



Railway Ramblings



Issue 185

December 2025

The monthly newsletter of the RCTS Hitchin & Welwyn Garden City Branch



Deltic at Dundee

Photo: David Cross

Railway Ramblings is published by the committee of the Hitchin & Welwyn Garden City Branch of The Railway Correspondence & Travel Society. Such committee does not endorse any personal opinions expressed in this publication.

Branch Programme

Note: In the event of any late change to the programme, everyone on the distribution list for this newsletter will receive an email advising the details of the change.

During December 2025

At Hitchin (14:00 – 16:30, doors open from 13:30)

9th December **Sugar, Steam and Sunsets**

David Longman

At Digswell, Welwyn (14:00 - 16:30, doors open from 13:30)

30th December **Six Decades of the Settle & Carlisle**

Michael Smyth

During January 2026

At Hitchin (14:00 – 16:30, doors open from 13:30)

13th January **Eurostar - 30 Years & Counting**

Chris McCanless

At Digswell, Welwyn (14:00 - 16:30, doors open from 13:30)

27th January **6 Months at Stratford Depot – My Recollections from 1988**

Hugh Driscoll

Special Note for the December meetings:

There will be an extended interval, when “festive food” (but certainly not “turkey”) will be available. Even if you have not been able to attend meetings during the year you will still be very welcome. No additional donations are requested.

Donations are requested for attendance at branch meetings – these, together with book sales, go towards the costs of hiring the venues, speakers expenses/fees and the provision of tea/coffee & biscuits during the meeting. These are £3 for members and £5 for non-members.

The Hitchin meetings are held at St Mark's Church Hall, St Marks Close, Lancaster Avenue (off Bedford Road) SG5 1UR

Digswell, Welwyn meetings are held at Digswell Village Church Hall, Warren Way, Digswell, Welwyn AL6 0DH



Chairman's Platform

I am really looking forward to our festive season meetings this year and I hope to see many of you at one or the other (or both!) venues. As a reminder, these are on 9 December at Hitchin and on 30 December at Welwyn. Both meetings will still feature a presentation (see pages 14 and 15 for details) but the interval will be extended. The cost of the catering is again being met from branch funds.

Looking further ahead, our 2026 programme contains a number of familiar presenters and also some new ones. It would also be nice to see some new faces join us – so please take the opportunity to invite a friend or two to join you at meetings. To make it easy we will just ask for a nominal £1 each for anyone accompanying a member to meetings in either January or February. Just sign them in and add your membership number beside their name.

Printed copies of the 2026 programme (which was previewed in last month's Railway Ramblings) will be available at the December meetings. Please collect a copy for yourself - and feel free to take an additional copy for a friend.

As we head into the winter months I would urge all of you who are eligible to have free flu and Covid vaccinations. It provides a large degree of protection, reduces the illness if you still get it and reduces your infectivity to others.

We can also expect spells of winter weather. If we need to cancel or change a meeting then we will put that on the branch pages of the RCTS website and we will also email all those on the distribution list for this newsletter. In bad weather please check your emails and/or the website before setting off to a meeting.

Finally, and especially to those who I will not see before Christmas, may I wish you all "A Great Christmas and a Happy New Year!"

Steve Lacey

New Members

We welcome Zoe Webb, of Stevenage, and Ray Bond, of Arlesey, as new members of the RCTS and the Hitchin & Welwyn Garden City branch. Both joined at the recent Spalding MRC exhibition.

We also welcome back Stephen White, of Biggleswade, who rejoined the RCTS, also at the Spalding exhibition.

Back Issues of Railway Ramblings

If you want to view back issues of Railway Ramblings, you can find those from recent months on Hitchin & Welwyn Garden City branch pages of the RCTS website www.RCTS.org.uk These are available to members and non-members. Earlier issues are available by contacting the Editor John.Dossett@btinternet.com

Spalding Model Railway Exhibition – Dave Elsdon

Our Society was invited, at relatively short notice, to take part in this exhibition, being over the weekend of 1st & 2nd November, Steve Lacey our Chairman (and Society Exhibition Officer) agreed to attend. Steve and I set up our stand on Friday afternoon after travelling through rain and sun to reach Spalding at around 15:00. The set up went well, we were located between two large stands one selling models, the other books, dvd's and other similar products, what it did mean was that there would be a large footfall visiting this location.



On the Saturday morning I travelled to Spalding again, leaving home at 07:30, collecting David Holdstock on route, as Steve was unavailable. We had a clear journey to Spalding despite there now being a diversion for northbound A1 traffic at “The Black Cat” roundabout, due to the extensive road works going on there.

At the exhibition, we had what I can only describe as one the busiest days I’ve been involved in for many years, selling many books including some of the new Society publications, and signing up seven new members. During the day we met many people we knew which was very surprising considering how far away from our local area we were, that aside we were very pleased to see them. There were thirty layouts on view, ranging from small sit-at N gauge ones to an enormous 00 layout in the other hall depicting a marshalling yard in late 1950’s Chicago, it was superb, showing those huge long freight trains, with a variety of steam and diesel motive power. Among the stands were several traders that we knew from other exhibitions we have attended. The show finished for the day at 17:00., we arrived back home without any problems just before 19:00.

Then on Sunday we did it all over again. This time I got to Steve's for a 07:45 departure and this, being early on a Sunday, was an extremely good journey. The good time we made allowed us time to re-stock the stand with yet more books. Today it was a much slower start but numbers steadily built up as the morning went on. The mix of new Society books and our second-hand books continued as did the signing of new members, we totalled six for the day.

Despite the travelling (approximately 85 miles each way) the event proved extremely worthwhile, earning both the Branch and the Society considerable additions to their funds.

I must admit that after such a long weekend it was very difficult to stay awake once home!

Dave Elsdon
Branch Secretary

Lanyard Badges – Reminder

A reminder that badges are issued to members and non-members alike.

If you have been a fairly regular attendee you probably have a lanyard name badge – and it is good to see many of you remembering to wear it at meetings. However, there are some who seem to regularly forget to bring theirs with them to meetings. Please do try to always remember to bring yours! (For those who struggle to remember to bring their badges you have the option of leaving your badge in the box between meetings!)

If you have not got a badge and feel “forgotten” then please let Steve Lacey (or Dave Elsdon, Paul Holloway, Tony Stratford, Hugh Driscoll or John Dossett) know and John will endeavour to get one prepared for your next visit.

Steve Lacey



Membership Renewals

Most members will have already received their invitation to renew their membership. If not then you are asked to renew asap.

If you have previously completed a Direct Debit mandate, either at a previous renewal, or when joining over the last year, the RCTS will take the renewal automatically, and unless any of your details have changed there is nothing you need to do. Renewals were requested by the end of November, to assist the administration for the renewals team, and also to ensure you will receive the January issue of *The Railway Observer*.

Tanfield 300 – John Dossett

For my birthday, in September, my wife, Jean, decided that we would make a trip to the North East to visit Beamish and the Tanfield Railway. We would travel by train to Chester-Le-Street and stay in a hotel there making daily trips by bus to Beamish and the railway. Jean researched the bus timetables beforehand and produced an itinerary

Our journey north on Saturday 20th started from Welwyn North with tickets to Stevenage, bought using the Hertfordshire bus pass concessionary fare, connecting with an LNER Azuma (11.28) to York (13.30) and the Transpennine service (14.20) onto Chester-Le-Street (15.10). The advance booking return fare for the two of us, using a Two Together Railcard was £102.40. At that price there seemed no point in driving. (The day before we travelled I checked on the internet and the cost for the same journey was then quoted as over £250!). The trains were all on time but the weather was atrocious.

Sunday dawned dry and bright so the trip to the Tanfield was still on. We travelled there by bus; the Sunday service was a bit “thin” but straightforward. At the Tanfield by showing our bus passes (you don’t get a ticket on the buses) we were able to get a 25% discount on the concessionary rate – a great deal. This particular day was a diesel gala, so plenty of action, but all diesel. There were also a handful of preserved buses at Andrews House station.



The Tanfield Railway has been celebrating their 300th anniversary in 2025. These days it offers a six-mile round trip through rolling countryside and a wooded valley. Dating back to 1725, a whole century before the Stockton and Darlington, the Tanfield claims to be the world’s oldest railway. There is also Causey Arch, adjacent to the station of the same name, the world’s oldest surviving single arch railway bridge standing high above a wooded gorge. The arch spans over 100ft, stands 80ft tall and beneath it runs Causey Burn. Close to the arch is the replica of an 18th century coal waggon.

The railway was built to connect collieries in the Tanfield area to the River Tyne for shipment. They used the latest technology and ground breaking engineering to complete the railway. Rebuilt by dedicated volunteers, is now a showcase for the North East’s rich railway heritage. These days the railway runs from Sunniside, in the north, through Andrews House (with Marley Hill yard and sheds), and Causey Arch to East Tanfield in the south. The main public access points, with facilities, are at Andrews House and East Tanfield.



Fortunately, on this special gala day, there was a high level of access across the whole of the railway so our visit included quite a lot of time spent exploring the Marley Hill yard and workshops.

They have a considerable stock of locos in running order, plus the inevitable bunch awaiting restoration some sunny day. We did also manage a couple of trips up and down the line.



The “star guest” loco for the day, appearing courtesy of its owner Phil Civil, was *MyFanwy*. She was assembled by Robert Stephenson and Hawthorns, Darlington, in 1962. It is said to be one of the most unusual locos ever made in the North East ... because it wasn't actually built in the North East! The loco was one of a batch of three identical diesels which were being constructed by the Stafford-based firm of W G Bagnall in early 1961. During their construction Bagnall's was taken over by Brush of Loughborough, and locomotive building at the Stafford works ceased.

The completed components were then crated and sent 175 miles north to the Darlington works of Robert Stephenson and Hawthorns, who were an established builder of diesel locos by this point. Final construction and assembly then took place, and the three engines were even outshopped with the “Bagnall” makers plates which were included in the kit of parts, obscuring the work done at Darlington.

The finished loco was delivered to shunt the Royal Ordnance Factory Pembrey site, and later moved to ROF Glascoed. Following its time in the world of explosives, the loco was heavily rebuilt in the early 1990s to head underground as part of Tarmac's extension of the London Underground Jubilee Line. This rebuild included fitting a cut-down cab, the same height as the bonnet. *MyFanwy* was preserved in 2003 and, in 2019, a restoration project was completed which saw the loco returned to its original appearance. It was during its rebuild in Wales that the loco gained its name, *MyFanwy* being a traditional Welsh choral song.

Another loco in service was Ribblesdale Cement Company No 6, built by John Fowler, Leeds, in 1960. Although built outside the North East for use outside the North East this engine would play a key part in the closing chapter of industrial railways on Tyneside.



No 6 is a Fowler 424 Class 0-6-0 diesel hydraulic powered by a Leyland engine, built originally for the Ribblesdale Cement Company's works at Clitheroe, where it was used to shunt the raw materials and marshalled cement wagons for distribution on the mainline. In 1983 the plant was producing 1.3 million tons of cement per annum. In 1981 Ribblesdale Cement had been merged with other firms to form Castle Cement and this merger saw No 6 moved to Forth Banks, central Newcastle, in 1986. When it was retired in 1993 No 6 was possibly the last industrial locomotive to work in Newcastle.

After several years in open storage at Tanfield "the Fowler" was fully restored by a small band of volunteers and returned to operation. In 2024 the locomotive's restoration was highly commended in the annual Heritage Railway Association Awards.

A great day at the Tanfield.

For the following two days we spent our time at Beamish. The weather was again good and, with the peak season crowds gone, the site was very pleasant. Again, travelling there by bus, we got a 25% discount on the seniors admission tickets (valid for a year). Since our previous visit, a few years ago, a new development is the 1950s area. So much there reminded us of our family homes!

September 24th, our return journey from Chester Le Street to Welwyn North mirrored the outward journey and there were no delays to the services we used. The train really did take the strain.

John Dossett

(Tanfield, No 6 and MyFanwy details reproduced courtesy of the Tanfield Railway).



Christmas at the Railway SANTA'S REINDEER RESCUE

Various Dates in December



The Magical Train Journey

Step aboard the NVR heritage train from Wansford Station for a return journey to Peterborough, filled with festive cheer. Expect festive songs and laughter from the onboard elves as you roll through the wintry countryside. If you would prefer a quieter time on board, NVR would suggest booking a private compartment or booking onto our quiet train service which will run on Wednesday 17 December.

What's Included

- A fully immersive festive experience at Wansford Station
- Reindeer food making with the elves
- A meet-and-greet with Santa in his grotto or a personal visit in your private compartment
- A gift for every child
- A return journey on a heritage train (steam or diesel)
- On-train entertainment with cheeky Christmas elves
- A festive activity booklet
- Access to the gift shop, café, and onboard bar

For more details and to make bookings visit the NVR website:

[Christmas at the Railway: Santas Reindeer Rescue | Nene Valley Railway Ltd](#)

(Reproduced courtesy of the NVR)



Santa Steam Specials



All aboard the Santa Steam Specials! This enchanting journey is the ultimate festive treat for children, offering a magical steam train ride from Princes Risborough to Santa's Grotto at his North Pole station. Here, little ones can share their Christmas wishes with Santa himself!

On selected dates in December, all trains will depart from Princes Risborough Station Platform 4, where Santa's stewards will warmly welcome you onboard. During the journey, the Elves will entertain the children with activity packs, puzzles, handouts, children's games and 'Letters-to-Santa'.

Travel in comfort in the 1950s carriages, named after Santa's reindeers – Rudolph, Blitzen, Dasher, and Prancer. Seats are booked at tables to keep families together.

The steam train will take you to Santa's Enchanted Workshop and Grotto at the North Pole station. Here, you can enjoy refreshments, chat with Santa, take memorable photos, and receive a Christmas present for every child.

Dates: 6, 7, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22 December 2025 - Adult/Senior or Child 1-12 years £29.50 per person

Train departure times and duration: Princes Risborough departures at 10.30, 12.30, 14.30, duration approximately 1 hour 35 minutes

Departure location: Santa Steam Specials depart from and return to Platform 4, Princes Risborough Station HP27 9DN. Car Parking: Chiltern Railways Pay-and-Display at the station - currently charging Saturday and Sunday £6.50, Friday and Monday £9.30

For further details, timetables and to make bookings visit the C&PRR website:

[Santa Steam Specials: all aboard! « Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway](#)

(Reproduced courtesy of C&PRR)



The Magical Epping Ongar Lights Express

Various dates to Jan 2026



The Epping Ongar Lights Express is an incredible light show on and in a steam train, consisting of thousands of coloured LED lights and LED wristbands, creating a kaleidoscope of different colours and flashing patterns. The train looks amazing, inside and out!

Join the festive action on board and get in the party mood with a festive DJ mix of music the whole family will love. Each passenger will receive their own interactive LED wristband which is synchronised to the music, meaning you become part of the show!

Sing, dance and cheer on this magical journey, hosted by the legendary “Voiceover Man” - laugh with him (or at him!) and compete against each other in his on-board game!

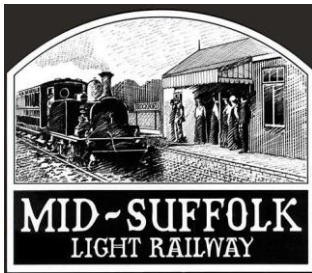
In the lead up to Christmas the train will feature Voiceover Man's festive family friendly mix of music and Christmas hits! (From 27 December, the train switches to Voicover Man's family party mix with a journey through the hits of the decades from the 1990s to the present day!)

Tickets: Adult: £25 Child: £20

For more information and to make bookings visit the EOR website:

[Epping Ongar Lights Express | Epping Ongar Railway](https://www.eppingongar-railway.co.uk/)

(Reproduced courtesy of the EOR).



2025 Santa Specials



There are six days of Santa Specials planned this year – December 7th/13th/14th/20th/21st & 22nd. For a magical Christmas treat for children up to 10 years old, a trip on a Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Santa Special is not to be missed.

Steam trains run from Brockford Station to 'North Pole Halt', for an individual visit to Santa at his Christmas Guards Van and each child receives a present. The Stations, Brockford and 'North Pole Halt' will all be decorated in full 'Christmasy' style. On the return from their Santa visit passengers will find Christmas crafts, hot drinks and snacks will be available to buy and for the grown-ups, a complimentary cup of festive mulled wine.

The trip to see Santa will last approximately 35 minutes. Visitors, especially children, can enjoy the unique atmosphere created at Suffolk's only standard gauge award winning railway museum. The Santa Special's genuine Great Eastern Railway Victorian four-wheeler coaches are a historical experience for any passengers. You will need to wrap up warm as these coaches are not heated!

Bookings are for individual compartments which can seat up to 8 people and must include at least 1 adult and 1 child over the age of 1. Children aged 1-10 will all receive an age appropriate and gender considered present.

Christmas trips get booked up early – so don't leave it to the last minute. Ticket prices £15.00 per person. Advanced bookings only. [Book Tickets](#)

(Reproduced courtesy of the MSLR)

The December Puzzle – Martin Elms

A Great Western flavour this month.

The first letter of each answer should spell a Great Western station or feature.

1. Station at end of branch line from Churston	
2 Locomotive depot with code 81D	
3. Name of locomotive 7034	
4. Tunnel near Kemble	
5. Station north of Winchcombe	
6. Junction to west of Gloucester	
7. Station near Blagdon	

8. Name of locomotive 7026	
9. Vale of ?	
10. Station at end of branch line from Savernake	
11. Station on West Bay branch	
12.? And Caradon Railway	
13. St ? for St Ives	

14. Class of locomotives numbered 7800 – 7829	
15. Name of loco 6813	
16. Station at end of branch line from Upwey	
17. ? for Tanworth	
18. Locomotive depot with code 84G	

Best of luck.

My answer to each of the questions and solution to the puzzle are on page 16.

Martin Elms

The December Presentations (1)

Sugar, Steam and Sunsets - David Longman



9th December

At Hitchin

(14:00 – 16:30, doors open from 13:30)

In the early years of this century, David Longman made a series of trips to photograph the remaining steam locomotives working on the narrow gauge sugar lines in Java. Unwilling to join an organised group he travelled the length of the island by bus, motorcycle and becak, locating the various 'pabrik gula' and bringing back a snapshot not only of the railways but also the lives of the people of this Indonesian island. Whilst there is now little or nothing left of these wonderful little railways, as road transport has rendered them largely redundant, David will be recalling the people he met, the 'Beast Of Tasik Madu' and places he visited during his photographic wanderings.

The December Presentations (2)

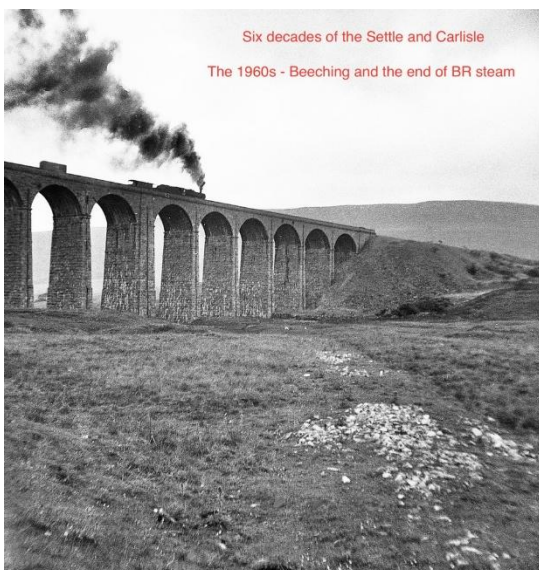
Six Decades of the Settle & Carlisle - Michael Smyth



46115 passes Blea Moor on its first run after overhaul on 7/2/09 (after many years out of service).

30th December

At Digswell, Welwyn (14:00 - 16:30, doors open from 13:30)



Six decades of the Settle and Carlisle
The 1960s - Beeching and the end of BR steam

This presentation covers the changing scene on the Settle and Carlisle from the 1960s to the present day. It features the slow decline in traffic towards its planned closure, refusal of closure, and subsequent resurgence of traffic through to the present day.

Illustrated by my own and unpublished images taken throughout this period capturing not just the trains but the scenic setting of this line in its ever changing and at times extreme weathers.

Michael Smyth

Sign of The Times – CoPilot



A beautiful new village sign has recently been installed in Digswell, at the bottom of Harmer Green Lane, near the junction with Hertford Road and New Road. This striking landmark celebrates Digswell's rich heritage and natural beauty.

Designed by "The Village Sign People", the sign features a steam train crossing the iconic Digswell Viaduct, a kingfisher perched by the River Mimram, and the year 1086—marking Digswell's first mention in the Domesday Book.

Standing over three metres tall, the pierced metal sign was mounted directly into the ground, creating a bold and lasting impression.

This project was made possible thanks to generous support from Siemens Mobility Ltd,

who pledged £6,000 toward its production. (Siemens recently had a base in the village for the ECML digital signalling programme.) Welwyn Parish Council secured the necessary permissions and will maintain the sign as part of its infrastructure portfolio.

The new sign has already become a symbol of Digswell pride and a warm welcome to all who pass through the village.

(Ed: An example of using AI, in this case CoPilot, to produce an article. The background to the picture is fake!—a photo with this background is impossible)

Solution to the December Puzzle (page13)

1. **B**rixham. 2. **R**eading. 3. **I**nce Castle. 4. **S**apperton. 5. **T**oddington.
6. **O**ver. 7. **L**angford. 8. **T**enby Castle. 9. **E**vesham. 10. **M**arlborough.
11. **P**owerstock. 12. **L**iskerd 13. **E**rth. 14. **M**anor. 15. **E**astbury Grange.
16. **A**bbotsbury. 17. **D**anzey. 18. **S**hrewsbury.

Answer – BRISTOL TEMPLE MEADS

Martin Elms

Newsletter Distribution

This e-newsletter, *Railway Ramblings*, 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

Workshop Wanderings, in Bury! – Steve Lacey

This month I bring greetings from Bury, Lancashire. As I write this, on the 4th floor of the Bury Premier Inn, I can hear the trams rumbling by every few minutes! Carol and I came up on Friday 17th October to help at the East Lancashire Railways (ELR) Midland Gala.



For those who don't know the ELR, as the name suggests it is situated in Lancashire about 7 miles to the north of Manchester city centre. It is centered on Bury Bolton Street Station and the line is 12 miles long, from Heywood in the south to Rawtenstall in the north. It runs along the Irwell Valley, with a mix of scenery both industrial and glorious countryside. The main shed is network rail connected in Bury at Baron Street, but so well hidden I have yet to find it, except on Google maps! Ironically for me, this line, which we have chosen as the new home for 92 Squadron 34081, was closed by BR exactly on my date of birth, 17th March 1951!

For the Gala the 92 *Squadron* team had a promotional stand on the platform and 92 was in the Bay Platform, having been cleaned by the ELR team. They had also “dressed” her in full “Golden Arrow” livery. Although occasionally hauled by a Battle of Britain locomotive, this was usually a Merchant Navy diagram. There is no evidence that 92 ever hauled “The Arrow”, but it is believed she did haul the “Night Ferry” (its night-time equivalent) on the odd occasion.



In addition to our usual fund raising efforts, we are specifically trying to raise money for a retube as part of her pending overhaul. As I believe I have said before, 92 *Squadron* had worked before Christmas on the ELR Santa Specials, but after the holiday she suddenly became a 2-cylinder locomotive, as a valve ring in the valve cylinder broke, became detached and bent the combination rod! Nothing drastic, but much easier to fix with the boiler off. In addition, there were a couple of leaking tubes and some rivets loose in the frame spacers. All this, and with only 18 months left on the boiler certificate, it lead the committee to the decision to go for an early overhaul.

The loco is now due to enter Riley's at Easter, after their winter maintenance programme is finished. With 2 leaking tubes, we felt that a total retube in the overhaul would be the sensible course of action, hence the fund raising effort. As well as an appeal to our members, we are appealing to the public. As part of this we welcomed people onto the footplate of 92 over the weekend, chatted to them about her history, explained the controls and then “invited” them to make a contribution! Over the 3 days we took £357.52 towards the tube appeal (mostly also gift aided!) with another £886 taken on the stand. Not a bad weekend's work. Hopefully my poster helped them part with their cash, along with sheltering from torrential rain on the Sunday in a commodious weather tight Bulleid cab!

I have put details of the appeal at the end of this article. It helps to demonstrate the scope of the work and how much each tube will cost.

Any donations would be much appreciated – just click on the donate link.

The Gala was most impressive with an intensive service using a great variety of motive power, including Stanier Mogul 13268, Ivatt 46441 and for me, the star of the show Furness Railway No 20 paired with the Great Eastern saloon and L&Y saloon, a vehicle very similar to the Old Gentleman's coach in "The Railway Children".



No 20 was built in Manchester by Sharp Stewart and Company in 1863 and is the oldest working steam locomotive in the country. A beautiful locomotive for the crew to work on, except when the heavens opened on the Sunday!

Another attractive pairing was the Pug and a rectangular tank wagon.



The Pug was built in 1910 at the Horwich works for the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (LYR 19), later being acquired by the LMS as their No 11243. The locomotive was allocated to Newton Heath shed in 1921 and was withdrawn ten years later and sold to John Mowlem the construction company, named *Bassett* and used by its owner on a contract to extend Southampton docks.

In 1923 it was sold to George Cohen & Sons Ltd, locomotive dealers, who sold it in 1935 when it was renamed *Prince* at Charlton, London at the works of United Glass Bottle Manufacturing Ltd. It remained there for the rest of its working life. In 1967 it went to Haworth after a short spell at the Luton depot of the London Railway Preservation Society. It was transferred to the ownership of what is now the LYR Trust in 1969.

A trial steaming at Haworth showed that extensive work was required, so No 19 became a static exhibit, first at Oxenhope and subsequently at Steamport Southport, the former L&Y shed. When that organisation relocated to the Ribble Steam Railway at Preston the locomotive also relocated. In January 2020 the locomotive was moved to the East Lancashire Railway where it was on display as part of the "Lanky" themed gala.

By January 2021 the locomotive had been dismantled with the saddle tank, cab and boiler all lifted off the frames. This enabled non-destructive testing work to be undertaken. This found that the boiler was in a good condition. It is thought that a new barrel was fitted at some point before the locomotive was sold into industrial service in 1931.

In February 2021 the East Lancashire Railway overhauled the locomotive and in February 2022 a fire was lit in the boiler for the first time since the early 1970s. It underwent a steam test at the East Lancs Railway shortly afterwards and returned to steam in April 2022.

In short she has had a long and very varied history!

There were also many large engines in steam during the Gala, but the one that caught my eye was BR Standard 4MT 80097. Built in 1954 at Brighton works (6 years after *92 Squadron* was built there) she spent time on the Eastern, Western and finally Midland before withdrawal in 1965.



My soft spot was because, as children, my wife Carol and I (before we knew each other) both were taken across the river on the steam ferry from Gravesend to Tilbury Riverside Station by our respective Grandparents. From there we travelled behind this class of loco steam - hauled to Southend in my case, or Chalkwell for Carol, where we had a day by the sea. Carol always points out that Chalkwell was classier.....yes, but Southend was more fun!

Also at Bury, is the ELR's Bury Transport Museum, just across the road from Bolton Street Station, but that will have to wait until next time ...

Steve Lacey

Ed: The *92 Squadron* tube appeal is on the next page.

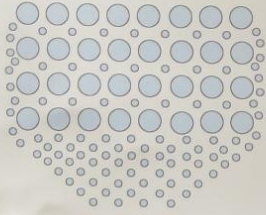
34081 92 Squadron Tube Appeal



Glasgow has 1, London has 11, 92 Squadron has 144!



Help sponsor a tube and get us back in steam by Easter 2028.



92 has:
32 large tubes @£270
112 small tubes @£90
Total cost £18,720

92 SQUADRON TUBE APPEAL – DONATION FORM

Name: Membership No.

Address:

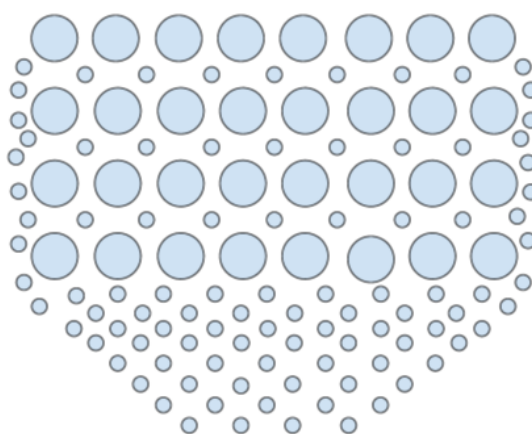
I/We wish to donate the sum of £..... towards a large / small tube(s)
(If you wish to specify tube(s) you are donating towards please highlight them on the below layout accordingly.)

Please forward a copy of this form showing your selected tube(s) together with donation by cheque to:
BBLS Treasurer, 47 Gonville Crescent, Stevenage, Hertfordshire. SG2 9LY, or

OR send your donation by Bank Transfer to the following account:
Name: THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN LOCOMOTIVE SOCIETY
Sort Code: 40-10-02
Account No: 31426974

Please show your donation as 'Tube Appeal'

Then email a completed form to 92squadron@sky.com



Posters used on the 92 Squadron stand

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