

Railway Ramblings

Issue 191

June 2026

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



4953 *Pitchford Hall* departs North Weald, towards Ongar, passing under the station footbridge

At the Epping Ongar Railway “Western Workhorses” Spring Steam Gala, 17-19 April 2026

Photo: Hugh Driscoll

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 June 2026

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

9th June **The Railways of South Wales in Transition**

Jeremy Segrott

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

30th June **An A-Z of Swiss Railways (Part 3)**

Steve Ollive

Please Note - Programme Change

The previously advertised 9 June 2026 meeting topic at Hitchin “London Underground Trains of the Past – Brian Hardy” has been changed. Brian is no longer able to travel to give presentations.

During July 2026

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

4th July **A Plug for Brunel**

Colin Brading

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

28th July **A Tale of Three Countries**

Geoff May

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 RCTS 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

Last month, after reporting briefly on the AGM I was asked to publish names and pictures of your committee! In response, our editor has put together a “rogue’s gallery” which you will find in this issue of *Railway Ramblings*. Now, aided also by the lanyard name-badges, you will know who to speak to on any branch matter – whether or not you get as appropriate answer only you will know!

At our first committee meeting since the AGM we have agreed that our plan for the August outing is to go to Mangapps Railway & Museum. We previously visited Mangapps (Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex) in 2018 and those who went had a most enjoyable day. Since then John Jolly, the museum owner, has given a presentation to our branch (June 2023) and we know from that just how much has been added since our earlier visit. The lead organiser for our outing will be John Dossett.

The date for the visit is **Sunday 16th August** – so put it in your diary. Family and friends can be invited to take part and we will, as in recent years, be subsidising the event from branch funds. **At this point** it will greatly help our planning if you will let John know whether or not you are likely to take part (and how many are likely to be in your party) . Further details in next month’s *Railway Ramblings*.

In line with their previously published decision the committee have now started to dispose of books that have been around for over two months. However, from the start of June you can still expect to find used books for sale at meetings - but once they have been on offer for over two months they will go – and, as a consequence, I am again now able to accept book donations, which will then be on sale for the nominal two months.

A reminder to those of you coming to meetings at Digswell that building works on the church hall are now well underway. This work will continue through to November 2026. In each issue of *Railway Ramblings* we will try to keep you up-to-date with progress (see p 23 in this issue). If you have any concerns about coming please contact our Branch Secretary (Dave Elsdon) on 01438 714277.

Steve Lacey

Lanyard Badges

The general consensus is that since their introduction our lanyard name-badges have been a great help in generating a good “buzz” at meetings.

If you already have a badge please remember to bring it with you and wear it at meetings.

A few new ones have been issued recently but I am sure that there are now quite a few fairly regular attendees who do not have badges. If this applies to you, please ask John Dossett (or any of the other committee members) and we will willingly produce one for you.

A reminder that these badges are available to members and non-members.



Aspall Halt Takes Shape

Back in May 2025 the Permanent Way team made a commitment to undertake the construction of the new Aspall Halt platform and to have it ready for passengers to alight by Easter 2026 and, on 25 March, they achieved their target with 10 days to go.



There is more landscaping to do before the destination is complete, but the Middy has come a long way in a short space of time thanks to the PW Team and other specialist volunteers.

Everyone involved has given so much to this project and thanks to them all for their help, commitment, skill and goodhearted companionship, which means that Aspall Halt has been open since Easter for visitors to take in the way the line used to run through the glorious Suffolk countryside..

Trains can now be operated by two locos in steam, with the locos changing over at Dovebrook Halt, to add interest for families and enthusiasts. This means that some trains could leave Brockford, disappear from sight and later return pulled by a different engine – magic!

During March, Aspall Halt went from just a platform to a station with its own running-in board and with its first building in situ and during the season more facilities are expected to be available. The atmosphere of the old rural railway is being faithfully recreated to help visitors enjoy their Middy experience.

(Information and photographs reproduced courtesy of the MSLR)

The June Puzzle – Martin Elms

This month it is an LNER flavour:

The first letter of each answer should spell an LNER subject

1. Name of locomotive 60082 ? <i>Gow</i>	
2. Station at end of branch from Burnmouth	
3. ? Garden City	
4. Tunnel near Riding Mill	
5. Locomotive depot with code 56B	
6. Name of locomotive 62772 <i>The</i> ?	
7. Station near Felixstowe	
8. Watertroughs near Newham	
9. Station near Wisbech	

10. ? High and Beach	
11. Name of locomotive 62677 ? <i>Ochiltree</i>	
12. ? Swing Bridge south of York	
13. Locomotive depot with code 52D	
14. Viaduct near Berwick	
15. Name of locomotive 60136	
16. Station north of Long Melford	

Best of luck.

My answer to each of the questions and solution to the puzzle are on page 23.

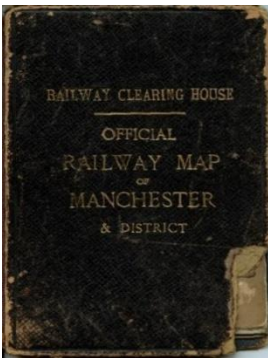
Martin Elms

How It All Began, Part 2 - Derek Boothby

“Holidays & Excursions”

Last month, in Part 1 “How It All Began” I attempted to describe how my enthusiasm for railways (and the LMS in particular) started very early in my life. This time, in Part 2, I cover how family holidays and school excursions broadened my railway experiences.

Every year for our family holiday we went, from Whaley Bridge, to Rhyl. The first stage of this adventure was the familiar local train, usually comprised of four suburban compartment coaches and a Fowler 2-6-4T, to Stockport Edgeley where we had to change platforms to travel back south to Crewe. To me, at the time, this train was a novelty because it had corridors and a big engine – later I discovered it was a Black Five. I had never heard of the places the train was going to! Changing platforms at Crewe for the train to Rhyl I once saw a really big engine. It must have made a deep impression on me because I have remembered it's name ever since. It was *Queen Maud*. (46211).



My well-used Railway Map of Manchester & District.



Our route to Rhyl took us through Chester where I saw some engines that looked quite different from those I was used to. These, I learnt, were Great Western engines. There is a road overbridge by the station at Rhyl which we had to cross on the way to and from the shops and beach and, of course, I always looked over. It was here that I had taken my first photographs in 1956. That year we had a coach trip to Holyhead where a similarly located over-bridge provided a good vantage point.

More of my first railway photos - Rhyl 1956 & Holyhead 1956



Rhyl 1956

Holyhead 1956

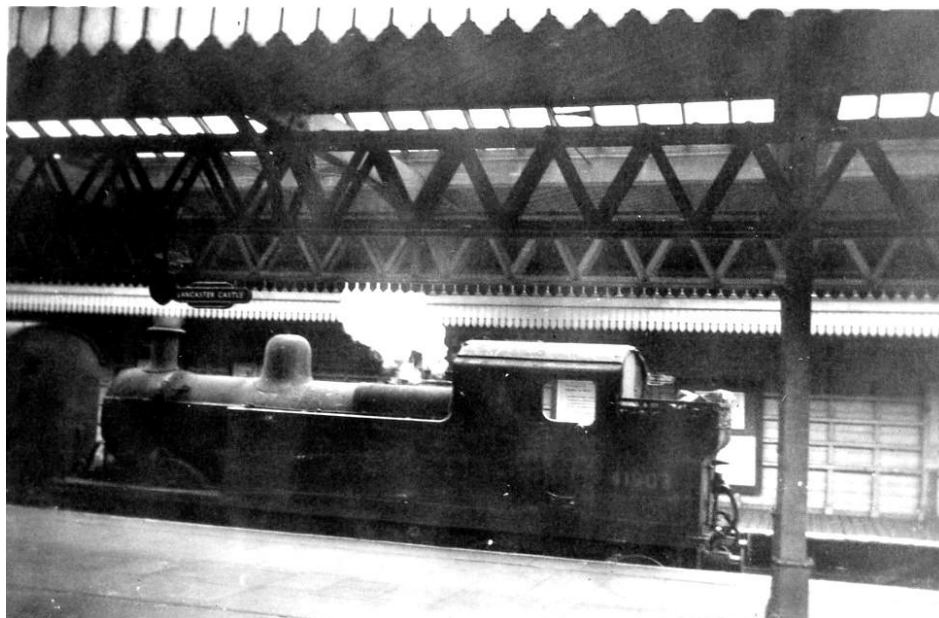
(Pity about the pole!)



Sunday School excursions were part of tradition in the north west. Every year (until Beeching put an end to such frivolity) one started from the village for Morecambe or Southport, picking up cargo on the way through the Mancunian suburbs. In 1957 the destination was Morecambe and I again took my brother's camera. The first stage of the journey was along the familiar route to Stockport, but at Heaton Norris we left the main line to Manchester (London Road) and took the ex-LNWR line to Stalybridge.



A stop was made at Denton to pick up more passengers and at Denton Junction we branched off the Stalybridge line and took the line to Droylsden where we joined the ex-Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. Passing through Manchester Victoria we regained the LNWR at Manchester Exchange station. We passed through Patricroft where I managed to photograph an ex-LNWR 0-8-0 outside the shed (*photo on previous page*). Here we left the Liverpool line and headed through Tyldesley to join the main line through Lancaster to Hest Bank where the line to Morecambe branches off the main line to Carlisle. At Lancaster I photographed one of the ten 0-4-4T engines built by Stanier in 1932. Nine of these were withdrawn in 1959.



Stanier 0-4-4T at Morecambe 1957

When the destination was Southport the route was the same as far as Manchester Victoria, from where we accessed the ex-Lancashire and Yorkshire direct line to Southport through Hindley and Wigan Wallgate.

But time passes and the next year was my final year at school. So, like Nellie the elephant I packed my trunk, pocketed my A-level results and set off for pastures new, way out east. To a new area for exploration – the City of Hull and the East Riding of Yorkshire. However, I did not have a camera for the next few years (I had been using my brother's) and so do not have any photographic records of this time.

Next time, in Part 3, I will pick up my recollections when I got a new camera.

Derek Boothby

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

The Branch Committee

Elected at the 2026 AGM, to serve until the 2027 AGM.



Steve Lacey
Chairman



Dave Elsdon
Secretary



Paul Holloway
Treasurer



Dave Cornelius



John Dossett
Newsletter



Hugh Driscoll



Tony Stratford

Book Sales at Branch Meetings

New RCTS Books

These will continue to be available at branch meetings, by ordering from the Branch Chairman. This saves you the cost of postage. Discounts are usually available to RCTS members.

Pre-Owned Books

Substantial stocks have accumulated over recent years. This stock was available for purchase until the end of May 2026. After that, much of that remaining has been given to worthy causes or destroyed.

New additions (often from the estate of former members) can now be received and will be on offer for no less than four branch meetings after receipt, after which any remaining books will be given to worthy causes or destroyed.

Ketton & Rutland Railway Museum

(now known as "Rocks by Rail") - Colin Conway

Incorporating additional information and photos from Ketton Parish Council



On Easter Monday (2026) I made one of my occasional visits to Cottesmore (Rutland) where it is always interesting to see the changes since my last visit. I went via Ketton where my photo show somebody's garden rose arch over the signalbox entrance at the level crossing.

A visit to "Rocks by Rail" is far, far better on a Quarry Railway day than a day when just brake van trips are available. I did not take any photos on this visit as my previous visits over many years had covered the site & included steam. I sometimes now take few photos on sites previously visited preferring to have a relaxing day just riding, watching what's going on & chatting to some of the staff.

The Ketton Cement Works does have very occasional Open Days, some years ago including some visiting steam locos, but in general these are poorly advertised mainly aimed at local community. In fact I didn't find out about the last one until after the event!

On to Cottesmore, where brake van rides were available all day, plus the Quarry line was operating which provides much spectacle involving 3 locos, 1 at each end for shunting plus third hauling wagons back & forth. There is much to see along the line & in the two buildings but a visit is definitely best on Quarry

Railway days which in 2026 are 4 & 25 May, 28 June, 26 July, 31 August, 27 September & 18 October. Presently the operation is all industrial diesels but they are awaiting return of overhauled boiler for one of the steam locos.

The Railway at Ketton

Ketton railway station was opened by Midland Railway on 1st May 1848 to passengers. The waiting shelter was built in 1872 - the same time as the single storey extension to the station building. In 1935 the station was renamed "Ketton and Collyweston". The station closed to passengers on 6 June 1966. The station buildings were demolished in 1973.



Ketton Cement works and Ketton Stone had its own rail siding (known as "Wards Sidings") which enabled it to haul coal by train. The rail siding opened in 1928 and closed in 1963.

The Cement Works

In 1921, a Sheffield builder called Frank Walker bought 1174 acres of Ketton parish, most of which consisted of old quarries and clay pits, to build a cement works on. In 1925 he established a small concrete block factory company under the name "Walkers Ketton Stone Company", and by 1927 was looking to raise the capital for a cement works. The project was taken up by Sheffield businessmen Joseph and Thomas Ward.



Frank Walker sold his business to the newly formed "Ketton Portland Cement Company" in July 1928, followed by his land at Ketton in August. Work began on the cement works on 1 August 1928, with much of the machinery and railway equipment coming from Wards. The

first full weekly wage-bill of £202.2.11 was paid on the week ending 10 August 1928 for about 90 men. By the week ending 8 November, the wage bill had risen to over £600 for around 250 men and boys, which were at work on the site.

One of the initial factors in the location of the plant, other than the high quality of lime and silica clays present onsite, was the proximity of the LMS Birmingham to Peterborough Line, to the south of the factory. In 1928 Ketton Cement Works had its own rail siding (known as "Wards Sidings") which enabled it to receive and dispatch train loads of cement while receiving fuel into the plant.

During the Second World War, the demand for cement increased hugely due to the construction of military bases and defences, but, as with most industry at the time, Ketton Cement suffered hugely from labour shortages due to the call-up of most able-bodied men. Further growth continued into the 1960s as the mass slum clearances lead to mass redevelopment in towns and cities.

The rail siding closed in 1963. Kilns 1-4 were closed in 1986 followed by Kilns 5-6 in 1987. These have now been demolished and the area where they stood now grassed over. Only Kilns 7 and 8 still stand.

In 1981, Thomas W Ward company became part of Rio Tinto Zinc [RTZ] and Ketton Cement was rebranded as "Castle Cement". In 1989 Castle Cement passed into the ownership of Scancem until they were bought by Heidelberg Cement in 1999. In 2007 Hanson Plc was bought by Heidelberg and became Hanson Cement.



The line into the Cement Works (photo taken from the Stamford -- Uppingham Road).

Trains still take products from the works, the tower in the background of the photo is where wagons are loaded. The connection onto the Midland Railway Oakham--Peterborough line is someway east of the level crossing and trains of wagons can sometimes be seen in the exchange siding awaiting collection, normally by a Class 66.

For further details of the "Rocks by Rail" museum and activities visit their website at:

rocks-by-rail.org – [The living ironstone quarry museum in Rutland UK.](http://rocks-by-rail.org)

Colin Conway

(ED: Ketton railway history and cement works details reproduced courtesy of Ketton Parish Council)



Father's Drive DL83

The Perfect Father's Day treat

20 & 21 June 2026



All small boys once had a train set and spent hours watching trains go round and round the track. This Father's Day, give Dad or Grandad the chance to **take the controls for real** at the Nene Valley Railway.

Drive Shunting Locomotive No. DL83 from Wansford to the tunnel and back, under the guidance of our experienced crew.

The Pump Trolley will also be available on the day for anyone who would like to have a go and experience a taste of traditional track work.

Just £40 per participant. (Includes a Father's Day Gift Bag, including three bottles of NVR-labelled beer).

Important – Accessibility

Due to the nature of the locomotive and yard environment, this experience is not suitable for wheelchair users. Participants must be able to climb onto the locomotive and safely operate equipment within the yard.

For details and bookings: [Father's Drive DL83 | Nene Valley Railway Ltd](#)

(Reproduced courtesy of the NVR)



Wartime and Rationing Weekend

13 & 14 June 2026

Visit the Epping Ongar Railway for a taste of life during wartime and rationing.



Come and step back in time, immerse yourself in a flavour of what a rural British steam railway could have appeared in the height of summer, as 'forties-dressed civilians and British and Allies military personnel, Home Guard, ARP Wardens, American GIs and other re-enactors mingle with passengers, and period road vehicles running to and fro.

Ride on the beautifully preserved fleet of vintage buses, included in your fare! Stations and passenger trains will be specially adorned and decorated. From the moment you arrive, you'll be immersed in the sights, sounds, and spirit of wartime Britain, with music, entertainment, and re-enactments bringing the era to life.

Passengers are encouraged to come dressed in 1940s style civilian clothing.

Heritage steam and diesel trains will be in operation between North Weald, Ongar and Epping Forest, together with connecting vintage London buses from Epping Underground station and Shenfield stations. These, and all the other attractions, are included in our great value fares!



For further details and to make bookings visit:

[Wartime and Rationing Weekend | Epping Ongar Railway](#)

(Reproduced courtesy of the EOR).



Brake Van Rides

An Addition to Scheduled Services

On 21 June (and 20 September)



There's something extra special on Sundays 21 June (and 20 September) - Sentinel Engine 'Joyce' will be offering Brake Van Rides at Princes Risborough - between service trains - running between 10.30 and 15.30.

The Brake Van rides will take place between Platform 4 at Princes Risborough to the section signal on the independent line, offering a chance to travel behind a unique locomotive, on track that is not often travelled in passenger service.



You don't have to pre-book - just turn up and wait on the day. There is no charge for these rides, but a cash or card donation of between £2- £5 is suggested for travelling.

There's no restrictions on the age of travellers, but there will be a limit of 10 people on each trip.

(Please note that if you have travelled on a service from Chinnor and take a brake van ride you will need to catch a later train back to Chinnor).

(Information and photographs reproduced courtesy of the C&PRR)

The June Presentations (1)

The Railways of South Wales in Transition

- Jeremy Segrott



Class 756 unit 756108 departing Aberdare (platform 1) with the 1F54 1051 service for Cardiff Central (May 2025).

9th June

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

Jeremy Segrott, will give an illustrated talk on the many changes that have taken place on the railways of south Wales over the last ten years. The first hour travels east to west from Severn Tunnel Junction to Carmarthen, charting the electrification of the South Wales Main Line, the arrival of new trains, and the decommissioning of signal boxes and mechanical signalling in West Wales. Part Two turns to the Valley Lines north of Cardiff, which have seen major investment through the South Wales Metro. Jeremy will explore the electrification of the network, extensive infrastructure upgrades, and the transformation of the rolling stock — from 1980s Pacers to the superb new Stadler FLIRT fleet. Based in Cardiff, Jeremy illustrates the talk with his own photography. He is a lifelong railway enthusiast, Chair of the RCTS South Wales Branch, and, now, the Society's Branch Liaison Officer.

Presentations Offered by Neighbouring Branches

Make the most of your RCTS membership. Why not attend a presentation offered by a neighbouring RCTS branch (Cambridge, Milton Keynes, Peterborough, South Essex, and Watford) The details are available in the *Railway Observer* and on the RCTS website.

The June Presentations (2)

An A-Z of Swiss Railways (Part 3)

- Steve Ollive



Rhätische Bahn nos: 53 and 55 arriving at Alp Grüm with a Bernina Express service from Tirano to St. Moritz on 19 February 2022.

Transport de Martigny et Regions no: 513 at Orsières with a service to Martigny.



30th June

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

Part 3 of An A to Z of Swiss Railways covers the private railways from N to Z which includes several mountain railways as well as the largest of the metre gauge systems. We will see railways from all parts of the country on both standard and narrow gauge railways. Nearly all of the photographs were taken on RCTS trips so Switzerland in the 2010s, with some more recent updates. An introduction to each company forms part of the presentation..

Workshop Wanderings – Steve Lacey

This month, as promised in my May Workshop Wanderings, I will continue by taking you on a tour of the East Lancs Railway (ELR) workshop at Baron Street, Bury. My host was Steve Banfield.



Steve Banfield beside diesel shunter 03 BR 0-6-0 Class 03 No.D2062

Around the works were parts of LMS 13065 a Hughes Fowler 2-6-0 'Crab' Power Class 6-P / 5-F Ex-BR 42765. To the untrained eye (me) the only recognisable part was the tender respondent in Midland red.



My apologies for poor quality photos, but as you will appreciate; the works is a bit crowded! Another rare sight in the workshop is the Metropolitan-Vickers "Co-Bo", or "MetroVick", Class 28 D5705. It is fitted with an original Crossley V8 2 stroke 1200hp engine. Built in 1958 -59 they were unreliable and withdrawn by 1968. The group restoring it have almost completed the task.....I just hope it manages to get as far as Bury station, so that it can be seen! Sadly

a picture of this rare beast was impossible, but I did manage to record Bo-Bo Class 15 D8233, a member of another less than successful class. of 44 locomotives. Also known as "BTH Type 1". Designed by British Thomson-Houston, they were built by the Yorkshire Engine Company and the Clayton Equipment Company between 1957 and 1961. They were powered by a 16 cylinder Paxman 800 hp engine They were withdrawn in the late 1980's and this is the sole surviving example.



.The list of rarities goes on and on.



On the left is English Electric No 1378 a centre cab battery-electric locomotive built-in 1944 by Dick Kerr at their Preston works. Rated at 54 hp it could work on battery, or via 500vDC via its pantograph. It could move 275 tons on level ground at 4.8 mph and was initially

delivered to the South Wales Electric Power Co for shunting at their Upper Boat generating plant. In the early 70's it moved to a power station in Bolton. After preservation in 1978 it worked for a while at the Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI) in Manchester and finally the ELR. Apparently it has some very unique and historic batteries which need replacing. Perhaps a museum would like them and Elon Musk could provide a Tesla battery for it to reemerge as a GT version!

On the right is D832 "Warship" BR Bo-Bo Class 42 *Onslaught*. One of only two Class 42 'Warships' in preservation, it was built in 1961 in Swindon. It is a diesel-hydraulic, which was used on the Western Region of BR until withdrawn in 1972. Powered by 2 Maybach MD650 engines it was rated at 2,270 hp with a maximum speed of 95 mph. As non-standard they had a relatively short working life being replaced by "conventional" diesel electric locos.



Another product of Swindon was D1041 BR Co-Co Class 52 "Western Prince" though this particular one was built at Crewe in 1962. Again a diesel-hydraulic with Maybach power unit, though this time 2 MD655 units giving 2,700hp. making her capable of 90mph. Once again early withdrawal as a non-standard class came in 1977, followed by a move to Bury.



A more "conventional" diesel is D5279 ex-BR Bo-Bo Class 25. Built in 1965 by Beyer Peacock in Manchester. A diesel electric powered by a Sulzer 6LDA28-B producing 1,250 hp giving a top speed of 75mph. Of the 327 built 20 are preserved. Delivered new to Tinsley depot, she was withdrawn in 1987, sent to Vic Berry's scrapyards, but entered preservation in 1988 ending up at the ELR via: Llangollen, Chinnor & Risborough, Gloucester & Warwickshire, Northampton and Lamport, Great Central Railways and finally the ELR! She must have travelled further afield in preservation than she ever did in service!



There is an example of a Jinty in immaculate condition (yes I could see my face in it) but the only picture I could manage was the builders plate. She is ex LMS Fowler 0-6-0s 3F BR 47324

Slightly easier to photograph was 80097 a Standard Class 4 built in 1954 at Brighton works (like her more illustrious cousin 34081....well I would say that!).



Initially shedded at Plaistow then Tilbury, then Stratford she worked the London Tilbury and Southend line until displaced by electrification in 1962. I may well have travelled behind her on our annual trips to "sowfend" as a child! She then went to Swansea East dock, Oswestry and finally Machynlleth then was withdrawn in 1965. Sold to Dai Woodhams scrapyards, she left there for Bury in 1985.



Rather more delicate was this little beauty which we were told was a Peckett 0-4-0 saddle tank which I believe is a long term resident at the ELR. For some reason, it is not listed on the ELR website and I cannot find more information, which is a bit frustrating. If you can fill in the details, I would be most happy.

At the other end of the scale was this “Large Prairie” from the GWR!



GWR 2-8-2T No 7229 was designed by Charles Collett and originally built in Swindon as 2-8-0 No 5264. They were designed for short haul Welsh coal traffic, but when coal traffic reduced after the stock market crash of 1929, they were rebuilt in 1935 with bigger bunkers and two extra carrying wheels under the bunker to give more range and flexibility. Re numbered 7229 It spent its whole life in South Wales on coal trains. Withdrawn in 1964 and sold to Dai Woodhams, leaving his scrap yard in 1984 for the ELR. In the shed there were other locos including a USA tank, Class 14 and many others... see the ELR website.

Steve Lacey

Solution to the June Puzzle (page 5)

1. Neil. 2. Eyemouth. 3. Welwyn. 4. Corbridge. 5. Ardsley. 6. Sinninton.
7. Trimley. 8. Lucker. 9. Emneth. 10. Cromer. 11. Edie. 12. Naburn.
13. Tweedmouth. 14. Royal Border. 15. Alacazar. 16. Lavenham.

Answer NEWCASTLE CENTRAL

Martin Elms

Meetings at Digswell - Update

The work to rebuild the Digswell Village Church Hall continues and is expected to last throughout the rest of 2026. It has recently become more of a construction site and less of a demolition site!

The church authorities have been largely successful in providing us with temporary accommodation in what is the main body of the church and we are grateful to them for that.

The temporary facilities (a toilet & small kitchen) have been provided and proper access paths installed. A completely new doorway has been added to give access to the church and the original main access closed. For the present, our access is past the temporary facility block and around to a new doorway at the other side of the main church building.

David Holdstock, who masterminds the delivery of refreshments during the interval of each meeting, has been doing an admirable job in coping with the temporary facilities.

For anyone interested in the detail of what is being built the most authoritative source should be the WHBC website. On their "Planning Applications" section look for application 6/2025/0777/FULL and chose "documents".

John Dossett

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

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. The committee comprises Steve Lacey (Chairman), David Elsdon (Secretary), Paul Holloway (Treasurer), Dave Cornelius, Hugh Driscoll, Tony Stratford and John Dossett (Newsletter Editor). The Railway Correspondence & Travel Society is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation Registered with the Charities Commission.