

Hello Everyone

February all ready and as I write these words my daily newspaper headline is **Precarious... but very different by Spring.** With many of us vaccinated by then, let us hope so for as the heritage railways take tentative, very tentative, steps planning their re-opening and future galas, they will surely need our support more than ever this year. For the immediate future many of them are concentrating on maintaining their assets and keeping a keen eye on costs with reduced staffing levels.

As we say goodbye, and probably good riddance, to 2020, local operator West Midlands Trains also said goodbye to their small fleet of class 153 single car DMUs. Previously with London Midland and still in that livery, they have latterly been used to strengthened trains on the Birmingham-Hereford line. 85 of these single car units were created in 1991 from the two-coach Class 155 'Super-Sprinter' units, built by Leyland Bus at its Workington factory in 1987, to replace the aging single Class 121 and 122 slam-door railcars. These predecessors were



extremely long lived, the final examples not being withdrawn by Chiltern Railways until 2017 after 57 years' service! Class 121 120 is seen left on the Aylesbury to Princes Risborough 'heritage' shuttle. Initially the units took over services originally monopolised by GWR built railcars but as more and more cross country and branch lines closed that work became less and less. Consequently the 'Bubble Cars' as they became known were spread wider ranging from Scotland to Cornwall, including the West Midlands.



Introduced in 1934, the GWR ultimately built 34 of these railcars including 2- parcel and 4- 2-car sets. The original streamlined outline of the units led to the nickname 'Flying Bananas', the twin AEC bus engines giving them a top speed of 80mph.



A Scrape with the Scrap Men

The Hastings DEMUs, introduced in 1957 as a ten-year stopgap measure to replace ageing rolling stock before the planned electrification, lasted so long they passed into Southern Region folk lore. They, along with certain of the similar two and three car units were maintained at a purpose-built depot at St Leonards on Sea, in East Sussex. Following the withdrawal of the Hastings units in 1986, the Hastings Diesel Group (HDG) was formed that year with the aim of preserving one or more "Hastings" DEMU coaches. Initial interest was encouraging and, one year later, a limited company Hastings Diesel Preservation Limited (HDPL) was set up by the HDG, to buy vehicles from BR. The aim was now to buy a whole 6-car train. In March 1989, HDPL bought not one but two entire 6-car units, numbers 1001 and 1013; in all, it acquired 15 withdrawn "Hastings" DEMU vehicles including five motor-coaches and three of the beautiful corridor firsts. They were housed at their then disused home depot at St. Leonards, to which access was already granted by BR for HDG members gathering spare parts from condemned stock. In 1990 matters were formalised when a separate but closely-affiliated company St. Leonards Railway Engineering Limited (SLREL) was set up to hold a lease and operate the depot. HDG was wound up, and Hastings Diesel Preservation Limited became Hastings Diesels Limited (HDL). I rather liked this story by **Michael Pannell**, repeated verbatim, of how one of the power cars came to be powered by a Ford Escort car!



Ok well the story is this.... We were told that a 3H power car was coming to SE (St Leonards) and we could strip whatever we wanted; what they didn't mean was remove the entire 12-ton English Electric 4SRKT engine with the depot crane we had got working again. Seemed like a great plan except that when the engine came out the front end of the motor coach it lifts over a foot and goes out of gauge....so we threw in as much pig iron as we could find and our faithful old spares carrier Ford Escort car ...all seemed great off the motor coach went for scrap...sweet...or so we thought. It got stopped at Sevenoaks and put in the siding by the tunnel. Whilst there Selhurst depot in South London needed a part off the engine for another DEMU, so a fitter was despatched by car one evening to remove said part.... picture the scene when he climbs onto the motor coach, opens the engine room door and shines his torch in!! Then to compound it he has to call his boss at Selhurst to explain there is Ford Escort in the DEMU engine compartment but no engine!! (immediate drug test is ordered) In disbelief he checks the engine room again and confirms to his boss it really is a Ford Escort. First reports come ringing down to us about doing a naughty thing...all well and good and she carries on up to Vic Berry in Leicester. However when Mr Berry finds a Ford Escort instead of a 4SRKT he figures its contains somewhat less copper than he paid for....he was mad as hell.....so a few weeks later we get a long parcel in the mail and on opening it it's the crushed front grille from the Escort and a message ' **don't ever do this to us again** ' Vic Berry...



The English Electric 4SRKT engine

Quiz Questions

Name this pub, which usually does a nice pint of Batham's, being passed by 25078 & 25106 on the BOC tanks with a nice selection of mainly British cars in the car park including a Robin Reliant ready for a quick getaway!



Or, how about this loco shed below photographed rather appropriately from Railway Walk.

If it helps, in this town two railway semaphore lower quadrant signals were placed on the pavement to warn road users that a train was due on the vinegar branch.



Photo: Terrence Dorrity



An extremely rare picture of a GWR loco at this midland location, passing the long closed ex-Midland Railway shed. GWR Hall class 4-6-0 No 6955, Lydcott Hall passes a lengthy rake of coal wagons destined for the gas works out of sight on the left. **Where is it?**

The January railway location was **ALDERNEY** if you fancy a summer in lockdown!



January Quiz answers 1-Clapham J 2-Aller j 3-Battersby 4-Cogload j 5- Dovey j 6-Exmouth j
 7-Fawkham j 8-Georgemas j 9-Haltwhistle 10-Inverness 11-Joan Croft j 12-Killin j 13-Llandudno j 14-Madeley
 j 15-Norwood j 16-Oulton Broad North j 17-Pleck j 18-Queenborough 19-Ryecroft j 20-Standish j **20-Three
 Spires j 21-Uphill j 22-Virginia Water 23-Watford j 24-Limerick j 25-Yeovil j - \ ---- sorry!---- \

It was rare to see locos from all four regions at any shed but especially so at **Redhill** in Surrey. Redhill was a crossroads with the London-Brighton line running north to south and the cross-country Tonbridge-Reading line running east to west. Due to historical ownership, the cross-country routes both faced north as they entered the station meaning a reversal and change of engines to continue their journey. The Brighton line had been electrified in 1933 but the busy cross-country route remained steam hauled until 1965 providing plenty of work for the shed situated in the fork of the Brighton and Tonbridge lines. The cross-country line was an opportunity for Reading GWR men to gain route knowledge in case of emergency so Reading Manor **7808**, **Cookham Manor**, or a 43xx mogul, could have been a daily sight on Redhill shed. Towards the end of steam LMR Black 5's were a regular sight on excursions to the south coast and often ran back to Redhill shed for servicing after Brighton shed closed in June 1964. On parade and a long way from home is **44951** from the West Riding shed at Mirfield.

An eastern region B1 was a different matter however and **61313** from Canklow Shed had



worked a Pidgeon special all the way from Rotherham to Lewes before turning at Eastbourne shed where it was found to have a hot box. It returned to Redhill for repair where Paul Abbott, the enthusiastic Redhill shed master, seized the opportunity to organise this line-up of a loco from each region plus a BR Standard but resisted publishing it at the time for fear of reprisals from 'on high' for wasting company time! The only local Southern region loco on shed was the Q class 0-6-0 **30543** and a Redhill BR Std 4 tank **80068** completed the line-up. The B1



remained at Redhill for 3 months and is seen on the left compete with 75B shed plate at Ash working a Reading -Redhill service in October 1964 before returning north with a condemned wagon train. Paul's request to keep the loco was firmly refused by the Eastern Region!

Eastbourne shed, or what remained of it after the wartime bombing, was officially closed in 1952 but remained as a signing on point and servicing facility for the few remaining local steam services. It became increasingly more dilapidated until little was left by the time the Cuckoo line closed in 1965 and with it the last steam hauled trains. However, in the last few years a surprising number of foreign LMR locos visited including Jubilee No 45672 **Anson** on the overnight Glasgow-Newhaven car sleeper service, a Willesden turn, despite the fact that **Jubilees were banned** from this part of the Southern Region! Perhaps nobody noticed in the dark? It worked a returning Strong's brewery special from Romsey to Brighton as far as Haywards Heath from Eastbourne before returning north light engine at slow speed.



Just as unusual was this visit to Oxley by Bullied BOB Class pacific No 34077 603 Squadron reported as 'off a summer excursion'. Did Roger or Simon witness it I wondered?



Stafford Virgins-Part 3

Derek continues his tales of the unexpected!

So, off to Birmingham for the medical. I expected to go as a group but we all had different appointment times. No one had told me how thorough this would turn out to be as I had never experienced such an examination. I was seen by a private Doctor whose practise was close to New St Station. Bearing in mind my job in railway terms was not "Safety Critical" tests seemed to me to be 'a little over the top', but as an aside, it should be pointed out that we have the safest railway system in the world. I stand to be corrected when I say I believe only one person has lost their life in a railway accident in the UK this century.

The doctor introduced himself and explained the procedure he was about to carry out. An eye test followed by a rather unpleasant hearing test. I was in what I can only describe as a telephone box with ear phones and a hand-held button which I was instructed to press every time I heard a noise. It was very claustrophobic and seemed to go on for ever and I was pleased to get it over with. Then, stripped to the waist, the doctor proceeded to listen to my 'inner workings'. This completed, I was asked to remove my trousers. My mind went back to school health inspections and I was dreading being asked to 'Cough' Those of a certain age will know what I mean! This was bypassed, 'sigh of relief', as I was given a small bottle for a urine sample which was duly delivered. I had to ask why I had to remove my trousers and the doctor explained that to avoid embarrassment the prospective Virgins would often take someone else's sample, little realising that the sample was temperature tested straight away. Recreational drugs, it

would seem was the biggest problem and it turned out that only six of the group went on to the next stage, which I found quite staggering. A foot examination followed and then it was all over. As the doctor was writing his notes, I dressed myself to leave and found that I had been in his surgery for almost an hour. Back to Stafford to be told that they would be in touch as soon as the aforesaid results were known.

A telephone call from the Assistant Station Manageress some days later confirmed I had passed stage 2 and I was to become a casual Virgin starting the first week in March 2003. In the mean time I travelled with my five other 'casual Virgins' to Crewe to be kitted out in uniforms. Times have changed now, but in 2003 it was a criminal offence to be in the public domain without a tie whilst on duty. The tie was a clip-on type which meant you needed the correct collar size. I was allocated three shirts; two long sleeve and one short, a quality jacket, two pairs of trousers, a superb knee length overcoat, woollen gloves and beanie hat all of which more than came into their own on the cold winter days at Stafford railway station.



Roger also braved a cold winters day on Sunday 24th January to capture the Kronospan freight at Codsall station on its roundabout route from Chirk to Carlisle. The Kronospan sidings face south so rather than taking the direct route north to Chester and Crewe the train runs Shrewsbury, Wolverhampton and Stafford to reach Crewe. Such is progress!



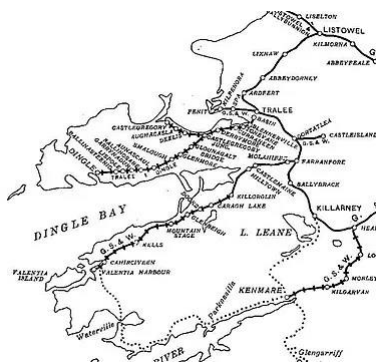
South Kerry granted greenway permission



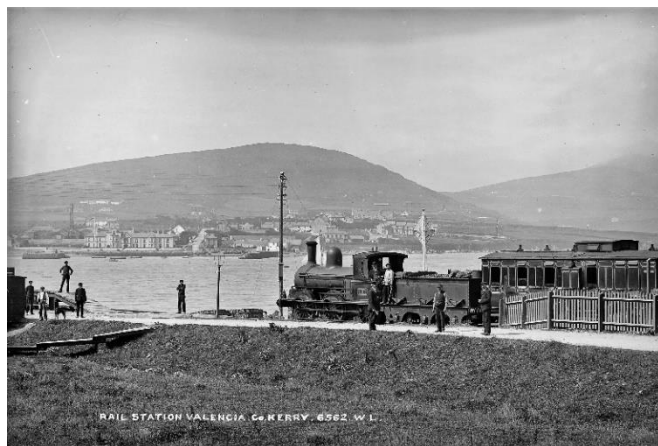
This headline from the Irish broadcaster reminded me that the course of this line headed west through some of Ireland's most spectacular scenery. It climbed through County Kerry's glorious mountainous countryside and along delightful Dingle Bay's southern shores to Valencia Harbour, **Europe's most westerly station**. Despite the remote location and sparse Gaelic speaking population, the Great Southern and Western Railway Company pushed ahead with the 39-mile line reaching Valencia Harbour in 1893 giving farmers and fishermen access to national markets.

The new greenway is planned as a three-metre-wide paved stretch of "roadway" on the old railway line for use by cyclists and pedestrians and will hopefully attract large visitor numbers. Estimated to cost more than €20m, (good old EU eh!) the greenway will face considerable engineering challenges. Some of the old line's most impressive structures, the Caherisveen railway bridge, the Gleesk viaduct, seen above and the Drung Hill Tunnels will all have to be repaired. I walked across the impressive curving viaduct in awe some years ago whilst my wife and our friends retired to a local hostelry for a glass of the dark stuff!

Next stop America was the caption for the postcard on the **right** although plans for the Harbour to be used as a packet station for services to the USA never came to fruition. It was however, the eastern terminus of the first commercially viable transatlantic telegraph cable.



Shunting at Valencia Harbour shortly before the line closed in 1960, by when the local population had halved since the line was built, is Córás Iompair Éireann No **C201**. Built in 1956, it was

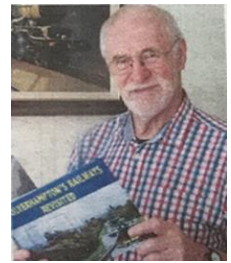


one of a class of thirty-four mediocre diesel electric locomotives designed for branch line passenger and freight duties manufactured by Metropolitan-Vickers in Manchester. The original Crossley engines were both underpowered and unreliable and were later replaced with General Motor engines which lasted until the 1980s.



Guest Photographer Spot

Another photo with a tale from Simon



Gathering clouds

Hall Class 4-6-0 No **6931 "Aldborough Hall"** at the rear of Oxley shed on 21st August 1965, an Oxford engine at the time but destined to be withdrawn just two months later. It still carries its cabside numberplates but has lost its nameplates and smokebox numberplate.

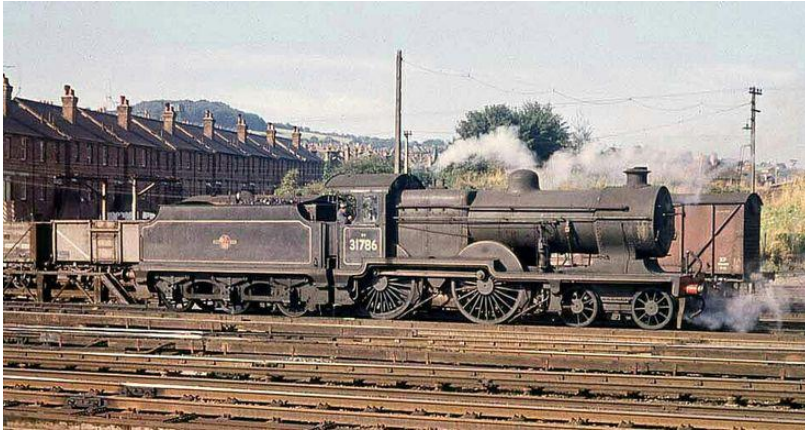
Steam locomotive withdrawal was in full spate with the Western Region intent on removing all its steam stock by 31st December that year and Oxford shed was the last stronghold of the class. The first of the class to be withdrawn (other than 4911 "Bowden Hall" destroyed in an air raid on Plymouth in 1941) was the prototype, 4900 "Saint Martin", on 3rd April 1959 with the first "Hall" proper, Taunton-based 4940 "Ludford Hall", in November of the same year. Wolverhampton's first member of the class to go was 4901 "Adderley Hall", withdrawn on 16th September 1960 after accruing a mileage of 1,263,627 miles during its life.

6931 was built at Swindon in December 1941 and by the time of its withdrawal in October 1965 had run 809,490 miles. The lines at the back of Oxley shed would see the accumulation of withdrawn steam locomotives as British Railways sped towards eliminating all its standard gauge steam fleet by August 1968. The shed itself closed in 1967 and would be demolished during the following year.

Thanks for that Simon, oh for a time machine!

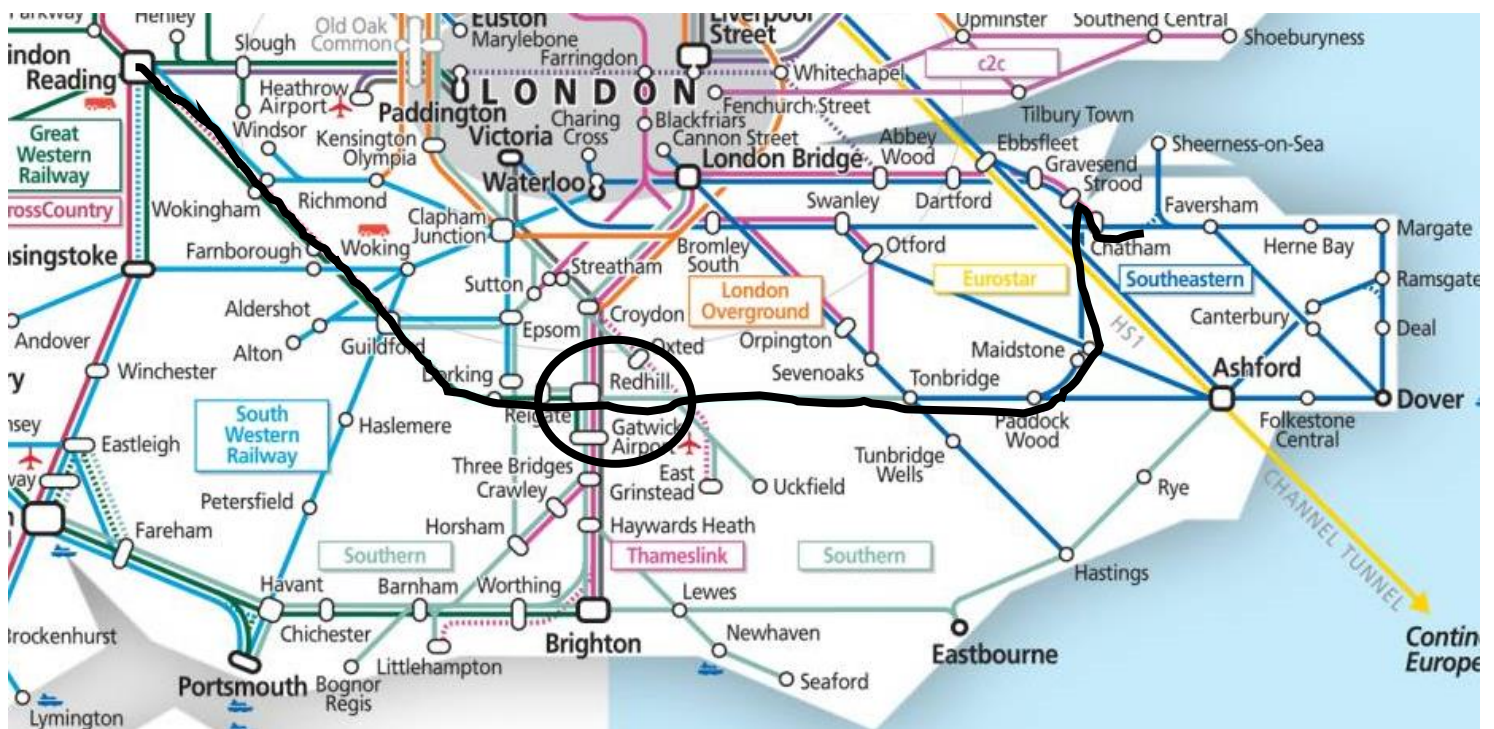
Railway Runabout

The amount of information available today through the many books, mobile phones and social media sites is staggering compared to the limited information available back when we were spotters, relying as we did on the spotter's grapevine. As an example, I looked back at a random loco underlining in my *Ian Allan* 1960



British Railway locomotives, Southern Region. Little did I know when I saw former Southern Railway 4-4-0 Class L1 No **31787** at Redhill station in 1958 how many miles it had travelled from its home shed of Gillingham, Kent (73D) and how many crews would have been on and off the footplate that day. Due off shed at the early hour of

3.30am, Gillingham men made the short hop to Strood where **Tonbridge** enginemmen work at 3.50am, via Maidstone and Tonbridge, to Redhill. Here the engine was turned on the shed and a **Redhill** crew left at 10.16am for the cross-country journey to Reading (Southern). After another turn on shed, the loco returned to Redhill at 1.50pm where once again it was turned on the shed table. All cross-country trains required a reversal at Redhill and another **Redhill** crew attach 31787 to the back of an incoming Reading train and work it to Tonbridge. Here a **Gillingham** crew head for home on a passenger service as far as Maidstone West at 9.34pm. Leaving there at 12.01am they work a freight to Strood. Almost done but before returning to their home shed, they bank a freight out of Strood, arriving back at Gillingham at **2.44am**, some 23 hours after it started. About 250 miles, 5-sets of enginemmen, 3 spins on a turntable and both passenger and freight; all in a day's work for the 30-year-old built by the North British Locomotive Company in Glasgow in 1926. Gillingham shed had three L1s to cover this duty.



Shrovetide Railway Memories

Last month we touched on this picture-
Here's the full story....

Ashbourne is probably best known for its annual game of Royal Shrovetide Football which takes place every Shrove Tuesday and Ash Wednesday, (although it has been cancelled this year because of the pandemic). The goals are three miles apart and located at the sites of two former corn mills. Until the sixties a goal was scored by a player hitting the relevant old mill wheel three times with the ball. By then both buildings had become unsafe and had to be demolished, substitute goals being provided. Now as back then it is necessary for a player to be stood in the River Henmore which flows between the two goals in order to score. There is no



limit to the number of players, allegiances to the Up'ards and Down'ards teams being determined by whether you were born north or south of the river or by family tradition. The only restrictions regarding where the game may NOT be played are on consecrated ground or in the Memorial Gardens. Play starts on the main town centre car park where the chosen worthy "turns up" the ball by tossing it from a plinth into the baying



crowd. Prince Charles had the honour in 2003, other past notables being Stan Matthews, Bob Taylor and Brian Clough. Cloughie seemed overwhelmed by the whole event and left town as quickly as he could! During the 2003 game a player carrying the ball ran straight into my wife whose automatic reaction was to reach out. Thus, she can truthfully claim that she once touched Prince Charles' ball! The Down'ards always had an advantage when the railway was extant.



The line ran directly from the station to within a hundred yards of Clifton Mill where they scored, or "goaled" the ball to put it in local parlance. Once a ball carrier had escaped the crowd of players and spectators, usually two or three thousand strong, it was relatively straight forward to gallop along the sleepers towards Clifton hoping you didn't run out of breath or the opposition catch up with you, in which case no mercy was expected or shown. Frequently the ball would be spirited away so quickly that most folk didn't know where it had disappeared to. Such was the case on this occasion. Some lads were on the wagons trying to get a better view whilst we more studious types were using our knowledge and limited playing experience to calculate what to do next. After all we were still too young to

go to a pub which most people did in such a crisis.

In 1963 the game was being played about eighty yards inside the north end of the 383-yard Ashbourne Tunnel when the afternoon freight from Buxton came to an unscheduled halt because of the crowd on the track. The fireman was a local chap so knew what was afoot. He went into the crowd pleading with everybody to leave the tunnel but to no avail. He returned to the loco, an 8F, and the driver allowed his train to roll slowly down the 1:60 gradient,



whistling as they proceeded. The local Police, who always accompanied the game at a safe distance, decided to join the throng and make their way to where the hug (akin to a very large unruly scrum) had been stationary for some time. The Police demanded the ball be handed to them whereby they escorted it out of other end before permitting the game to restart near the old station. In the meantime, very few spectators heeded the whistling of the 8F so its frustrated driver came to halt no more than the loco's length inside the tunnel before emitting steam from every available orifice whilst his fireman piled on the coal. It was like Dante's inferno but far from leaving by the shortest route, virtually everybody took the longer option stumbling over the ballast in darkness as they were pursued by the now more socially distanced 8F. My knowledge of

Anglo Saxon was considerably increased that day!

Did I ever play? Yes, but was never remotely likely to score unlike my father who goaled for the Up'ards twice, (That's



Tony's Dads prized 1947 ball *left*) an uncle who did it three times including the fastest time ever (and was rewarded

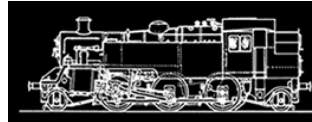
with a tun of ale for his efforts) and his son who was the youngest ever scorer at only twelve years old (with a bit of help from his dad I think!). What was it like to be in the middle of a hug of two or three hundred grunting men striving to move the game on? Surprisingly good natured, especially if we got stuck in one place for some time. Wives would pass hip flasks and whisky bottles to their loved ones and these would be passed among the players until empty. My abiding memory is of the hug being wedged in a corner near the bus station at 11 o'clock at night, (we could play until midnight back then). Steam spiralled above us into the cold night air, the atmosphere being a heady cocktail of sweat, clothing sodden with river water, silage, whisky and cigarettes. Suddenly a voice in the centre began to sing a current hit by Amen Corner, "Bend me, shape me, anyway you want me", etc. Gradually everybody joined in; it was a grand night!

Tony Beresford.

Great tale Tony, more next time!



Spot the Difference



THE **82045**
STEAM LOCOMOTIVE TRUST
Practical Steam for the 21st Century

We have followed the progress of this new-build loco at Codsall and even enjoyed a talk one Wednesday evening by the trust. 2020 was not the best of years for progress on 82045; stop-start with the lockdowns and restrictions in place when they are on site in an effort to keep everyone safe. Here's an interesting comparison of bunkers at Bridgnorth with Std class 3MT **82045**'s bunker painted in the attractive Swindon-inspired livery of dark green, lined out in orange and black favoured by the Western Region for its locos. No other BR Std tank class carried two liveries. **1450**'s driver looks decidedly uninterested!



When delivered new the class all carried BR lined Mixed Traffic black livery. From 1957 onwards, those members of the class based on the Western Region started to receive lined green livery although in the early 1960s, some Western Region class members also received unlined green livery as an economy measure. Those class members allocated to other regions retained lined black livery until withdrawal.

One curiosity was **82044**. Delivered in black livery it was re-painted in green livery by the Western Region but then returned to black livery after it was transferred away. During this repaint there were two differences to all the others, one clearly a mistake that was never corrected before final withdrawal. Withdrawal came twice, first in 1965 from Gloucester Horton Road (85B) and second after reinstatement at Bath Green Park (Somerset and Dorset)) a further two months later. Seen below right at the grade 11 listed station building, the site is now used as a retail and events space. Can you spot the difference?



Thanks to Ivan Whitehouse

Tales from the Footplate

More from Bushbury 'mon' Keith Morgan that's him in the middle

I was now a fully qualified Passed Cleaner, and was now ready for any job that was thrown at me, maybe an express passenger train or a fully fitted goods. I was bought down to earth when after about a week, my name appeared on the shed working roster, there it was, Keith Morgan with driver Jack Green on shed turning duty

The link consisted of 3 shifts, my first turn was 10pm- 6am, so I duly booked on for the first night shift of my life. The work was pretty straightforward. When an engine came onto shed, it's crew turned the loco (if required) then went under the massive coaling tower, There were two shutes, one for passenger engine's (quality coal) the other for goods and shunting loco's. This so-called coal could be quite decent stuff, or, the dreaded "briquettes and ovoids". This fuel was truly awful; it was made up of coal dust and cement, it burned ok, but it was almost impossible to control the smoke it produced, also the ovoids would create an avalanche on the footplate with the damn things up to your ankles.

We were lucky at Bushbury as we didn't have to dispose, i.e. drop or clean fires, rake out ashpans, and empty smoke boxes of char (small pieces of half burned coal that had been pulled through the tubes and settled around the blastpipe). The driver and myself then moved the engine to the water column, and filled the tank, we then placed the loco on the shed ready for its next duty. After a couple of nights Jack, the driver said, "you can move the next one" and although I had never driven before I felt quite at ease with the controls.



Jack explained that I needed to apply caution as some of the engines were low on steam pressure resulting in a poor steam brake. One trick when approaching the stop blocks was to leave the regulator open, move forward then put the engine in reverse, this operation gave a gentle stop without touching the brake but of course you never did this if a loco had full steam pressure.

One engine that Jack wouldn't let me drive was the ubiquitous Super D;

1963, Bushbury Super D No **48895** with BR number but LMS still on the tender



These machines appeared to have a mind of their own when in low pressure, so had to be carefully when moving about the shed. This reminds me of the time when I was a fireman and we had taken a goods train with a Super D to Washwood Heath on the Midland main line and B-ham control instructed us to take the engine to Saltley. When we arrived on shed the Foreman said, "you're not leaving that f***** thing here, my men will refuse to drive it." I don't think Midland men liked ex- LNWR engines, but likewise on the few

occasions that they came my way I never had much success with their Class 4F 0-6-0.



Photo D Hill: LMS 0-6-0 Class 4F No 44358 at Bushbury

An ex-Midland driver said to me that they liked a thick fire just inside the fire hole door sloping to almost nothing at the front, this appeared to work while the engine was stationary with plenty of steam, but on taking up the load on a goods train, your

heart would sink when the steam pressure gauge dropped alarmingly, they were not one of my favourite engines.

After a couple of months in the shed turning link, it was time to move into the Spare link, but on reflection, what had I learned? I was now capable of moving engines safely, familiar with the shed yard and location of point levers, how to couple two engines together using the heavy shackles and vacuum pipes, together with confidence in your driver, also learning hand signals and their proper use, most important. I remember a driver admonishing his fireman for not giving a clear hand signal, after a few swear words he ended with, "what do you think I am, a bloody mind reader!!"

Thanks Keith, look forward to some more!



Bushbury men called it the Milk Bar Triangle. The tenders were labelled...

Important members of Bushbury shed's allocation were the sludge carriers, used to transport the results of the water softening plant so necessary for Bushbury's hard water. This ex-Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway eight-wheel tender was emptied by raising the external paddles resulting in the staining seen around the paddles and on the frame and running gear. Another Bushbury fireman Ivan Whitehouse remembers these were emptied in a sludge disposal tip created in the triangle at Bloomfield Junction for the Birmingham area sheds, costed at £759 by the LMS in 1938.

TO BE RETURNED WHEN EMPTY TO WATER SOFTENING PLANT BUSHBURY.

A typical water softener, this one at Coalville. On the left can be seen a 12ton van delivering/collecting chemical drums with an ex- Midland Railway 3500-gallon Johnson tender converted to take the sludge away for disposal.



Roger's Train Spot

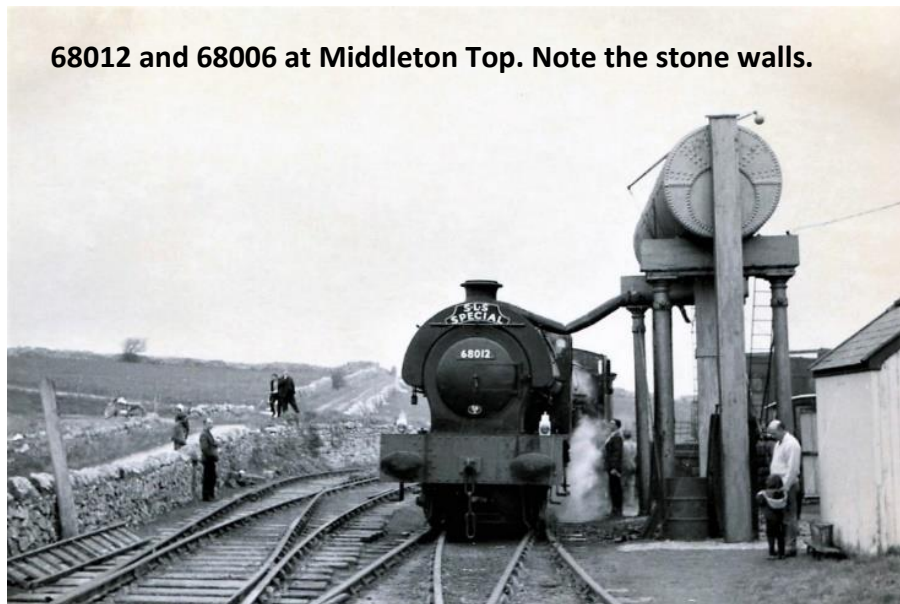
This was my shortest rail tour, a 22-mile round trip with J94's **68006+68012** and 6 Brake vans, on Sunday 30 April 1967. A heavy programme was planned with three round trips. The SLS was the first one at eleven o'clock the following two in conjunction with an excursion using Flying Scotsman from King's Cross to Chesterfield and visiting Cromford & High Peak Railway by coaches.



Our trip was with six brake vans, the locomotives stalled halfway up Hopton Incline and had to return to the bottom and make two separate runs with 3 brake vans. All of this action delighted the throng of enthusiasts whose cars jammed the narrow lanes. By this time we had to stop at

Longcliffe goods yard for water. We then went to Parsley Hay to run round, however they left 2 brake vans behind so they could go up Hopton Incline in one go. By now we were running one and half hours late, so tour number two set off with four brake vans and guess what, they also stopped on the incline one hundred yards from the summit. The train had to be divided again and only got to Friden and returned to Middleton Top. The last train now two and half hours late did get up in one go with four empty brake vans all the way to Buxton. After the second trip arrived back at Middleton Top because of the lateness of the train, all the passengers had to return to Chesterfield to catch the Flying Scotsman back to King's Cross. So ending 142 years of CHPR. The passenger service closed in 1877. Well that's my short tour on British rail tracks.

68012 and 68006 at Middleton Top. Note the stone walls.



However in May 1967 I went behind **51218** on a tour of Trafford Park Estate and Manchester ship canal only 10 miles!. Well, that's it for this month. Stay Safe **Roger**



An interesting photo from Colin Walker's the Steam Railway book; This one shows an alert Stafford Road driver Freddie Griffiths in the cab of 6008 King James 11. Are there any of his relations amongst our members?

I was intrigued by what appears to be a chalked inscription on the cab roof,

84A 12 400.



84A was of course the code for Stafford Road but did 12 stand for twelve coaches weighing 400 tons perhaps and was this a regular practise? Anyone Know?

Newspaper stories

Bournemouth Evening Echo

Mrs Irene Graham delighted the audience with her reminiscences of the German prisoner of war who was sent each week to do her garden. He was repatriated at the end of 1945 she recalled. He always seemed such a nice friendly chap but when the crocuses came up in our lawn in February 1946 they spelt "HEIL HITLER"

Given the general lack of railway news, I did wonder if Newsletter is the right title for our monthly jottings? Perhaps we should rename it. Answers on a postcard.....

That's all for this month folks. We hope you enjoyed the read and my thanks for your encouraging words. If you have a memory, photo or a humorous tale to share, please do get in touch. Until next month, Stay Safe and no hanging about outside!

**I AM SORRY TO ANNOUNCE
THAT MY TRAIN OF THOUGHT
IS CURRENTLY RUNNING
15 MINUTES LATE.**



**I APOLOGISE FOR ANY
INCONVENIENCE THIS MAY
CAUSE.**

