





*Two photos from the Forties Day held on 2 July 2023 (Craig Greenslade)*



*(Front cover) Stanier 4-6-0 No. 44932 comes under North Lane bridge at Marks Tey with the Great Britain XV railtour, 23 April 2023 (Seb Rees)*



## THE CLASS 315 STORY

When it was planned to replace the 91 LNER-designed Class 306 trains, it was decided to build a four car version of the Scottish Region Class 314 units. The 61 units were ordered in 1976, with non-standard thyristor control and 6.25/25kV capability: however, such was the rate of conversion of the GE lines that in 1978 the specification was changed to provide for 25kV operation only. The Class 315 units, formed DMS (Driving Motor Second)-PTS (Pantograph Trailer Second)-TS (Trailer Second)-DMS, were eventually built at Holgate Works in York during 1980/1 and provided 318 seats compared with 168 of the three-car Class 306. However, the latter operated as nine-car trains in the peak (504 seats) whereas the Class 315 units run as eight-car formations (636 seats). Originally 315801-841 had Brush TM61-53 motors with the remaining units having GECG310AZ motors, but these became mixed very early on and were interchangeable. The first units arrived at Ilford in early July 1980, entering service in late 1980, and were in the standard British Rail blue and grey livery.

Initial driver training saw them reach Colchester and Southend, but once in service numerous complaints were received when used on Southend services due to the lack of toilets, which saw them mainly restricted to inner suburban workings between Liverpool Street and Shenfield, with some early morning and rush hour workings extended to and from Southend.

Whilst they have always been regarded as Great Eastern units, two units were loaned to the London Midland Region for driver training prior to the introduction of the 'Bed Pan' electrics: in fact, it was a Class 315 unit which unexpectedly inaugurated

*315812 at Ilford Car Sheds in 1989 after repaint into Network SouthEast livery*  
(Pete Martin)





electric passenger services, when it was pressed into traffic between Bedford and Luton on 16<sup>th</sup> September 1981 to cover for a failed diesel train.

With the West Anglia lines conversion to 25kV, the Class 315 units extended their sphere of operation to work the Chingford and Enfield services from January 1984.

On 10 June 1986 Network SouthEast was created covering all services previously in the London and SouthEast sector with a bright new red, white and blue livery for the trains: eventually all the Class 315 units received this livery. 315844-861 received West Anglia line stickers, with 315801-843 receiving Great Eastern line stickers: however, units could be found working on either route.

In 1991 a new branch off the West Anglia Main Line was opened to serve Stansted Airport and a service was introduced from Stratford, utilising Class 315 units.

On 21 October 1992 315844 suffered underframe damage at Silver Street when a terrorist incendiary bomb exploded beneath the train while it was working the 1622 Cheshunt to Liverpool Street.

On privatisation from 25 September 1994 315844-861 were transferred to West Anglia Great Northern (WAGN) at Hornsey, these units covering the fourteen diagrams from Liverpool Street to Enfield Town, Chingford and Cheshunt, with peak hour extensions to Bishops Stortford and Hertford East. The First Great Eastern (FGE units) continued to work the Romford to Upminster branch and the 'all stations' to Shenfield service. One train an hour was extended to call at all stations to Southminster. Their use on a limited number of early morning and peak hour extensions to Southend continued.

*315842 at Southend Victoria on 6 March 2004 in First Great Eastern livery  
(Alastair Holmes)*







Various alterations took place to the units over the years. The single leaf doors adjacent to the driving cabs were taken out of public use, with the door controls blanked off. During 2000 a modification was made to reduce the opening of the coach hopper windows to stop vandals throwing seat cushions out of trains. Also early in 2000 315827 was fitted with wheel/rail scrubbing equipment on the leading bogies of both ends and that the unit was intended for operation on the Romford to Upminster service. A further modification in 2002 saw the fleet fitted with power sanders to reduce wheel slip on greasy rails. 2004 saw all units fitted with OTMR equipment. At various times, other modifications have included fitting CSR (Cab Secure Radio), later replaced by GSM-R (Global System for Mobile Communications - Railway), TPWS (Train Protection Warning System) and an automatic air/water separator system.

In March 1997, the first unit to appear in the new GER livery was 315809, which was repainted by Adtranz at Ilford. It incorporated traditional GER blue and First Bus mid-green applied to a mid-grey background. The rest of the fleet of 43 units were dealt with in due course, and by September 1999 the final Class 315, No. 315843, was completed. On the WAGN side, from 2001 some units received a new purple livery similar to that then used by c2c: amongst the first to do so were 315859/60. However, some units appeared in an all white livery which did not wear well and soon looked very scruffy. A trial refurbishment by First Great Eastern (FGE) saw 315804 in a predominantly purple livery with little change to the interior. Exterior changes were limited, and included revised light clusters, new high intensity headlights, a new vigilance system and air cooling in the cabs, an upgraded wheel slip protection system, new windows and new electric door gear. It was first out on test on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2003. Subsequently FGE confirmed that the planned Class 315 refurbishment programme that would have included a revised seat layout and a new ventilation system, had been put on hold because of the uncertainty of the future of the franchise. Only a few units (804, 806, 809 and 812) were therefore face lifted at this time.

As part of a new awareness to reduce crime on the railways, WAGN 315858 had bright eye-catching vinyls applied to its bodysides in early 2004; some time later it was repainted into WAGN purple.

With refranchising, all services from Liverpool Street came to be operated by 'one', part of the National Express group. The first unit to be outshopped in their new metallic blue/grey livery with Great Eastern branding was 315809 in March 2004.

In late 2004 Bombardier Derby won a £64m contract from HSBC to refurbish 61 Class 315s for 'one': this was the first overhaul since construction in 1980-1, and the work included corrosion repairs, the fitting of passenger information systems and the removal of two seating bays and their replacement by tip up seats to create a dedicated wheelchair space. Under the terms of the franchise, this work was to be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006, although it was not finally completed until 2008. 315813 newly returned from Derby Litchurch Lane in 'one' livery was in traffic on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2005: this was the first unit to be completed. CCTV was also fitted. The Class 315s then received new Vapor Stone electrical door gear. To be RAVR compliant the door control buttons were replaced with those of yellow surround including Braille and lowered. The timber floors were renewed and covered in an anti-slip rubber. The powder-coated aluminium side kick-panels were replaced. Many of the laminate panels were renewed and others resprayed. The 'one' pink was applied to the part of the doorway and seat back panelling.

As 'one' wanted all maintenance done 'in house', all the 315s were concentrated at Ilford from October 2006. During February 2008 the franchise was renamed National Express East Anglia, and soon after the Southminster extension of some services ceased.



*315810 on the rear of a departure from Shenfield to London, 7 October 2005  
(Alastair Holmes)*  
*315825 on a rare working to Braintree due to engineering works  
(Mark House)*







With Abellio winning the franchise under the name Greater Anglia in 2012 the units received a new livery of white with red doors.

Commencing early in 2013 an upgrade programme was started with the fleet being fitted with an automated passenger information system (PIS). This was carried out at Ilford by Bombardier staff.

From 31 May 2015 the Liverpool Street to Shenfield Metro services were transferred to MTR Crossrail, and the West Anglia inner suburban services to Enfield Town, Chingford and Cheshunt via Seven Sisters services - together with the Romford to Upminster service - were transferred to London Overground. 315801-817 were allocated to London Overground, with 315818-861 to MTR Crossrail. The first unit to be reliveried for MTR Crossrail - 315837 - actually appeared on 16 February 2015, in white with blue skirts and doors. London Overground units started to appear in white with a blue skirt and orange doors.

On 6 February 2014 new Class 345s were ordered for the Crossrail services which were to replace the Great Eastern Metro services; on 19 June 2015 Transport for London (TfL) announced that they had ordered 45 four car Aventra units from Bombardier, some of which would be used to replace all the Class 315s working for London Overground - with an anticipated entry date into service of 2018.

On 22 June 2017 the first Class 345 unit was introduced to service on the GE, and soon after the slow inexorable run down of the Class 315 fleet commenced. The very first units to be withdrawn were 315835 and 315840 on 29 November 2017, initially to store. The first unit to actually go for scrap was 315850, which moved on 20 October 2018.

A number of units were kept for a while in warm storage from November 2019. Some former GE units were subsequently used on LOROL West Anglia services to cover for Class 315 and 317 overhauls. 3 March 2020 saw the first Class 710 unit introduced on the West Anglia local services operated by LOROL, which marked the start of the end of the class on West Anglia services. As of early September 2020, just nine units were left with LOROL with seven diagrammed for work each day - six on West Anglia diagrams and one on the Upminster branch. As of 18 September. MTR had just 20 units still in service.

The last day of Class 315 operation on the Romford to Upminster line was 4 October 2020, with 315802 being the unit for the day. From 5 October 2020 ARL had just one pair left in daily service until 20 October 2020 when 315802/7 worked the 1433 Liverpool Street to Chingford, the last Class 315 working on West Anglia.

From 13 December 2020 planned off peak working on TfL services out of Liverpool Street ended. Four of the six daily Class 315 formations stabled overnight at Aldersbrook, with two others from Ilford EMUD. The diagrams are designed so the two that begin their day at Ilford finish at Aldersbrook. Conversely, two of the four Aldersbrook starts finish at Ilford to enable rotation for maintenance. Despite the planned cessation of off peak workings, these continued on an occasional basis. Eight units provided cover for these diagrams.

Pairs were used on Santa Express duties on 2 & 9 December 2021 and on 1 December 2022 when they carried school children from Liverpool Street to Shenfield and back. Further reductions in work saw just six units left in traffic by August 2022.

A Class 315 Commemorative Event was held on 26 November 2022. The occasion was the result of collaboration between MTR Elizabeth Line, Network Rail, the Branch Line Society (which provided the booking arrangements and stewards) and the Class 315 Preservation Society. The 'Event' principally revolved around four Liverpool Street to Shenfield nonstop round trips, there being two during the morning and two in the



afternoon. Participants booked for either morning or afternoon trains (or both!) at an appropriate £31.50 per session. The trains ran as follows, utilising 315847 and 315856:

Morning: Ex Liverpool Street 1Z17 (0907) and 1Z19 (1025) departures  
Return ex Shenfield 1Z18 (0941) and 1Z20 (1113) departures

Afternoon Ex Liverpool Street 1Z21 (1407) and 1Z23 1525 departures  
Return ex Shenfield 1Z22 (1441) and 1Z24 (1613) departures

The last day of 42 year old Class 315 operation was Friday 9 December 2022 when their final duties were the 1734 and 1804 Liverpool Street to Gidea Park services. These were formed by the very last four left in service, 853+857 and 837+856 respectively. On a happier note, it was announced early in December that 315856 had been saved and donated by Eversholt (leasing company) to the Class 315 Preservation Society. A new home has been found at the Llanelli and Mynydd Mawr Railway in South Wales.

315856 was initially be taken by rail from Ilford to the Dean Forest Railway on 23 December 2022, then by road to the Llanelli Railway where it will be restored to its original as built specification by BREL at York. This will include a full repaint and interior refurbishment to original specifications. On 5 January 2023, 37884 hauled 315837 and 315857 as 5Q76 1036 Ilford to Newport Docks, the very last Class 315 movement over Great Eastern metals.

*315850 and 315837 in adjacent platforms at Liverpool Street, 17 September 2017  
(Alastair Holmes)*







*315801 at Hackney Downs in London Overground livery, 14 June 2015  
(Alastair Holmes)*

## STOUR VALLEY STEAM

This magazine is edited by Mark House and Rob Boyce. The closing date for submissions to the next edition is 15 February 2024: submissions are welcome at any time, preferably as early as possible as it saves a lot of last minute chasing! It would be especially good to see updates from departments that have not featured in the magazine for a while - you know who you are! Particularly welcome are photos of current happenings and events at the Museum: whilst we cannot guarantee inclusion in the magazine, all photos and video clips are added to the Museum Photographic Collection, which now numbers in excess of 60,000 images - and still growing.

Please send them in any of the following ways:

- by e-mail to [svs@earm.co.uk](mailto:svs@earm.co.uk)
- by post to the Museum, marked 'Stour Valley Steam'
- by WhatsApp to 07899 841039

# EARLY DAYS AT CHAPPEL

by E W Lawrence

*Continuing Ted Lawrence's recollections of the early days at Chappel*

## **B.L.P.C. LTD/S.V.R.P.S MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

Resulting from a very positive response to the skills/volunteers survey sent out with the July 1970 edition of Stour Valley Steam we were able to form a proper line manager structure of suitably qualified volunteers under the B.L.P.Co. Ltd., Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors consisted of:-

Roger Watson - Chairman & Financial Director (Solicitor)  
Terry Gregson - Estates Director (Chartered Surveyor)  
Ted Lawrence - Engineering Director (Manufacturing Engineer)  
Brian Hockey - Company Secretary (Trust Administrator)

Advisors to the Board:-

Brian Southwell - Accountant (Overseas Accountant for The Marconi Co)  
Robert A. Watson & Sons - Solicitors

Department Managers:-

Signalling Manager - Derek Fox (Had been BR signaller and at that time was working at BR Board Headquarters, Marylebone as assistant to the head of train operations).

Permanent Way - Kim Malyon (Had been BR footplate crew, he was then working as Mechanical Engineer with Whitlock's at Yeldham).

Transport Manager - Phil Wood

Maintenance Manager - Trevor Martin

Loco, Carriage & Wagon - Brian Leighton (BR Main Line Driver)

Security Manager - Mike Stanbury (Essex Constabulary)

Museum Curator - Dennis Swindale (Rep for Marine Paint Company)

Electrical Services - Dick Hymas (Own company of Electrical Contractors)

Estates Manager - David Wood (Own company for building services)

Civil Engineering - Roy Stillwell (Quantity Surveyor)

Robin Smith - Head Gardener (A young man who had left the army resulting from injuries received while on active service in Northern Ireland)

Traffic Manager - Alan Berry (ex British Railways - Mechanical)

Lottery Manager - Wally Banks

Financial Manager - Len Wells (Bank Manager)

Publicity Manager - Tony Butcher (Sales Representative)

Magazine Editor - S.E. (Bunny) Austin

Catering Managers - Mrs Birchall

Bookshop Manager - R. P. (Robbie) Roberts





While this may sound quite an involved structure it meant that the many tasks we were faced with were broken down into manageable tasks that volunteers could tackle. Each manager was able to recruit his own group of helpers. The important point is that it worked as we had in addition quite a number of well qualified volunteers whose skills or qualifications proved a great asset in the early days.

\*\*\* Footnote:- By coincidence the head of train operations who Derek worked with was John Watson. I knew John and his family as the association of our two families went back many years. When John lived in Collier Row he was the Vicar's Warden and a Server at The Ascension Church, where I was a Choirboy until leaving school. Both John and his wife came to visit us at Chappel to see the work we were doing as he was then living near Colchester. Besides working for BR John was also very enthusiastic about railways having started out at the crack of dawn in 1959 to have a last trip over the full length of M&G.N.Rly before it closed. This proved a very useful link into BR for advice.

Derek's father Mr R.W.G Fox had been Station Master at Bures in the early 1950s.

#### **PURCHASE OF TRACK IN CHAPPEL YARD**

Negotiations continued for several months and while these were still proceeding with BR at Derby for the purchase of the track in Chappel Yard, Len Fisher learned of the impending removal of the track for scrap by J. Watling & Sons. Immediately Len phoned Terry advising of the situation. As a result many phone calls were made to BR Supplies Department at Derby and Mr Watling at Wisbech. Through the cooperation of BR and Mr Watling the track was not removed and it was agreed we could acquire it.

Then came the question of price. BR's initial price appeared rather high considering the state of the track in a rather overgrown Chappel Yard with some of it having been dismantled by BR and laying in various parts of the yard and on platform 2. With this in mind Roy Stillwell and myself went hot foot to Chappel armed with a long tape measure and notebook to itemise exactly what track still existed at Chappel (rail, chairs, sleepers and point work) and its condition. Photographs were taken and together with the itemised list were sent to BR at Derby with a suggested revised price. Resulting from further telephone calls with Derby we arrived at the more realistic price of £1,600 to purchase the track. In the meantime an appeal for loans and donations was made to the members who generously responded with sufficient money for the successful purchase of the track thus saving it from the scrap yard.

#### **START OF WORK IN CHAPPEL YARD**

We were then given permission by BR to start work on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> October 1970 in Chappel Yard, which resulted in a large working party of members arriving on site that day. A considerable amount of undergrowth and brambles had to be cleared before track laying could commence. The first task was to sort and move the track in the yard and then commence to re-lay it. This was greatly assisted by Metford Durston who brought along his David Brown tractor that was fitted with a crane. Together with Kim Malyon, Len Fisher, George Hartley and Dennis Walker work commenced.

Chris Hunt and Colin Hill retrieved the signal frame from Chappel Box that was lying in the yard badly damaged and broken. David Wood was kept busy replacing broken glass in the windows of the Goods Shed. All of this activity was recorded for posterity by the camera of Bob Radford. Bob was in charge of plant projects at Marconi Basildon and a staunch supporter of our efforts. *(To be continued)*



*On the day of the first working party (Bob Radford)*

*Chappel Goods Shed prior to occupancy of the site, with part of the canopy cut away.  
It was being used to store potatoes (E W Lawrence)*







## FIFTY YEARS AGO



*On 9 September 1973 the N7 arrived at Chappel, and G D King was on hand to record the event. Above shows the loco under Spring Gardens Road bridge awaiting to be dragged into the yard, whilst below shows Gunby hauling the N7 into the yard passing the electric loco.*





## Machinising in Utrecht (part 5 (or 8))

by Mark Fogg Elliot

After a four year layoff we were finally invited to bring 54 (masquerading as Thomas) and a crew to Het Spoorwegmuseum, the Dutch National Railway Museum in Utrecht. There was a crew change this year as Pete Martin's 70 year old bones are finding 4 days in a row plus a lighting up day hard work, so in his place went Peter Robinson (Head of Intelligence), to accompany seasoned veterans, Michael Sanders (Head of Loco), Rob Varletta (Chief Pallet Basher) and myself (Chief Gatekeeper - as all theirs' disappeared).

And, yet again, it did involve me falling over; this required both Newton and Archimedes conspiring against me. Their points levers have a counterweight which you swing in a circular motion as it orbits an upright lever, and as I was swinging the counterweight I forgot to let go in time and one of the laws of motion happened as I flew through the air with the greatest of ease. I would have got away with it had Rob not been properly vigilant, and attentive to his duties, and no one would have been any wiser...

We arrived mid morning on Wednesday, the day before the event, and 54 was exactly where we didn't want it, so instead of just cleaning the engine and putting a warming fire in it we had to make enough steam to shunt it onto preparation road. This was just as well, as I had three of the best firemen and locomen, and they were making a right hash of getting it going - also there wasn't very much 'Easy Start' for locos, i.e. no wood available, so Het Spoorweg staff turned up with a couple of pallets, and Rob bust them for insertion into the firebox. The hours ticked by and we were still on the pin - this coal took some getting going, deep mine Welsh Steam coal it was not; if we had not properly prepped we would have been embarrassed Thursday morning.

Once we had relocated the engine and left it all nice and pristine, it really was very clean indeed, and extremely presentable, it was time to find the hotel, only a short distance by cycle path, but a considerable adventure when trying to find it by road. Anyway, Michael superbly navigated us to the hotel without a map or using Google - I was certainly lost. Then having had a fine dinner it was time to set up the bicycles (much shorter route) to save us driving round.

I decided to go for a ride so I could ensure I knew the way to the Museum from the hotel, as this hotel was new to us, I checked the bicycle allocated to myself, and set it up, took it for a test drive so I could be sure I could find the Museum the next morning. After about a couple of kilometres I spotted a sign for the Museum, and the level crossing with which I was familiar so I turned round and headed back to the hotel, which took a considerable while longer than it should have done because I couldn't find it, I had managed to lose a very large hotel...

Thursday morning was very busy, as the Dutch really celebrate Ascension Day, and the actor Machinist and de Dikke Controleur (whoever he is, I'm not very good at Dutch despite a few visits) would have been wondering where Thomas had got to. However, having learned from Wednesday, Peter and Michael set off extra early to the Museum from our wonderful hotel to light up, and by the time Rob and myself followed a couple hours later having ballasted ourselves with breakfast we took over the prep whilst Peter and Michael went back to the hotel to have their well deserved breakfast.



*54 at Utrecht (Michael Sanders)*

The operation of the loco was brilliantly undertaken, and to a very high standard by each of Rob, Peter and Michael, while I went off in search of water, because the weather was somewhere between reasonably warm and quite hot, and acting as gatekeeper. Thomas also looked immaculate, and had been thoroughly cleaned.

There are various charities associated with the museum and from 9:00 Friday morning the museum played host to several disadvantaged children, so Michael and Rob went off extra early to light up. Luckily by this stage we had got the hang of working with this coal so we were now steaming quite well.

I was on early start with Rob on Sunday, our final morning as, on arrival at the museum, we were not going to be able to get our engine on to our preparation road as there had been a shunt the previous evening and a train was left abandoned on a piece of railway we needed to use. So we woke up Head of Intelligence, and Diplomacy, and left him to sort this out as my Dutch isn't very good. This he had obviously been done brilliantly as by the time Rob and I returned after a magnificent breakfast there was a pile of ash on prep road and the loco on the display stage. I was delighted with this as I had panicked myself silly when I arrived at the museum.

Nothing much funny happened on the bicycles this time as Michael didn't break a pedal, and I wasn't told off in Dutch for cycling along a lane only to be used by car drivers. However I did manage to break a bicycle seat, so got my bike changed, luckily, for a faster one.





We were all very sad to leave the site having got 54 loaded back on to the low loader trailer ready for transit back to the UK. I would particularly like to thank my joint Heads of Navigation for helping me find our way to the museum and then back to the boat.

Coming off the boat Monday morning was a nerve shredding operation as we managed to completely lose Peter, and he was crucially key to the entire success of this venture.

So many thanks to all involved in this epic adventure, Het Spoorwegmuseum staff for their kindness and hospitality, EARM staff for enabling the readiness and preparedness of 54, and I hope the machine enjoys its next holiday at the Mid Hants.

Already I am looking forward to next year's adventure.

Now to return to work for a rest...

## MEMORIES/REMINISCENCES WANTED!

### A new display needs your help

A new display will be opening at the end of the year, early next year, about memories relating to railways and we want your help.

We are looking for memories or reminisces relating to railways. A paragraph or two would be great. If you have a photograph that relates even better.

For example it could be about commuting, a favourite trip or a member of your family that worked on the railway.

If you don't want your name included with the memory, please do let me know otherwise it will be included by default as first initial followed by surname i.e. J. Collison. You are welcome to submit more than one memory if you wish to.

My Mother's memories were to always take a second pair of white gloves as they could get dirty on the train, and to watch where you sat as nylons could melt with steam heating.

Please can memories be email to me [Jaki.Collison@earm.co.uk](mailto:Jaki.Collison@earm.co.uk) or sent to the VRC for my attention please. Thank you

## VOLUNTEERING NEWS

### by Mike Bradley

Following the Volunteer Recruitment Day on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2023, we have had many new volunteers join with interest from others to join later.

Almost every day I receive enquiries for volunteering at the museum, which means we are doing something right. If you now have a friend or family member interested in volunteering at the museum, then ask them to contact me at [volunteering@earm.co.uk](mailto:volunteering@earm.co.uk)



## OPERATIONS NEWS

by Jack Plumb

The first for me wearing a new hat, although you may recall my previous articles under the banner of “Semaphore News”, having previously run the S&T Department for a little over 5 years. Having picked up the Operating Department role from Isaac Ferneyhough at the start of the year; it’s been a steep learning curve bringing myself up to the world of Rosters, Traffic Notices and an Office of Rail and Road (ORR) Inspection to top things off in May! Personally, this was a very positive experience with ORR sharing their expectations/views/learning points on Heritage Railway Industry as a whole as well as specific items for us in our operation. Recent changes such as a revised Competency Management System, medicals and a move to electronic competency files all being seen as positive steps by them.

It’s also been very pleasing to see a number of new faces join and others qualify in new operational roles ably supported by our professional team running the railway which is reflected in the positive views of our visitors. Finally a big thank you to the team of assessors we have who have assisted in catching up with any overdue assessments as well as working in the three yearly assessment spike we will have for a period of time following the resumption is operations after the first Covid-19 lockdown(s). All of these contributions lead to increasing strength/flexibility within the museum and our ability to sustainably deliver running days/events going forwards.

As ever, we’re always looking for new members to join operating positions or for existing staff to qualify into new positions are welcome.

*Buckeye familiarisation course on 15 April 2023, with Peter Robinson instructing Angel Vaughan, Adam Pepper, Aimee Archer, James Lloyd and Brad Wright (Jack Plumb)*





## Team Wednesday report Summer 2023

by Tony Foster

The size of the TW volunteer group is increasing again with the arrival of some new members, which is heartening.

The team continues to repair and renew items around the museum site. Starting with the tube wagon, the team replaced the floor with a little help from Allan R. The repainted seats were put back in and the floor and interior of the wagon also received attention from the paint brush while others had made a great job of repainting the exterior.

The palisade gates at the front entrance of the VRC are back in position refurbished and repainted.

One of the most visible items of the museum site is the running in board on platform two. It has been restored again this time by a group consisting of Norman Tenner, Phil Leggat, Ian Harper and TW stalwart Keith Tomlinson. A different method of jointing the planks that make up the backing board has been tried so that hopefully there will be much less water ingress. Also, to create further durability, exterior grade white plastic has been used for the lettering.

Moving on to new work: the team have removed a lot of overgrown foliage from the side of the rear entrance road leading from Spring Gardens. Also on this theme, a 20-metre length of boundary hedge has also been drastically cut back on the north side, where the play bus will be moved to in order to make room for the removal of other items currently sitting at platform 5. On the subject of the play bus the team has cleaned the whole vehicle. The north facing side has been repainted in its familiar red colour and the remaining areas of the bus will be painted shortly once the prep has been completed.

Other work going on at platform 5; prior to their move to the exhibition shed the LTS half coach and the North London brake van have had their roofs pressure washed before they are repainted. Mick Judd has started reskinning the plywood panels of the LTS coach. This vehicle has suffered greatly from its exposure to the elements and will need a fair amount of work to improve its appearance, although the interior will probably only need a refresh.

In the children's playground, 'Eric' the engine has seen some mid term remedial work to keep it looking presentable and safe. The children's green painted activity centre has had the algae and dirt washed off.

At Allan R's request TW have made and installed a basic sink unit at the south end of the goods shed for use in washing glassware etc during festival events. The unit is plumbed in, we even managed an egress for the waste water without having to create any further holes in building.

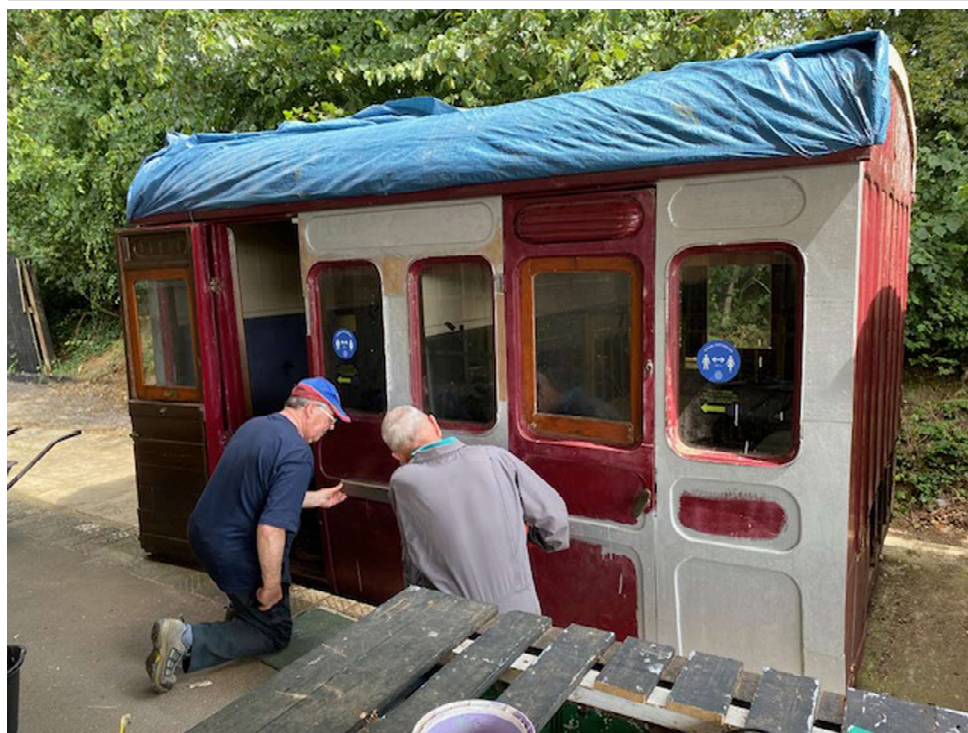
Gordon H on one occasion used the crane on the lorry to extract a telegraph pole/ lighting column from the front car park and remove same to the set down area.

Other work projects, Rod Terry has continued with his task of wiring up the running shed. He has also wired up the 'Victorian' lamp posts that line the footpath to the model railway centre.

A ten-foot square container in the set down area has been made useable for the storage of equipment and materials.

Finally, work has started on refurbishing the railings leading up from the level crossing keepers hut on to platform 2.





*Team Wednesday working on the LTS half coach (Tony Foster)*

## **MINIRAIL UPDATE**

**by Robert West**

Whilst outwardly not much appears to have changed in recent months, there have been several developments behind the scenes. All the 4-seater coaches built by CMD, which were supplied with brake gear fitted to one bogie as standard, have now been retro-fitted with vacuum equipment on the unbraked wheelsets. This offers greater braking power when trains are descending the steep incline behind the Thompson Centre. A few new faces are beginning to appear as station staff and loco drivers, as more hands are being trained to operate the miniature railway. This is particularly the case during the summer holidays, where the minirail has run alongside the larger trains each Wednesday and weekend, (staff and weather permitting).

The railway was first opened during 2020, during the pandemic, so initially our station waiting room was not used due to being an enclosed space. However, it is now opened as the norm whenever the trains are running, giving customers somewhere cosy to sit and watch the trains while waiting for their turn, and allowing minirail staff to direct queues in an orderly fashion, with separate entry and exit points to avoid bottlenecks. One of the educational pieces from the Heritage Centre has also been placed in the waiting area, giving youngsters something interesting to play with. There are plans to add some displays along the walls, such as replica period railway posters, or details of the minirail itself, including its history and future prospects.



Our steam loco, Frederick, remains the usual choice for event days, being the only one able to haul two- or three-coach trains to satisfy high demand. However, on quieter events, such as summer Wednesdays, our electric loco Ricardo Lampwick makes a better option. Even though our current incline limits him to only one coach for passenger rides, this is usually enough when numbers are small and steady. There are times when train and staff are left standing in the station for a short spell waiting for customers. A steam loco like Frederick is always using precious fuel, even when standing idle; so Ricardo has the advantage, as he can be simply switched off until the next ride begins.

There will be some more noticeable changes to be seen in the near future. Running-in of our multi-purpose coach, which can convey a wheelchair, is to be performed with Frederick; initially as a standard 4-seater, then trialled as a wheelchair carrier, before an official launch into regular service can be announced. The minirail depot, formed of a 40-foot intermodal container, is now planned to be slewed by a few feet from its current position. This will permit the passenger line to be redirected onto a straight course, eliminating the severe S-bend at the foot of the steep gradient, which will be a great help to both descending and ascending trains.

More volunteers to assist in the operation of the Minirail are always welcomed: as well as drivers, we need station and platform staff to assist in the operation. If you are interested, please contact either Jack Plumb or myself.

*Frederick in steam on the MiniRail, with Rob West driving and Freddie Southall*





## MODEL RAILWAY CLUB NEWS

by Gordon Humphris

It's been a good few months since the Club last reported the goings on in the Thompson Building.

We have enjoyed Easter DOWT and the Transport Extravaganza with very good numbers coming through our doors. We have been working on several new and existing projects with the doors also opening on a Wednesday during Museum Steam and Diesel days. On the project front, a small team finished and delivered a diorama of Kelvedon light railway to the Kelvedon Museum, essentially a repair, restoration and animation of an existing layout in need of a lot of TLC and upgrading! So if you visit the Museum in Kelvedon be sure to seek it out. Work has finally got underway with the outdoor garden railway which will be situated between the Playground and the Thompson Building. The retaining wall on the road end has been installed ready for work to commence on the trackbed infrastructure. No time frame at the moment but progress, weather dependent, should be showing soon. Completion of a new control board and wiring system on the 0 Gauge layout "Chappel High Road" will see that back open again to public viewing on the August DOWT event. There will be plenty of interest for the public with new layouts being built and existing layouts constantly being worked on and added to. More of Thomas's Friends have arrived in time for the August Bank Holiday event. Generous recent donations have enabled the membership to press on with new projects and also means that we have a good selection of second hand and well loved locomotives, rolling stock and accessories for sale at bargain prices to help with all manner of activities. We have also recently been treated to a visit by TV Model Railway personality Kathy Millatt of Channel 4s "Model Railway Challenge!" She was very impressed with the Clubs layouts and facilities. As always members are always most welcome to pop in when the Club is open, normally on a Monday Evening, Tuesdays and Thursdays during the day.



*(Left) Kathy Millatt looking at Branstead Quay*



*(Right) The completed wall for the garden railway*



## ENGINEERING UPDATE

by Allan Robinson

Lamport :- The water saddle tank has been turned over to give access to the underside for repairs to be carried out rust holes have been welded up, 4 access holes have been added to the base so that the large amount of rust & scale can be removed, whilst we are at it water take off valves have been added for boiler washing out. The smoke-box has been repaired and modified to accept a new door: once these jobs have been completed the smoke-box and tank will be fitted to the chassis. Work is progressing on the boiler with the mud-hole door holes cut out and doors fitted: the wasted area on the bottom of the barrel has been restored with welding. A small patch is being welded in and once this has been completed the boiler will be NDT after which a start can be made on the fitting of the inner fire-box.

BR brake van :- the wooden body has now been fitted to the chassis and work is progressing on the woodwork. The new vacuum brake system has been tested and has been deemed to work.

N7 :- the roof has been reunited with the cab.

Exhibition hall :- The entrance and exit platforms have been completed.

Simplex :- The springs and axle-box adjusters have been removed and repaired as required.

WD :- the loco is looking superb in its new coat of paint, as seen below





## PLIM BLOCO

by Pete Martin

10 years ago, I retired after nearly 40 years on the railway, and when one looks back in comparison to today many things have changed. Sadly, it could be said that it's not all for the best and must admit that I was glad I went when I did. However, in the days of my tenure on BR and subsequently into privatisation, there were many things that weren't quite right even then, where the more recently quoted buzz phrase of 'lessons to be learned' was yet to be coined.

With work continuing on a multiplicity of fronts currently which others will reveal more elsewhere, one of the more recent jobs has been the transformation of our Mk 2 coach. Bought some years ago as mentioned in the last prestigious edition of this publication, the recent cosmetic transformation from a sows ear to a silk purse by Robbie our resident artiste, presents a breath of fresh air which will astound many on its emergence. There has been much debate over the years regarding the future of this vehicle, where others have put the gas axe through them in preservation.

As a vehicle, the Mk 2 coach - of which there were many allocated to the Liverpool Street main line, didn't last as long as the Mk1 vehicles they replaced and not many feature in the preservation scene - unlike the easier to repair Mk1's which form the backbone of numerous heritage railways. There are companies now producing body panels and fittings for them like the classic car enthusiasts, where you can buy new body parts for your vintage Mini, Morris Minor, or Land Rover.

Over 1800 vehicles of this type were constructed at various BR workshops over a number of years, and came in various different configurations and variations ranging from Mk2a to e,f &g. Ours is a Mk2b. Being designed by various committees and consultancies, they were not without their problems that befell many BR related projects, like the APT - and we all know what happened to that. The only real successful longevity were some of the later DMU classes, the lately withdrawn ridiculed Pacers and the seemingly everlasting HST sets - some of which still ply the GW and in Scotland - but even then, they weren't without their problems in the early days.

Whilst 5455, may never run in anger again, it will look pretty - at least for a few years to augment the buffet coach. However whilst the interior has been the recipient of attention to much of the worn out seating material, there is still a way to go, and would welcome input to enhance it further. For details, please contact Martin Gibbins or Phil Ainsley who have been chommering away on the internals.

Continuing on, our 'Queen Mary' BR brake van has provided some entertainment recently with the re-uniting of the body to the chassis. A couple of years ago, it was necessary to fit it with a vacuum brake cylinder as it was never what they called a 'fitted vehicle'. As mentioned in the last mag, the installation of the cylinder and attachments was not without its problems, where several cubic feet of reinforced MoD grade concrete needed to be removed to gain access! As the body was in need of some repair (and that's the understatement of the year!), it was chosen to remove it as a complete item, which was fairly easy as there wasn't a lot left!

Over the ensuing months, there was much measuring, drawing, re-measuring, and measuring again, and then Kev set to on rebuilding the body, sub frame assemblies and main build rails, but sadly, due to family issues he left our employ, and never saw



the fruits of his labours until a recent visit. Suffice to say, when we came to refit it a few weeks ago, the chassis and steelwork had suffered from 60 odd years of BR use, and whilst the reconstituted body is square, the chassis isn't, so there's a bit of 'artists license' to get it to fit, as can be seen in Peter Robinson's photo below.



And so it continues.....

On the diesel front. The WD loco is in the final stages of a cosmetic make over to its original MoD livery. It's Gardner engine has yet to have an oil change, and various other bits tweaked, but should appear resplendent soon. It will replace the 04 which is in need of a similar make over, as it has been the mainstay of much shunting and general operation, and it is in need of a rest.

Which brings me back to the opening statement on my retirement, where I used to go back to work for a rest, and it is highlighted by many that once you retire, one wonders how you had enough time to go to work! Yeah - think they're right!

Finally, to use the old saying, many hands make light work - and we are always on the lookout for additional volunteers to work on our rolling stock. This doesn't have to be at weekends - there are some of us beaver away at Chappel virtually every day! If you are interested in learning more, why not drop a line to Mike Bradley the Volunteer Co-ordinator or have a chat with Allan Robinson or me on site.





## LOCOMOTIVE UPDATE

by Michael Sanders

I'll start with the steam locomotives. Firstly, **Jubilee** started the year as the main locomotive and undertook all the early steam days and Day Out With Thomas. Performing admirably in that time requiring very little in terms of tinkering. Secondly **54** was also available for some of the early steam days and of course acting as Thomas for DOWT. It was then prepared to go on holiday to Utrecht and I must say performed extremely well - please see Foggy's article in this edition of SVS. On coming back to England it was straight off to the Mid Hants Railway as their Thomas replica is currently out for its 10 year overhaul. This was the first time in a long time to 54 clocked up some serious mileage - performing without fault operating over 50 miles a day for nine consecutive days with myself, Peter Martin and Josh Fortescue going out with it to act as owners' reps. So, a thank you to the staff and volunteers at the Mid Hants for their hospitality and gentle handling of 54 - it's always a positive to build good relationships between other Heritage railways - we are all in the same situation after all most of the time.



*54 as Thomas arriving at Ropley on the Mid Hants Railway (Michael Sanders)*

That brings me on to **No. 11**, which has since passed its annual boiler exam, undertaken all the summer steam days to date, again working extremely well in the process.



On the diesel front, Class 04 **D2279** has undertaken the vast majority of the diesel turns and certainly could do with some minor jobs and maintenance being undertaken - which should be possible on the completion of works currently being undertaken on the WD which is starting to look rather splendid. Well done to those leading that restoration.

**Railbus E79963** has operated a few days but the condition of its tyres has limited its use and we are working on ways to extend its use going forward.

The **DMU** has some outstanding issues that DUPA are looking to resolve.

#### **N7 update**

Work continues in Liverpool on the boiler with now the new outer firebox all built up, with just the throat plate requiring riveting to the side sheets and boiler barrel. At the time of writing all the stay holes have been drilled on the outer box and the tube plate and back plate of the copper inner box are having the radius formed to allow them to be fitted to the already rolled side sheets and crown all rolled from one piece of copper. The plan over the coming weeks is to form up the new inner box marked out and drilled and then riveted along with the riveting required on the outer box to allow the inner box to be fitted in the outer firebox along with the foundation ring for the staying process to start so it really is getting to quite an advanced stage now but we can only continue this process if we keep receiving donations!

The frames are currently awaiting the new valve heads and rings which is being done by JM engineering which should be with us soon to enable reassembly of the valve gear.

*The new outer firebox attached to the boiler barrel, throat plate in the process of being prepared for riveting*





## TRACKWORK AND EXHIBITION HALL UPDATE

by Peter Robinson

With the traditional Chappel Just-In-Time™ approach, the planned track work of the Winter and Spring was completed with the Picnic Siding being reinstated a week before the pre-Thomas shunt [see previous SVS article]. I'd like to pass on my thanks to all those who contributed to make the proposed changes a reality as the amount of volunteer hours that were put in was fantastic to see and I hope those who took part can be satisfied with a job well done.

Fettling work on this part of the yard project continued through the Spring, with overhauled hand point levers being added and some general tidying up. Alongside this, the required routine track maintenance was carried out, with gauging, fishplate oiling and inspecting completed under the direction of Josh Fortescue to ensure we were fit to begin our busy operating calendar.

Meanwhile, after the sudden construction of the main structure of the Exhibition Hall across the Winter of 2021-22, numerous other jobs were still outstanding, and this year has seen the construction of the shed doors, the planting of the embankment tree screen and creation of entry and egress platforms amongst many other activities. Design work is also now well underway for the exhibition area in the annex lead by Adam and Jaki with various items being prepared for display. Quotes are currently being sought for construction of the elevated walkway and for the other required services.







As we moved into the summer, and what proved to be a warm June, the chance to do some track work in the shade was grasped with the construction of 150ft of bullhead display track inside the Exhibition Hall. Utilising a quantity of lower grade materials and some precision lorry driving from Jack Plumb, the road was completed in short order.

The work doesn't end here, the plan for the remainder of 2023 aims to install a track connection to the Exhibition Hall, ready for winter, when the next stage of the yard renewal will be undertaken, with the relocation of the currently buried splitter junction and final surface refresh of the infilled area. So why not come and join in? There is plenty going on at the best value gym in the South East - stay tuned to the various channels for news on working parties in due course!

## CURATOR'S UPDATE AUGUST 2023

by Adam Culling

As many of our members are probably aware, the Museum's B.D.J. Walsh Railway Heritage Interpretation Centre will be closing its doors at the end of the summer. In preparation for the buildings dismantling in early 2024, many of the objects will be relocated to locations across the EARM site, while other will be temporarily placed in the archive store. While some may be sad to see the Heritage Centre close, it offers an exciting opportunity to build a new small displays building, purposely designed to showcase the unique collection in a safe, fun, and informative way.

While it may be sometime before the new Heritage Centre is built, I am pleased to say the 'Marks Tey' and 'Chappel' rooms in the Thompson Centre will be used as a temporary display area. Some of the objects currently on display will be relocated here, while many new objects will be displayed for the first time. A new 'Memory Wall' is being created by Jaki Collison, which I have no doubt many of the members will have stories to contribute. Some remedial work is required to make these 2 rooms ready for



*(Left) Searchlight signal donated by the Frinton & Walton Heritage Trust*

*(Right) Our new research project will explore the lives of local railway workers such as Station Master Lufkin, Bures (1915-23)*





displaying the collection, however I hope that this temporary Heritage Centre will be open to the public by the end of the year.

New acquisitions continue to arrive at the museum, including a Stratford Works appointment board from the Midlands Railway Trust, recording the Locomotive & Carriage works managers length of service from 1883 to 1959. A Searchlight signal was donated by the Frinton & Walton Heritage Trust, as well as several smaller items from individual donors.

This summer we also welcome a new volunteer to the curatorial team. Dr Jane Pearson will be taking the lead on a new research project that explore the lives of railway workers on rural lines in East Anglia. In time we hope to tell the story of these railway workers through the EARM site, and where possible, link the stories to objects in the collection.

## MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

by Linda Robinson and Darren Johnson

### Direct Debit payments for Membership

We would like to advise all members who have previously paid for their membership via Direct Debit, that due to Lloyds bank withdrawing this service at the start of 2023, we are now unable to take payments this way.

All members will be converted to manual payments, which we have already done for the April and July renewal runs. We are sorry for any inconvenience and hope you will all continue to support the Museum and renew either via online card payment, or in the VRC with cash, card or cheque, thank you to those who have already done so. If you have any Membership queries, please contact us via [membership@earm.co.uk](mailto:membership@earm.co.uk)

Secondly, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome all the new members who have recently joined the Museum: we hope that you will have a long and happy membership and welcome your support. Without it the Museum would not be the thriving organisation that it is today.

Sadly, we must record the passing of a number of members and supporters of the Museum.

Last year **Charlie Middleton** passed away at the age of 91. He joined the LNER on 10 April 1945 at the age of 14 as a junior messenger, and worked on the railway until 1972 - apart from a break for national service - as a fireman and then driver. In 1972 finding the electric trains boring to drive, he left and became a NSPCC inspector and social worker. It was his recollections of his time on the railway that formed the book *Stratford: A Locoman Remembers* which the Museum had the privilege of publishing. The book is, however, out of print.

**Roger Milne** passed away at home on 27 June 2023, aged 78. Roger was the husband of Rosemary Milne, a former employee in the Visitor Reception Centre. He will be sadly missed by her and all his relatives and friends, to all of whom we send our condolences.

Former Team Wednesday (TW) member **Chris Johnson** passed away on 28 June 2023 aged 80 after a four-year battle with cancer. He will be best remembered at Chappel for a batch of dummy rifles he fashioned at home for the first of the Museum's Dad's Army-themed events, knowledge of which came from his having been a keen marksman of many years and an active member of a shooting club in Harold Wood. Chris



was raised and educated in the Romford area. On leaving school he completed an apprenticeship at Ford Motor Co. at Dagenham, then moved into the wider automotive industry specialising in plastics (described to his family as ‘working with black sticky stuff’) and progressing into management and then consultancy. Retirement brought him to Chappel where his mechanical engineering skills were put to much wider use during his decade or so with TW, including the complete refurbishment of a pump trolley virtually single-handed (see photo to the right) as well as involvement in numerous other projects. He leaves an extended family of two daughters from a later-dissolved marriage, and his partner of the last 33 years, Philippa, who also has two daughters. Our condolences go to them all.



**Ian Bates** passed away in July 2023. Another former Team Wednesday member, Ian was also a proficient match stick model maker and frequently exhibited his models at events at the Museum, where he was always delighted to explain the intricacies of how to make the amazing models. Ian leaves a son, Andrew, to whom we offer our condolences.

*Ian Bates in 2016 displaying one of his amazing matchstick models  
(Philip Ainsley)*







## ANNUAL TRANSPORT EXTRAVAGANZA AND MINI GALA ROUND UP

by James Cornell

The Annual Transport Extravaganza has been running for many years now and the concept has pretty much been the same since I first took over the event in 2014. Knowing that repeat visitors and exhibitors might get a little tired of the same concept, I wanted to enhance the event for 2023, but without spending lots of money hiring in attractions. This is when the proposal came about to merge the Transport Extravaganza with the Annual Steam Gala. However, it was later found that 54 would be on hire and therefore unavailable for the event and meant we could not really hold a home fleet steam gala with only two steam locos. Following this, the steam gala was quickly changed to a mini mixed traction gala. Gala events offer a good boost to operating crews and allow for increased training opportunities.

The event turned out to be a huge success with every external factor such as the weather working in our favour. The final visitor count over the two days was just over 1000 which is a new attendance record for this event. We have to go back to 2017 for the previous record of around 700 over two days. I believe the merger with the gala contributed to this total as we had the people who normally come to the Transport Extravaganza, plus the people who would come to a gala join together. Exhibitor numbers were also up despite a number of different events going on elsewhere. Our friends from the AJN 825 preservation group extended their loyalty with their offering of free vintage bus rides. We were also joined by the Blackwater Preservation Group who

*Fantastically restored H C Chambers & Sons Leyland Olympian Alexander RL, dating from 1989, now owned by Adam Carter (Nathan Bentley)*





joined forces with AJN to offer a three bus hourly service to cope with the increased visitor numbers. As always, the bus rides were a top attraction with many supportive comments. We had a nice return from the pub and the Annual Raffle with over 200 tickets sold. On the Sunday evening P2 Cafe facilitated a BBQ for members with the aim of reviving the annual members BBQ social. We had a nice turnout and some delicious food! I would like to say a massive thank you to everyone who had an involvement with the event, both in the preparation and on the days.



*One of the many cars on display in the Events Field (Nathan Bentley)*

#### **Call For 2024 Event Ideas - By James Cornell (Event HOD)**

It is now the time of year when attentions get focused on planning the 2024 events. Although the Events Team have a pool of ideas, we would like to extend this to members who might have further ideas that they would like to see become reality. We hope that encouraging ideas from members will boost volunteer morale and motivation. If you have an idea for an event or an event add-on then please email me using the events email listed under the HOD's at the rear of the magazine. Remember that the museum is a charity and that we do not have a bottomless events budget, so sensible ideas please.

## **WAGON DEPARTURE**

10 ton Tank Wagon No. 5474 was built by Hurst Nelson at Motherwell in 1944. It was restored in grey BP (British Petroleum) livery with decals supplied by Railcar Services Ltd, and was donated to the Museum by BP - arriving at Chappel in late 1984. *(If anyone has a more precise date please let us know)*. It departed to the Mid Suffolk Light Railway at Brockford on 8 June 2023, where it will be used as a reservoir for boiler washouts.



*All loaded ready for departure to its new home at the Mid Suffolk Light Railway on 8 June 2023 (Pete Martin)*



*Those who have been members for a while will recall when the Museum had a number of active branches supporting the Museum and holding regular meetings.*

*One of the most active was the South West Essex branch, and on 11 July 2023 there was a reunion of some of the members, namely Geoff Hutton, Brian Snelling, Dave Gibson and Colin Gilderson who are seen here at Cressing station.*



## OFFICERS OF THE MUSEUM

### Trustees:

Pete Martin (chairman & trustee) - [peter.martin@earm.co.uk](mailto:peter.martin@earm.co.uk)  
Mark Cornell (Commercial and Retail) - [mark.cornell@earm.co.uk](mailto:mark.cornell@earm.co.uk)  
Peter Robinson (Health and Safety) - [peter.robinson@earm.co.uk](mailto:peter.robinson@earm.co.uk)  
Mark Fogg-Elliott (Treasurer & trustee) - [finance@earm.co.uk](mailto:finance@earm.co.uk)  
Mike Stanbury - [mike.stanbury@earm.co.uk](mailto:mike.stanbury@earm.co.uk)  
Mike Bradley (secretary) - [mike.bradley@earm.co.uk](mailto:mike.bradley@earm.co.uk)

### Heads of Department:

Operations/Traffic - Jack Plumb - [operations@earm.co.uk](mailto:operations@earm.co.uk)  
Permanent Way - Josh Fortescue - [josh.fortescue@earm.co.uk](mailto:josh.fortescue@earm.co.uk)  
Signalling - James Lloyd - [james.lloyd@earm.co.uk](mailto:james.lloyd@earm.co.uk)  
Engineering - Allan Robinson - [allan.robinson@earm.co.uk](mailto:allan.robinson@earm.co.uk)  
Carriage and Wagon - Brendan Sothcott - [brendan.sothcott@earm.co.uk](mailto:brendan.sothcott@earm.co.uk)  
Locomotives - Michael Sanders - [locomotives@earm.co.uk](mailto:locomotives@earm.co.uk)  
Team Wednesday - Tony Foster / Gordon Humphris - [tony.foster@earm.co.uk](mailto:tony.foster@earm.co.uk)  
Mini-Rail - Rob West - [robert.west@earm.co.uk](mailto:robert.west@earm.co.uk)  
Estates and Plant - Tim Rice - [tim.rice@earm.co.uk](mailto:tim.rice@earm.co.uk)  
Security - Nigel Hull - [nigel.hull@earm.co.uk](mailto:nigel.hull@earm.co.uk)  
Telecoms - Brian McGennity - [brian.mcgennity@earm.co.uk](mailto:brian.mcgennity@earm.co.uk)  
IT - *position vacant*  
Model Railway Liaison - Gordon Humphris - [bhmrc@earm.co.uk](mailto:bhmrc@earm.co.uk)  
Education/Schools - Phil Ainsley - [schools@earm.co.uk](mailto:schools@earm.co.uk) / [phil.ainsley@earm.co.uk](mailto:phil.ainsley@earm.co.uk)  
Marketing/Membership - Darren Johnson - [marketing@earm.co.uk](mailto:marketing@earm.co.uk) / [membership@earm.co.uk](mailto:membership@earm.co.uk)  
Curatorial - Jaki Collison - [jaki.collison@earm.co.uk](mailto:jaki.collison@earm.co.uk)  
Volunteering - Mike Bradley - [volunteering@earm.co.uk](mailto:volunteering@earm.co.uk) / [mike.bradley@earm.co.uk](mailto:mike.bradley@earm.co.uk)  
Events - James Cornell - [events@earm.co.uk](mailto:events@earm.co.uk)



*On Jubilee's  
footplate:  
fireman Aimee  
Archer, driver  
Rob Varletta and  
Megan Rees, 29  
April 2023 (Seb  
Rees)*



*(Above) Steampunk 2023 (Mike Bradley)*

*(Below) The Diesel Railbus (guard Ian Rushbrook) departs from platform 3, with No.11 in Goods Shed North, on 1 May 2023 (Dom Shaw)*







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