

# Railway Ramblings

Issue 114

January 2020

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The monthly newsletter of the Hitchin Branch of the RCTS

## Meetings This Month

At Hitchin (19:30-22:00, doors open 19:00)

14 January: **A Potpourri of European Railways** "Who knows what may turn up tonight" Rob Freeman

At Welwyn Garden City (14:00-16:30, doors open 13:30)

28 January: **Next Train Gone** "Many local scenes here possibly" Adrian White

## From the Photo Album



In the summertime:

On the Dollnitzbahn, Germany, in July 2019, our chartered Saxon IV-K Class 99 1584-4 (750mm gauge) does a spirited run-past. An 0-4-4-0 designed by Meyer and built in Chemnitz 1898.

*Photo: John Dossett*

*If you have photos (old or new) that you are willing to share with other members please supply them, with a suitable caption, to the Editor ([John.Dossett@btinternet.com](mailto:John.Dossett@btinternet.com)). They should be your own photographs!*

# Chairman's Platform

A "Very Happy New Year" to you all!

Last year saw a general growth in attendance at our branch meetings and I trust that, with the brilliant 2020 programme drawn together by our secretary Dave, this trend will continue into this year. Make a New Year's resolution to attend as many meetings as you can – and especially if you are attending for the first time make a point of introducing yourself to me (I don't expect you'll miss me!).

I know that much of the time at our meetings is taken up politely listening to our guest speakers but there is also the opportunity to chat with like-minded folk and to make new friends – perhaps another New Year's resolution? And don't forget that you can always invite guests to meetings – they are always welcome and, who knows, they may eventually become members in their own right.

Finally, last month I made a request for you to send our newsletter editor some photos from the past, for publication in future issues of Railway Ramblings. Don't worry about the quality from the pre-digital era or if they only exist as old prints – the content is the most important thing – we'll do our best with them. More modern digital photos are of course also welcome. The editor's email address is [John.Dossett@btinternet.com](mailto:John.Dossett@btinternet.com)

## Exhibitions

This month sees the following exhibitions locally:

CHILTERN MODEL RAILWAY ASSOCIATION on 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> January 2020, at the Stevenage Arts & Leisure Centre, Stevenage SG1 1LZ. Over 30 layouts plus trade stands etc.

The branch will have a stand at this exhibition – to encourage people to become members and to raise funds for the branch through book sales. If you visit the exhibition do call by our stand and say hello.

BRAMBLETON MODEL RAILWAY CLUB on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2020, at Harpenden Public Hall, High Street South End), Harpenden. Opening time 10:30 to 17:30.

For those travelling to Harpenden by car, there are public car parks at Harpenden station and on Bower's Way. For those travelling by train, the public halls are approximately a 5-minute walk from the station.

## Book Sales

The book-sales table remains popular at branch meetings and the revenue helps towards our running costs. If you can contribute any books to the branch they would be most welcome, and it will give you shelf-space for those new arrivals you acquired over the festive period! A number of members have already donated books – will you join them?

## Newsletter Distribution

This e-newsletter is distributed by the Branch Chairman (Steve Lacey). If you do not currently receive a copy directly but would like to do so, provide him with your email address and you will be added to the list. Conversely, if you currently receive a copy but wish to be taken off the distribution list then please advise him accordingly. Steve's email address is [gricersteve@hotmail.com](mailto:gricersteve@hotmail.com)

## More from the Photo Album



313064 at Langley Junction on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019, with Stevenage Platform 5 preparation work in the background.

*Photo: Adrian White*



Aln Valley Railway, No 9 *Richboro*, arriving back at Lionheart Station on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2019

*photo: John Dossett*

# Class 313 Farewell Tour

NSE liveried 313064 - which was pictured on the first page of our December newsletter (and in this newsletter as at the end of August 2019) – ran on Wednesday 23rd October 2019 marking 43 years of service (1976 - 2019) in this area.

Built by British Rail Engineering Limited's Holgate Road carriage works between February 1976 and April 1977, the 'claim to fame' of these units was that they were the first UK trains able to operate on both 25Kv AC overhead wires and 750v DC third rail.

The special service ran, in the morning, from Kings Cross to Royston via Welwyn Garden City, then back to Hertford North. Then in the afternoon it ran from Hertford North to Moorgate (changing from AC overhead wires to DC third-rail at Drayton Park) and then to Hornsey Reversing Sidings before returning to Kings Cross.

Although no longer used on these routes local to us, a small number of Class 313, but single-voltage, units are still in service on Southern along the south coast (based at Brighton), whilst similar 313-type units can still be found on other services in London, Glasgow and Merseyside.

## Forthcoming Branch Events

During February 2020

At Hitchin (19:30-22:00, doors open 19:00)

11 February: **More Thrills and Spills** "Stories from an ex-railwayman" Chris Blackman

At Welwyn Garden City (14:00-16:30, doors open 13:30)

25 February: **The 1829 Ordeal 'The Rainhill Trials'** "The very early historic event" Dr Rudi Newman

All members are welcome at all meetings.

A reminder that the suggested donation rates for meetings are £2 for members and £3.50 for non-members. All attendees are entered into a free book draw and admission also includes refreshments at the mid-meeting interval.

*Railway Ramblings is published by the committee of the Hitchin Branch of The Railway Correspondence & Travel Society. Such committee does not endorse any personal opinions expressed in this publication. The committee comprises Steve Lacey (Chairman), David Elsdon (Secretary), Paul Holloway (Treasurer), Chris Alton, John Dossett (Newsletter Editor), Martin Elms, Roger Moulden and Adrian Scrutton. The Railway Correspondence & Travel Society is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation Registered with the Charities Commission*