Class 119 Driving Motor Brake Composite W51073 from a shell into a fully-refurbished operational vehicle. It hasn't been an easy year, with last winter having mostly sub-zero temperatures and the summer having to be dedicated to keeping the other units the team looks after up to serviceable standard.

After initially clearing the unit out and surveying what little had already been carried out, the decision was taken to make a start on the internals of the vehicle whilst the weather was bad. The vehicle is split into three passenger compartments (First Class Smoking, First Class Non-Smoking and Second Class) with a large guard's area at the rear which incorporates a luggage

cage from the days of carrying airport luggage on the way from Reading to Gatwick Airport.

Most of last winter was spent on preparing the First Class Smoking compartment, which is the large compartment behind the cab. This involved derusting the sides of the vehicle as they had been left bare after asbestos removal and then painting it all over, roof included, in anti-corrosive paint to prevent further rust. After this, new fibre glass insulation can be added to keep everybody warm! Lots of time was spent on sanding back the layer up on layer of paint and varnish that had been added to window surrounds and internal doors over the years and then staining them in a nice walnut colour before adding a clear varnish. The end result after this time consuming activity is quite nice.

As the winter began to turn into spring, the team found themselves more able to work on externals. The winter was culminated by the installation of lighting and ceiling panels in the First Class Smoking compartment and it gave the team a real sense of achievement. The majority of the work from now on though would be concentrated on items underneath the unit as the weather was much warmer.



Apart from the superficial painting of various things, the main activity through the spring was on one of the engines. The decision was taken to work on Engine No.2 as this engine was brand new and not even refurbished! Many things were missing including the coolant system, fuel system and electrical connections. Gradually, all of these things were installed and the engine was very close to being started for the first time. However, with the onslaught of the summer season, the team were finding it increasingly difficult to find time to just fit those final few items to this engine which would get it to start. All of the other vehicles in the fleet would require routine checks and maintenance as the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway uses them on the majority of services, which keeps us busy!

Finally, at the start of November, just a day was found to finish off what was required to start the engine and on the 7th November 2009 the unit started an engine for the first time in over fifteen years! The whole team deserve a big well done as this was probably the last thing that could be done outside before the weather started to turn but it was a great achievement to end the season with.

This winter is again likely to see further work inside the unit. The de-rusting and anti-corrosive painting of the small First Class Non-Smoking compartment has already been completed by the end of November and I am sure the team will be pushing to get this compartment into the same state as its neighbour.

You will be able to follow the restoration's progress via the regularly updated diary on the railway's website at <http://www.e-v-r.com/class119> and you will also be able to see it for yourself as it is hoped to have the vehicle on show again at the opening event of the 2010 operating season - a DMU Gala on the 20th and 21st March.

Many thanks to Leigh Gration for supplying this article - does anyone else have anything similar, perhaps produced for your railway's journal?

Winter Scenes on the East Lancashire Railway

Throughout the month of December the East Lancashire Railway has been operating diesel shuttles to serve stations along the line and connect with the steam hauled Santa Specials which operate from Bury. On the 21st December following heavy snowfall, Class 122 W55001 (recently reintroduced into traffic) was working the eight miles between Bury and Rawtenstall, with Class 101 M51192/M56352 working the remaining four miles from Bury to Heywood. The white snow and blue "bubble" were captured at Ramsbottom and Irwell Vale during the afternoon.



Forthcoming Events

Date	Railway
February 6th	East Lancashire Railway
March 20th & 21st	Ecclesbourne Valley Railway
June 26th & 27th	Llangollen Railway
October 8th-10th	Severn Valley Railway

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 (such as the East Lancs 122 feature in this issue)
 - Restoration articles (such as the Class 119 article in this issue)
 - Reports on special events
 - Requests for information
 - News & images of recent DMU activity (even a sentence will do!)
 - Anything that featured in the pre 2004 bulletins
 - Anything that may be of interest to readers
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Feel free to send submissions at any time to railcar@live.co.uk but no later than February 27th for Issue 98 (due out March)