



Beachy Head with the Maunsell set. Photo: Brian Dandridge

The Bluebell Times

A Newsletter for Bluebell Railway Members, Staff and Supporters

July 2025

IN THIS ISSUE

I make no apologies for using – for the second month running – a photo of the Atlantic and Maunsell set, and not just because the shy retiring fireman hiding out of sight on the opposite side of the cab happens to be me! There have been times in recent years when you never quite know whether you are going to bump into your driver or a Gruffalo when signing on at seven in the morning, but we should not lose sight of the fact that in railway preservation terms, the Bluebell can put on quite a show!

Inspiration is a theme of Railway 200, and it is worth reflecting on what inspires both our visitors and our volunteers. Family events have undoubtedly proven a success in drawing in new visitors to the Railway, but we must also think of what will inspire them to return. To the child who has outgrown The Gruffalo, or Bluey, or baby dinosaurs – what will inspire them to become the return visitor, the member, volunteer or donor of the future?

The answer must surely be our unparalleled ability to display our railway heritage. Moreover, we have the ability to put on a show across eras that no other railway can manage – a plausible recreation of the experience of Edwardian, inter-war and post-war travel. The Atlantic and Maunsell set exemplifies that unique collection at the Railway. The dinosaurs and characters are helping the immediate bottom line – but we must remember they are a means to an end, which is to bring visitors to the Railway so they can be inspired to become the visitors and volunteers of the future.

Tom James, Editor

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Watts Occurring

By Roy Watts, BRPS Chairman

To start this month's "Watts Occurring", I'd like to thank everybody who braved the heat and attended the Preservation Society's AGM on what has proven to be one of the hottest days of the year so far.

My concern was three-fold. Firstly, for the comfort of everyone attending because as I said at the start of the meeting, there would be plenty of hot air in the marquee and with temperatures reaching the 30s, the last thing you want is people feeling uncomfortable or worse still, feeling overcome by the heat.

My second fear was in the light of recent communications, there would be an avalanche of questions. Not that would faze me one bit because to quote the old saying, "a problem shared is a problem halved" and how important it is to get people on your side and take them on the journey ahead with you. Finally, I was wondering if the weather would deter people and under such circumstances that I could well be on my own! Now that would be a first. So, my thanks to you all who attended. I'm sorry that there was no major announcement that could be made this year but there are times when we go from feast to famine. There was however the new coach in Maunsell Brake 3687 in service for members to sample. It was very reassuring to hear the comments about the Bluebell having rolling stock that represents the golden age of rail travel and our uniform rakes of coaches.

To me that is recognition of the Railway trying to ensure we stay true to our aims and objectives.

However, as always, it's nice to see that the groups such as the Project 27, Atlantic House (or 488 Adams Radial Restoration Headquarters 😊) and others benefit from meeting members, explaining progress and hopefully raising some needed funds – and yes, I purchased my customary jars of marmalade from the Project 27 fund!

As always there are people that make the event and I would like to take the opportunity to thank

Don Brewer and his team of assistants for their administrative duties, Keith Leppard who kindly pulled the day together and to Gavin Bennett who as always, works hard to ensure everything is done on time and correctly – and that's not just on the day.

We thank John Knight for his service and support during his time as a Trustee and welcome Gordon Parry to the Board, and not forgetting Roger Kelly and James Young who return for another period of service.

Building on comments made last month, it's pleasing to report that again June was a good month for visitors, particularly the number of school parties. Likewise, a significant number of groups from the Guides and Scouting movement have boosted numbers and just as a side note, these are the groups who will secondary spend purchasing small souvenirs of their visit and hopefully if we have done our job correctly, show a keen interest in what we do.

After welcoming our new finance Director, Chris Welch, to the Board, Chris has firmly got to grips with the task of "managing the money"! This is not just about what comes in and what goes out but aligning budgets, seeking opportunities to raise revenue, challenge spending and importantly, providing monthly accounts information. It is vital we demonstrate that we are in control of our business, particularly when it comes to costs where we have absolutely no chance to question them and it's more a case of take it or leave it so relevant in the current climate. It's not easy to balance at times because of the very nature of our business, the plethora of suppliers and invoices, especially as we have to address ageing infrastructure and equipment. It's not just a case of going down to the local B&Q sadly – hence the importance of using the skillsets of our great workforce.

This month we welcome Paul Seller as Chairman of the Company. In the few weeks Paul has been with us, it hasn't taken him long to build an

understanding of the complexity of our business and how he needs to develop and foster a strong relationship with the Society that builds on our respective strengths. Again, this is not just about money but about what we do and how we do it and he has already challenged certain aspects. I'm sure you will have the opportunity to meet Paul and sample his enthusiasm and total commitment to delivering a strong, robust and sustainable business – but not neglecting our preservation remit, rather endorsing and embracing it.

Like me, Paul sees this as a joint venture and I told the Society Board that a line was drawn at the AGM and our focus has to be developing the partnership.

We were both at a recent HRA meeting of other Chairmen from many other Railways across the country and to a person, the topic of discussion was simply about trade and governance, very little on stock. However it was nice to have further compliments paid about *Beachy Head* and Car 54 and one even "How did you get *Sir Archibald Sinclair* out on the main line again?" Nice surprise!

Ladies and gentlemen, clearly, we are not alone nor in a unique position. We have to move forward and look at what we do and how we manage our Railway.

But here we are approaching a key trading period of the summer holidays and we can all be ambassadors and promote the Railway if people are looking for something to do. The "Inspiration Train" arrives shortly to spend time with us and already we have some visiting rolling stock to help tell the story of the development of Railways.

Another piece of good trading news is that our on-train catering services have improved quite

dramatically, especially the "Golden Arrow" which has sold out on certain dates.

I spoke with people after the AGM who made positive comments about some of the additions to the Arrow and this is what matters, small but innovative ways of improving the offer, making sure people get value for money and take away a great experience.

Not that I suggest we fill a couple of compartments of 1098 with fake tobacco smoke and discarded newspapers so people really can experience what travel WAS like or takes them back to their school days and a crafty smoke on the way home!

I started with the AGM so I will end on that. Yes, it's not very often a Chairman will don the replica shirt of his favourite football team – and who knows if we will be playing in Europe? – but as I enter my final year (I always likened the AGM to the academic year!) there is a lot to do and time to call on the strength of the team, yes, all of us, no matter what position you play in.

I have invited and am pleased to say that Keith Leppard has agreed to be my Vice Chairman for the coming year. Keith is already working on the governance side, looking at the last review and what needs to be addressed, basically how we must be fit for purpose. But it doesn't end there; put simply, there is a lot to do and it is not a one-man job so support from the team is paramount, success is winning the match. This is our Railway: not Roy Watts', not yours, OURS!

I am indebted to you all.

Roy

(Only another 339 days to go ...)

BRPS AGM – 21 June 2025

By Gavin Bennett, BRPS General Secretary

181 members signed in for the AGM this year and we had 124 proxy votes, of which 34 only voted on some of the resolutions, as is their right. The absence of any election this year was a relief to the membership team as they did not have the task of

counting all the different preference votes and recording the voting intentions on a control sheet. The temperature in the marquee was very warm.

Chairman Roy Watts welcomed everyone to the meeting, urged them to keep hydrated and to

leave the marquee if they found the heat too much. He introduced those Vice Presidents present – Bill Brophy and Charles Hudson, those Trustees present and was pleased to see several Plc Directors at the meeting.

We stood in silence to remember the 99 members who had died since the last AGM and were listed in the AGM booklet. Robert Burch was deleted from the list as he was still alive (his Bluebell News had been returned marked 'Deceased') but we added Martin Skrzetuszewski who had passed away the previous week.

The minutes of the 2024 AGM were amended to show the correct date of the 2023 meeting (serves me right for using cut and paste!) and agreed *nem con*.

The Society accounts for 2024 were approved equally quickly, noting that the Society now paid its own bills and that instead of buying shares, we donated surplus funds to the Plc. The re-appointment of TC Group (formerly Knill James) as auditors was approved overwhelmingly with a handful of votes against and the usual abstentions.

Special Motions 1 and 2 were proposed by the Trustees to amend the Articles of Association to first, remove the preference voting system introduced in 2003 and revert to 'first past the post' and secondly, to amend the Articles of Association to prohibit the publication of additional election statements other than those published in the AGM booklet. Both were approved by a clear 75% majority.

Special Motion 3 proposed by Doug Fennell urged the Society to accelerate the Ardingly (WEP) scheme rather than keeping it for the next generation. In a lengthy presentation he argued that we needed to get to Haywards Heath to attract a different market but also strayed into his dislike of non-railway events such as the children's characters. The Trustees had already argued their case for rejecting this call and had made it clear we would not be allowed into Haywards Heath. Others also argued against, citing the costs and also noting that it remained an objective in the current long term plan. Much work had been going on behind the scenes and we had just conducted our third bat survey. The Motion was lost by a large majority. The Secretary said the character

events costs little to put on and had attracted extra family business to the railway which we would not otherwise have had.

Before Motion 4 was proposed, which sought to force the railway to continue to take cash payments, a counter-proposal of next business was proposed as the Trustees had already said it was a commercial matter for the Plc. The counter motion was seconded and passed by a clear majority. Motion 4 was not debated.

Long Service Awards were presented as set out below:

50 Years: Colin Tyson

40 Years: Stuart Bardouveau, Richard Clark, Roger Dudman

25 Years: Gerry Brown, Joan Brown, Lisa Boyle, Mike Jackson, Richard Mason

Discussion on the Plc accounts attracted a lot of discussion as might be expected. Chris Welch, the new Finance Director, was only appointed in March and was unable to attend but had said that like other heritage railways, we were struggling. There was a very high fixed cost in running the railway, not only in keeping our locos and rolling stock serviceable, but also in making sure the track and infrastructure were in a safe state to be used. It was difficult to break through the costs without a significant increase in revenue. The Chairman assured the meeting the Board were taking positive action to reduce costs and to achieve a balanced budget. This could involve selling some assets like the cottages but one of them needed a lot of work to make it saleable. He said he was leading a working group to review our corporate structures to see what we needed to do to be able to claim Gift Aid on fares as other heritage railways were doing. Members would receive a consultation document later this year with proposals.

Colin Tyson reported on the work the Trust had been doing during the year in supporting the railway. Donations to unrestricted and restricted funds had increased during the year and they had also been notified of unrestricted legacies worth around £900k. Loco works apprentices had been funded by the Trust. The Trust also had responsibility for the running of the Museum,

SteamWorks and the archive and he paid tribute to all the stewards and archive volunteers. The Trust was considering the purchase of an historic locomotive from the Plc to add to its historic collection.

Before giving his address, the Chairman donned a Crystal Palace shirt and scarf, commenting that he was grateful for all the messages of congratulations he had received. He thanked everyone for their help, support and contribution to the railway during the year. He had volunteered for nearly 58 years and said the standards that we now achieved in our restorations in that time had improved a hundred-fold, commenting on the latest restoration of Maunsell Brake 3687 which looked magnificent. The next year would be challenging. The Trustees owed it to the members

to keep a watching brief on the Plc but we had to work together as a team.

He paid tribute to retiring Trustee John Knight, a stalwart over the last six years. His contribution to the discussions were always based on carefully analysed and methodical arguments and Roy thanked him for his work [which had included the creation of a Bluebell Atlas mapping out all our land ownership with the Land Registry reference number]. He welcomed Gordon Parry as a Trustee who unfortunately could not be at the meeting as he was recovering in hospital from an accident. In closing, the Chairman said we all needed to work together to make the railway succeed. This was now day -352 as he counted down to his final retirement on 13 June 2026. He would be appointing a Vice Chairman to share the workload.



Gearing up for Rail 200. – Photo: Julian Clark

Q Class 541 Overhaul Progress

By Steve Pilcher and Chris Hunford, Maunsell Locomotive Society

Work is progressing well on the chassis at Leaky Finders, with the first of the new frame inserts having been welded into place. The leading and trailing horn blocks have all been fitted, using new bolts that have been machined on site.

As part of dismantling the loco and cleaning items up, it was noted that there were cracks in four of the horn blocks and these have been sent for welding up. The driving wheels are now back at Leaky Finders after machining of the journals so a start can now be made on setting up and machining the new axlebox crowns.

As regards the boiler, the majority of the new copper and monel stays have been fitted on the sides of the firebox. The work to install new patch screws to secure the new outer steel wrapper

plates to the throat plate and backhead has also been completed. There are a few minor fractures to address in the doorplate and once these have been welded up the new backhead can be fitted. The foundation ring can then be fully riveted in place and the boiler turned the right way up ready for fitting of the new tubes and flues.

Back at Sheffield Park, the tender has been temporarily re-wheeled to move it out of the workshop for the duration of model railway weekend. In due course the tender tank will be lifted off to enable it to be painted.

The Maunsell Locomotive Society volunteers have continued cleaning and priming various sections of the loco's boiler cladding that are present at Sheffield Park.

Right: Reaming the right hand fitted bolt holes.
Photo – Leaky Finders

Below: Leading front horn guides in place and new fitted bolts installed to secure the cylinder block.
Photo – Leaky Finders





Left: Tender tank and chassis temporarily re-wheeled. Photo – Steve Pilcher

Below: Boiler cladding in first coat of undercoat. Photo – Steve Pilcher



Awake the Giant Summer Update

Words by Tom Newble

Since the team's last update in March, it has been a very busy and productive second quarter for the 'Awake the Giant' team and 92240. There have been fourteen working parties in our second quarter of the year. If you are interested in joining the team and being involved, then please get in touch with the team leader Andy Taylor by emailing Andy.Taylor@bluebell-railway.co.uk

9 MARCH

On 9 March, David installed our new display and information into SteamWorks, where visitors and enthusiasts can find out information about 92240 and the work being carried out.

26 APRIL

26 April saw one of the largest working parties of this quarter. Tom finished hand sanding areas on the rear buffer beam before applying a coat of green primer whilst Simon and Duncan continued to loosen the brake gear pins. John, Howard and Peter continued to electric sand the tender sides before adding another layer of undercoat. Martin led the team throughout the day and Mark and Phil continued their amazing work, applying coats of epoxy resin within the tender chambers (middle photo).

In this quarter there were several small working parties. They focused on some key areas including working on the water spacechambers, cleaning the underneath, preparing the rear buffer-beam and applying more undercoats and topcoats, as well as sanding and wet & dry sanding on the tender exterior.

31 MAY

This day brought another, relatively large working party back to the railway. Whilst Mark and Phil continued work inside the tender with the epoxy resin within the water space chambers. Duncan and Simon continued to clean underneath the tender (bottom photo). Tom continued his work on the rear buffer beam and applied the first coat of what the team thought was red undercoat but actually it was a dark pink!



IN OTHER NEWS

The team have new stickers for our younger fans, so when the stall is around, why not pop over and pick one up! Ken has been working on the merchandise selection which has become very popular with members and visitors since it launched. Merchandise is readily available to buy at the majority of galas at the Bluebell Railway. Merchandise can be bought from 92240's stand as well as from the Carriage Shop. Mark has been working extremely hard on publishing the recent edition of the 'Giant Gazette'. If you are interested in subscribing, please contact:

giantgazette92240@yahoo.co.uk. Tom has continued to work on building the archive of 92240. If you have any material on 92240 that you would like to add to the collection, please contact Tom at Awakethegiant@outlook.com.

COULD YOU HELP 92240?

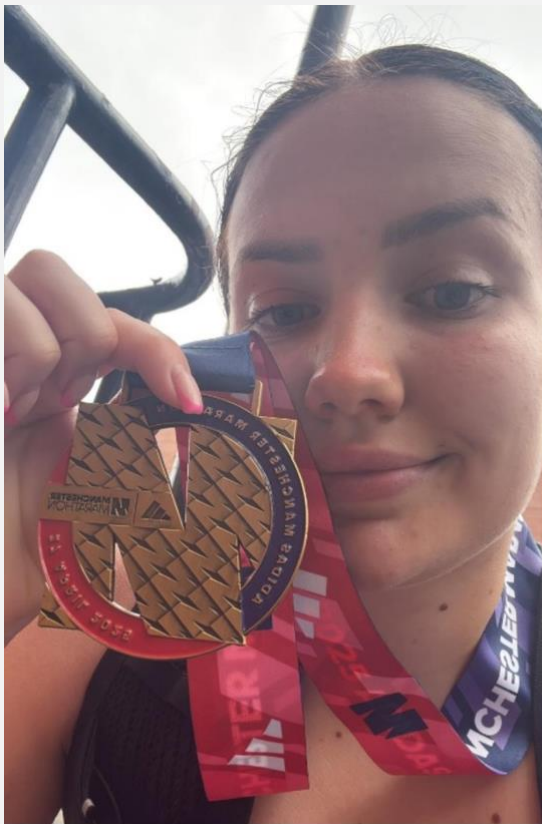
The team, in amongst personal schedules and rostered turns over the Railway, are looking for a volunteer to join the team, whose role would be to lead the communications and negotiation of stand locations at railway events and to run the stand with other members. If you feel you are interested in this, or would like to know more, please ask by emailing Andy at: Andy.Taylor@bluebell-railway.co.uk.

You can also help by making a regular monthly donation.

Please go to the below site and click on Awake the Giant. Just 250 people at £15 per month will raise over £250,000 with gift aid within 5 years.

<https://www.bluebell-railway.com/trust/make-a-monthly-donation/>

TOM PARSONS' LEGACY



8 July 2025 marked the sad anniversary of the passing of our stand manager for 92240, Tom Parsons. We still miss Tom's warm embrace for the project and friendly chat, as do our supporters.

We send our support from the Awake the Giant Group and the wider Bluebell family to the Parsons family during this difficult time.

At this year's Manchester marathon, Sophie Parsons ran an amazing time of 6½ hours. Sophie asked friends and family for sponsorship, with all proceeds raised going in Tom's name to the Awake the Giant group in aid of restoring 9F 92240. Sophie raised a massive £1,005!

We can't thank Sophie enough and also the Parsons family for continuing to support.

If you wish to get involved in something amazing in Tom's memory, please get in contact. Let's Awake The Giant once more! Andy.taylor@bluebell-railway.com

Carriage Works News

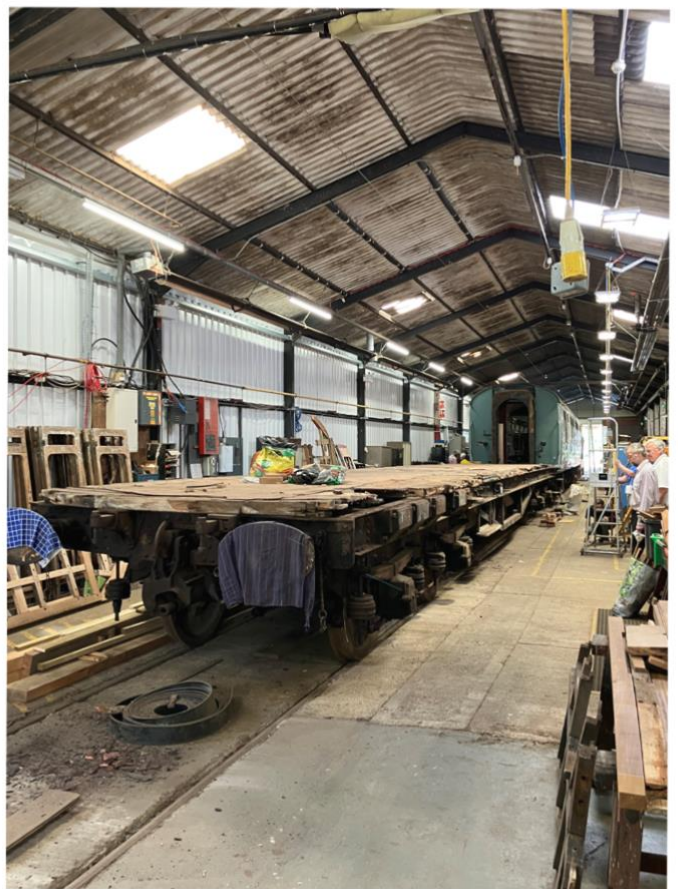
Words and photos by Keith Leppard, C&W Volunteer

Our SECR disabled access 3rd [No. 3360](#) has been in the paintshop recently for a touch up and revarnish. It's now finished and will be looking great next time the 4-wheelers are in service.

There was a big shunt around of D road recently, with the [Maunsell Restaurant Car](#) underframe going outside for floor removal and grit blasting, and the two Mark 1's (disabled access [No. 5034](#) and RBR [No. 1674](#)) that had been south of it also heading out for a bogie swap around. 5034 was moved onto the accommodation bogies that had been under the RBR, so its own can be worked on, while the RBR got its own refurbished bogies back again. 1674 is now in the paintshop while 5034 should be back in D road in the works by the time you read this.

Whilst out in E road, 5034's two wheelchair lifts were removed so this area of the coach can be worked on. Work to reinstate the two saloons is already well advanced.

Bulleid Open Third [No. 1482](#)'s new roof canvas has had three coats of diluted paint in the past couple of weeks and the roof furniture is now being refitted. The plan is that it will be next in the paintshop after the RBR.



Top right: SE&CR brake 3rd / disabled access vehicle No. 3360

Right: The underframe of the Maunsell Restaurant Car No. 7864



Above: Bulleid Open Third No. 1482

Left: No. 5034 with wheelchair lifts removed.

Below: Also in the paintshop and nearing the end of its overhaul is Maunsell 12 ton ventilated van [No. 47588](#). See the [March 2025 issue](#) of The Bluebell Times for a restoration update on this van.



Diesels at Horsted



Left: Class 33/1 No. 33 108, on loan for the summer, hauling a special one coach train for the owning group's AGM passing through platforms 4/5 at Horsted Keynes, 26 June 2025

Photo: Julian Clark



Right: Two weeks earlier, on 10 June, 33 108 propelled a train into the newly relaid platform 1, which had only been ballasted that day. This was the first service move into that platform since reconstruction.

Photo: Alex Widdowson



Left: 'Thumper' unit 1001 is also on hire for the summer, courtesy of Hastings Diesels Limited. The unit is seen here passing Leamland Junction on its empty stock move to the railway from St Leonards on 25 June 2025

Photo: Julian Clark

Carriage Shop Donates £500

By Chris Wilson, Carriage Shop Volunteer

The Carriage Shop team are pleased to be able to donate £500 to Bluebell Railway Goods Division. This amount has been raised from the sales of our exclusive Rapido wagons.

For more information on how you can support the Bluebell Railway Goods Division please visit www.bluebell-railway.co.uk/bluebell/wagon/

The Carriage Shop at Horsted Keynes station is open every weekend, for additional days during the visit of the Inspiration Train to the Bluebell Railway and throughout the Bluebell Railway 65th Anniversary weekend.

We currently have a wide selection of Horsted Keynes exclusive souvenirs, model railway items, railway and transport books and Railway Art by Matthew Cousins. We are also supporting the 1305 Thumper Gang, Bluebell Railway Goods Division and the Fenchurch Fund by stocking a small selection of their items in the shop.

The Carriage Shop is always pleased to receive donations of model railway items, books, DVDs, bound magazines, pictures, postcards, photographs, slides, mugs, badges, keyrings or other railway or transport material. If you can help please contact:

bluebellrailwaycarriageshop@gmail.com

For our opening times and news please visit our Facebook page:

facebook.com/BluebellRailwayCarriageShop



Above: Bluebell Railway Goods Division volunteers Jack, Laurie and Matt.

Below: Limited Edition 7-Plank Gregory & Smith wagon produced by Rapido exclusively for the Carriage Shop at Horsted Keynes station. Currently still available from the Carriage Shop.



Photos From The Museum Website

By Chris Wilson, Bluebell Railway archive volunteer

This month we have added a further 343 images to the Bluebell Railway Museum website bringing the total now available to 27,867. There are now images of over 4,200 different steam locomotives available!

These additions all come from the camera of Joe Kent and showcase more of his images taken from 1952 to 1955. There are photographs taken at Preston Park Pullman Car Works, where Joe worked at the time. Other locations include Brighton, Patcham, Stratford, Raynes Park, Surbiton, Wimbledon, Templecombe and Evercreech Junction.

If you have a collection of photographs, negatives, slides or digital images you are interested in depositing with the Archive and preserving for the future please get in touch with us by emailing photos@bluebell-railway-museum.co.uk.

Every photograph sale directly helps the Photograph Archive giving us much needed funds to invest in conservation and storage materials. The information needed to pay for orders online by BACS is now included on every order form.

To view and order go to www.brm-archive.co.uk. There are various searching methods, including by locomotive number or class and location. The content key search allows you to see all the images of a particular type, for example, all the images taken of Pullmans. Use the New key to see all the latest images including those mentioned and shown here.



Top: BR(S) H2 class No. 32422 'North Foreland' with empty stock near Preston Park Pullman Car Works on 24 September 1954. Photo: Joe Kent [154770]

Middle: BR(S) 4-SUB EMU No. S4427 on Cliftonville Spur, Preston Park on 5 January 1953. Photo: Joe Kent [090723]

Bottom: BR(E) V2 class No. 60893 approaching Wimbledon with the up 'Bournemouth Belle' on 30 May 1953. The loco was on loan to the Southern Region due to the temporary withdrawal of the Merchant Navy class for axle examination. Photo: Joe Kent [090864]

On This Day - 11 July

By Tony Hillman, Deputy Curator

Three pictures from the Bluebell Photographic Archive taken on the 11 July. Thanks to John Creed, Martin Elms, Richard Peirce, Chris Sutton, Roger Merry-Price and Chris Wilson for finding the pictures and researching the notes.

Photo: J.J. Smith [043929]



A feature of the 1950s on a Summer Sunday were rail trips to the South Coast. Many of these originated from other Regions and Sunday 11 July 1954 was no exception.

Ex GNR N1 0-6-2T 69435 is photographed at Holborn Low Level on a half day excursion from Hitchin, on the Eastern Region main line, to Brighton. The train, consisting of 8 carriages, the first vehicle being a Gresley third brake, left at 9.30 am and after a five minute stop at Holborn Low Level between 11.27 am and 11.32 am, was scheduled to arrive at New Cross Gate at 11.52 am. There, ten minutes was allowed for the N1 to be replaced by a SR locomotive, with a booked arrival at Brighton at 1.24 pm.

The return excursion would have left Brighton at 7.57 pm with the SR locomotive giving way to an ER engine at New Cross Gate between 9.07 pm and 9.17 pm.

Two other South Coast excursions from the ER also ran that day, one from Enfield Town to Eastbourne, the other from Southend to Brighton, both routed via Liverpool Street and the East London line.

Holborn Junction Low Level, as it was officially known, opened as Snow Hill on 1 August 1874, being renamed on 1 May 1912. It was closed from 1 June 1916. The line continued as a north-south freight link, with occasional passenger specials, but all regular freight and parcels services were withdrawn in 1969, and the line was abandoned in 1971. The line was re-opened in 1988 as part of the new Thameslink network with a new station, City Thameslink, situated close to the old Snow Hill site.

The N1 class was designed by Henry Ivatt and entered service from 1907. 69435 was built at Doncaster in December that year and, like the majority of the class, was fitted with condensing apparatus. It was withdrawn in March 1955.



It is Monday 11 July 1955 and Colin Hogg has captured quite an unusual scene at Norwood Junction. Here we see ex LBSCR E6 0-6-2T 32413 at the head of what appears to be a very heavy train, the 6.30pm London Bridge to Forest Row via East Grinstead High Level. The photographer's notes suggest the little tank engine replaced the rostered locomotive which had failed.

The August 1955 edition of the *Railway Observer* provides more of the background details. The train had left London Bridge in the care of Fairburn 2-6-4T No. 42067 which then expired at Honor Oak Park. 32413, presumably as the only available replacement, took over at Norwood Junction. Having left there already more than an hour late, the E6 struggled to Forest Row, losing another thirty minutes on the way.

The 6.30pm was never scheduled to stop at Norwood Junction. It was booked fast to East Croydon (6.48pm) and then made all the stops between Sanderstead and East Grinstead High Level (7.42pm). It was due into Forest Row at 7.50pm. In July 1955 a corresponding up working

was scheduled to start from Forest Row at 7.04am and was due into London Bridge at 8.19am.

Designed by Robert Billington, 32413 was one of ten E6s, all of which were built at Brighton Works. It entered service in 1905 as LBSCR 413 and was actually given the name *Fenchurch*. The Southern Railway renumbered it as B413 and then 2413. At the time the photograph was taken the locomotive was allocated to Norwood Junction (75C). Withdrawn from there in February 1958, it was scrapped almost exactly a year later.

East Grinstead High Level and Forest Row both closed in January 1967 along with the whole line between Three Bridges and Ashurst Junction. The line to East Grinstead (Low Level) was electrified in 1987 and today's rush hour Thameslink service with a similar stopping pattern to the 6.30pm is timed to take 56 minutes for the journey.

Photographer: Colin Hogg [048367]



It is the twilight years of the Somerset and Dorset as on 11 July 1964 a branch train from Highbridge stands in the Down Platform at Evercreech Junction. It was formed of Collett o-6-o 2218 of Templecombe Shed (83G) and the customary two coaches, plus on this occasion a van, probably conveying milk churns. The photographer didn't identify the train, but it is almost certainly the 2.20pm Highbridge to Templecombe.

Aside from Templecombe, Evercreech Junction was the main junction on the Somerset and Dorset. Although it only had two platforms, it had extensive sidings on the west side of the "main line" and a turntable. In between the two platforms was a Middle Siding, used when there was a Branch connection to be made out of a Main Line train and on Summer Saturdays prior to the autumn of 1962 when it was used to accommodate pilot engines for assisting heavy trains northwards to Bath.

The decline of the Somerset and Dorset accelerated after the withdrawal of the inter-regional holiday expresses at the end of the Summer Timetable in September 1962 but the

gradual "Westernisation" started in 1958. This was apparent at Templecombe where Midland 3F o-6-os and "Jinty" o-6-oTs were replaced by Western Collett o-6-os and Pannier o-6-oPTs. It was planned that the Somerset and Dorset would close to passengers on 3 January 1966 to coincide with the proposed elimination of steam on the Western Region. But it was not to be. A bus operator who was to provide some of the replacement bus services pulled out at the last minute. An emergency passenger timetable was instituted until final closure on 7 March 1966.

2218 was built at GWR Swindon Works in 1940. It arrived at Templecombe Shed (83G) from Exeter (83C) in April 1964 but only survived a few months until withdrawal in the period October – November 1964.

Photographer: J. J. Smith [o468oo]



Tail Lamp

If you've enjoyed this issue of *The Bluebell Times*, feel free to pass it on to other people you think might also want to read it.

To find out when the next issue is out and for other updates about the Bluebell Railway, check our [website](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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| ➔ Tom James | ➔ Chris Wilson |

The Bluebell Times

*A Newsletter for
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Supporters*

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