

# N.E.L.P.G. NEWS



**NO.207 FEB.2002**

## EDITORIAL

Over the years there has been a tendency amongst some members, including some on the Committee, to suggest various restoration schemes which, though quite laudable and logical, would have stretched the Group's limited resources too far. For a long time now there has been a danger that we 'spread the jam too thinly' but with prudent decision making and planning we have managed — often by the skin of our teeth — to achieve our various objectives. A timely reminder of the Committee's perennial dilemma, and recounted in the Locomotive Report in this issue, is the concentration of the volunteer workforce on the K1 in order to get it ready for its run to Bury, but at the temporary expense of progress on the J27.

Not wishing to labour the point too much, but whilst the Group might be in a sound financial position, our precious volunteer resources are still stretched to the full and we must therefore plan our future work load with this in mind and not take on more than we can cope with. Some concerns have been expressed by some members that there is no prospect of the Q7 being overhauled again. The Committee's decision — and the Committee is elected by the membership to make such decisions, however hard or unpopular they might seem to be — was a realistic one: there are other priorities, such as the long awaited overhaul of the Q6, which, for the foreseeable future, *must* take precedence over the Q7. However, should circumstances change that might facilitate a return to steam, then this issue will certainly be enthusiastically revisited since I am sure that members of the Group and the Committee alike would love to see the Q7 back in steam, though not at the expense of the Group's other aims and commitments.

As the new season approaches things seem to be going rather well! The J27 should be fit for the start of NYMR services on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, the Q6 frames should be going to Darlington during March, and the K1's somewhat unexpected railtour on 23<sup>rd</sup> February was an all-round success. The icing on the cake would be a positive response from the boiler insurance company on the future of the A2 — the outcome of the examination of the firebox was encouraging so fingers are crossed!

## **LOCOMOTIVE REPORT by Richard Pearson, Martin Lloyd & Paul Hutchinson**

### **J27 No. 65894**

There has been little activity on the J27 as efforts have been concentrated on the K1 to prepare it for the main line run on 23<sup>rd</sup> February. However, after the preparation and fitting of ferrules by Maurice Johnson, the NYMR has now completed the retubing of the boiler by expanding and beading the tubes.

NELPG volunteers were expected to 'box up' the boiler (i.e. replace all fusible and washout plugs, hand hole and mud hole doors) in readiness for a hydraulic test, trial steaming and insurance company steaming by the second week in March so that the locomotive would be available for the commencement of the NYMR season on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

Other work carried out has included the annual recalibration of all the cab gauges, stripping and examination of the cab fittings, and overhaul of the safety valves. A new set of safety valve springs, together with a set for the Q6, have been ordered.

Besides the preparation for the imminent steamings, the other outstanding jobs are the construction of a new brick arch in the firebox and the fabrication of a new smokebox spark arrester.

A piston and valve examination is due soon and is pencilled in for the July/August period when the locomotive would not be expected to see use on the NYMR. The long overdue repaint into NER livery should also take place at this time.

### **T2 No. 2238**

The engine frames were towed to Pickering on 7<sup>th</sup> January without problems; this was the first time the frames had moved any distance since 1982 when the locomotive was last in steam! They now await the completion of track laying at Darlington before their next move. There has been no further progress on the boiler.

óIf anybody is interest in getting involved in the overhaul of the Q6 at Darlington, then please call Richard Pearson on 07779 366796 or Fred Ramshaw on 01740 621301.

### **K1 No. 62005 (Mac Cailin Mór)**

As this is being written, the K 1 is undergoing a steam test after the first part of its winter maintenance. This is in preparation for a trip along the Esk Valley line from Grosmont to Middlesbrough and on to York and an overnight stay at the NRM. Incidentally, the Esk valley line from Grosmont to Whitby is closed at present because a derailment has extended the work being done thereon during the schools half term holiday — but that's another story. After an overnight stay at the NRM the K1 took a 10-coach train to Manchester Victoria via Hull (the obvious route!). Exciting though this is, it was really a means of getting the loco over to Ian Riley's engineering works at Bury for the continuation of the winter maintenance i.e. loco and tender tyre replacement.

The work done at Grosmont, though not from a lengthy list, was quite demanding. The cylinder liners were re-bored — probably for the last time before they will need replacing. This meant that the piston heads had to be built up with weld and machined to the new diameter and of course new rings were required. Ian Storey did the re-bore and produced a very fine finish on each bore, whilst the pistons were taken to Flavell's at Thornaby. My little van is getting used to dragging itself out of Esk Valley with pistons in the back (see A2 reports last year) but on returning home that evening I had to go on a lengthy unplanned errand and had to lug around all the extra ballast.

With a certain degree of 'stable door shutting' the intermediate draw-gear has been overhauled. This means that we now have new safety links with new pins and new draw-bar pins. We have also made sure that the fall plate cannot fall between loco and tender if ever we have another draw-bar pin failure. Meanwhile, Maurice Johnson has overhauled all the mechanical lubrication system, including the two Wakefield lubricators, the atomisers and some of the associated pipe-work. We have played the usual musical chairs with the AWS equipment trying to find the best combination of parts to ensure its reliability. The blast pipe spark arrestor has had the mesh replaced since it was getting a bit battered. (One of the problems in lighting up a cold damp loco is that the initial fire generates a fair amount of smoke and soot. The latter sticks to the damp mesh of the

spark arrestor with the result that the fire will not draw which usually fills the cab with all the products of combustion. The usual remedy is to open the smoke-box door and tap the spark arrestor with a soft brush but some individuals prefer to give it a heavy clout with a shovel). The cage was strong enough to withstand this treatment but the mesh was a little flimsy and had started to corrode away anyway.

During the functional steam tests after the above work was completed and prior to the locomotive leaving Grosmont, problems were experienced with the AWS. After much exasperating investigation the problem was traced to a single wire between the battery and the AWS control box which was inadequate to take the requisite electrical load; it was replaced with a wire to the correct specification and the AWS now works satisfactorily.

The loco arrived at Bury on the evening of Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> and went straight into traffic on the Sunday for a guest appearance at the East Lancs Railway Spring Gala. It had been planned for a NELPG working party to remove the valves on the Sunday evening whilst the engine was still warm, with a start on dismantling the following day ready for a lift to remove wheel-sets. However, as the new tyres are not due for delivery until mid-March and as the ELR would like to use the locomotive over the weekend of 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> March, this work has been postponed for three weeks.

With delivery of the new tyres imminent, members might be interested in the cost; the six 5' 2" diameter driving wheel tyres are £950 each and the six tender 3' 9" tender tyres are £750 each. Whilst the tyres are being replaced with new ones by Ian Riley, we will examine axle boxes and side rod brasses, refurbishing where necessary. Richard Campbell is lined up for this work. The boiler will be given its cold examination, by Sam Foster, whilst the loco is off its wheels. Once all the work is complete, we will need to have Sam back along with Brian Penney for the functional test which gives us our mainline ticket for another 12 months. All that remains then is for a bit of running in on the ELR then back to work — wherever that may be!

The name in the heading? Well, if the loco goes to Scotland this year (as seems likely) we have been asked if it could carry a name just for public interest. The Committee has agreed provided it is just for the Jacobite and associated services and that the name plates can be removed at the end of the season, also if requested for photo charters etc. *MacCailin Mor* seems to be the most appropriate choice.

I must pay tribute to all those who have worked to get the loco ready for the forthcoming rail-tour especially since I was not able to join in the latter stages because of repairs I had to undergo myself at rather short notice. Thanks everybody.

### **Q7 No. 901**

On display inside Deviation shed.

Further to the report in the last NEWS and contrary to a recent report in a National magazine, the locomotive will remain in the custodianship of the NELPG on display at Grosmont at least until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2004 (the expiry of the recently renewed agreement). However, whilst the Group has a commitment to operate the J27 and the K1 , and progress the major overhaul of the Q6 (with the additional possibility of work on the A2 — see below), the Committee has taken the reasonable and sound decision that it cannot allocate either funds or manpower to another overhaul of the Q7 in the foreseeable future. Nevertheless should circumstances change, the Committee would naturally review its decision.

### **J72 No. 69023**

In store in Deviation Shed.

### **A2 No. 60532 Blue Peter**

The possibility of extending the A2's boiler life has not yet been determined. However, the planned examination of the firebox and boiler by John Graham, NELPG CME, Andy I larper, NYMR Boilersmith and Sam Foster of The Engineering Link, our VAR, took place on 5<sup>th</sup> February. As a result certain areas of remedial work were identified and agreed and these include some stay and toundation ring rivet replacement. A report has been prepared and submitted to the insurance company for its consideration; a decision is now awaited. If favourable, the identified work would be started immediately with the hope that the locomotive might be available for NYMR peak season services.

The engine is currently inside Deviation shed with the tender in store outside.

## **WORKING PARTIES**

These take place every Sunday at Grosmont for work on the J27 and the A2. Contact Richard Pearson on 07779 366796 or Fred Ramshaw on 01740 621301.

If you want to help on the Q6 at Darlington please contact Fred Ramshaw.

Each of the respective Locomotive Engineers is always in need of assistance, so if you can help, please contact any of the above and come along and help out, join in the fun, and find out the latest news.

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## **DARLINGTON WORKS — PROGRESS REPORT**

Work on the building is all but complete with all construction and installation work complete and just some paint work to finish off. Thanks are due to all those who have helped out but particularly to Fred Ramshaw and Tom Young.

The only outstanding job is laying the track. A number of offers have been received but it is expected that seven track panels will be donated by Railtrack (thanks to Nick Bielby) and delivered by Jarvis, hopefully, in the very near future. In the short term it will not be possible to connect this with the adjacent DRPS line, so the Q6 frames will have to be off-loaded using a road crane from the adjacent public road, and this will involve a road closure order.

It is also planned to transfer the contents of the NELPG store in a container housed in the nearby Darlington Railway Preservation Society site into Hopetown and help is needed in carrying this out.

As proposed in the last NEWS it is confirmed that there should be working parties on Monday evenings, under the auspices of Terry Newman as Responsible Officer, and on Thursday evenings, with Fred Ramshaw as

R.O. Working parties would usually start at 18.00 and probably finish around 22.00. If you can help please either write to Fred Ramshaw or give him a ring stating which of these days you could attend.

Help would not go amiss at Hopetown now in the final preparations to receive the Q6 frames, but depending on track laying it is hoped to start the Q6 working parties proper in mid-March.

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### **SECRETARY'S REPORT by Dave Martin**

It is good to start my first report for 2002 on an upbeat note. In the last edition of NELPG NEWS I reported that one of our stalwart members, Arthur Robinson, was in a coma following a brain haemorrhage. I am very pleased to report that Arthur regained consciousness early in January and has recently been discharged from hospital. Physically he is in very good condition, although he has lost a lot of weight! However, he is struggling to regain his speech but it is early days yet. (*We all wish him well and a complete recovery — Ed.*).

Arthur was, of course, very much involved with the work at Hopetown Carriage Works. Things have moved on a lot since my last report and from the picture on the back of the December NEWS. The amenity block is finished, apart from a lick of paint here and there, and the walls have been rendered and painted. Most of the clutter inside the works has been removed or stacked away. Overall the transformation has been amazing — other than laying the track very little remains to be done.

Several members have expressed regret regarding the future of the Q7 but I can assure you that the Committee's decision was not taken lightly. Personally I would have liked to see the Q7 overhauled because I was one of the few members who worked on the Q7 back in the 1980s. Thereby lies the rub. You may recall that I circulated a questionnaire some time ago to establish how many working volunteers we could rely on in the future. Only 33 members responded positively and with that number we can only realistically work on one locomotive overhaul at a time. With an average





*Maurice Johnson working inside the smokebox of the J27 at Grosmont on 28.10.01 preparing the front tubeplate retubing (John Hunt)*



*Ian Storey care fully watching the reboring of the left hand cylinder of the K1 on 23.1.02 (John Hunt)*

overhaul time of, say, 2 ½ years, it would take 15 years to achieve a complete cycle of overhauls for our fleet of six locomotives.

So the choice was either to have locomotives in long term store or to reduce the number of locomotives that we look after. The Committee opted for the latter alternative. Another significant point was that there is no money set aside for the overhaul of the Q7. The decision was taken by the Committee many years ago that monies earned by the Q7 would go towards the Q6 overhaul, so the Q7 cupboard is bare! Assuming the Q6 overhaul takes another two years, the A2 will then be waiting for overhaul (if that is the members' wish), with the .127 due for withdrawal in 2006 and the K1 in 2008, on the expiry of their respective ten year boiler tickets. Enough said!

Finally we have sold our old support coach — BSK 99760 — to Trailways of Hawsker, near Whitby. This firm specialises in cycle hire and is based on the trackbed of the Whitby — Scarborough line. The coach will be used for storage purposes along with other railway vehicles on recently relaid track at the old station. The site is adjacent to the main Whitby to Scarborough road so the coach will be visible to all those passing by!

*(Ironically the track from Prospect Hill Junction at Whitby to Hawsker was left in situ after closure of the line to Scarborough in 1965 in the hope that it might be required in connection with the mining of potash in the area. These hopes were not realised and before the track was finally lifted an NYMR working party recovered rail and sleepers from Hawsker station in 1971 for re-use at Grosmont shed! — Ed.).*

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## **RAILTOUR REPORT**

Despite an hour's delay in the journey from Grosmont to York due to the knock-on effects of the well publicised closure of York station because of gale damage to its roof on the Friday afternoon, the K1 successfully completed its unexpected railtour on 23<sup>rd</sup> February without incident.

With ten coaches in tow, a healthy complement of 340 passengers on board and in bright but blustery conditions, the locomotive put up a spirited performance on the generally level stretches of track between York and Hull with some lively running bearing in mind the K1's speed limit of 50 mph!

Problems in setting the loco release road in Paragon station, meant that the K1 was held for nearly half an hour before it could go to Dairycoates for turning and servicing, and departure from Hull was delayed by 25 minutes as a result.

More restrained and competent running saw the K1 head its train westwards through Goole, Knottingly, Pontefract and Wakefield to the water stop at Healey Mills yard, but having lost its path the train was held for five minutes to allow a DMU to pass. Joining the Calder Valley line at Thornhill for the run through Hebden Bridge and Todmorden, was a precursor to a spirited climb up the hill to the 1 mile 1,125 yard long Summit Tunnel, before the descent to Rochdale and Manchester Victoria. On the outskirts of Manchester further delay was encountered with the train apparently running under caution as police dealt with an 'incident'! Arrival at Manchester was about forty minutes late but none of this was attributable to the locomotive. Here the K1 left the train and retraced its route, light engine, to Castleton and thence on to the East Lancs Railway.

Thanks are due to the support crew, under R.O. Terry Newman, who all performed very well, despite a cold night in the NRM's support coach at York on the Friday night, when there were strong cold winds and snow flurries. Thanks are also due to the NRM for making its facilities available for the K1 and crew, and to Peter Robinson and helpers for operating a sales stand on the special train.

As a postscript to the K1 's run, a brief report detailing any incidents or delays on a steam run is supplied to MLSOA (the Main Line Steam Operators' Association) which keeps a national record of steam performance. This is primarily to be able to rebut any claims by Railtrack or TOCs that steam locomotives have caused delays to other services. At the recent AGM of MLSOA the figures for 2001 were circulated. During the year there were 364 runs by 21 different locomotives, totalling 51,837 miles. Significantly, the K I ran 5,010 miles on the main line last year, just under 10% of the above figure!

The figures for the last five years make interesting comparison:-

YEAR	NO. OF RUNS	NO. OF LOCOS	TOTAL MILES	CASUALTIES	MILES PER CASUALTY
1997	170	14	13,238	2	6,619
1998	234	23	24,134	11	2,194
1999	297	22	41,100	8	5,013
2000	296	23	36,048	8	4,560
2001	364	21	51,837	12	4,320

A casualty represents a locomotive failure that causes delay during a main line operation; to put the miles per casualty figure into perspective, with the exception of 1998, the figures are considerably better than some modern forms of traction in everyday use on Railtrack!

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### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS by Colin Smith**

Members are reminded that this is the last issue of the NEWS that they will receive if they have not renewed their membership. Membership cards are included with this issue for those renewals made before 1<sup>st</sup> February and will be included with the April NEWS for those renewing after that date, unless a SAE is included with the renewal.

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### **COVENANTING & GIFT AID DONATIONS by John Drew**

Following the change in system introduced by the Inland Revenue in 2000 I have attempted to work both systems together for a few years until the existing covenants are due for renewal, which is quite acceptable under the new scheme. This is working satisfactorily and we have significantly increased the number of members signing up to this scheme. Several members had comments about the original form that I distributed for Gift

the income tax value of their subscriptions/donations to the Group, please complete the enclosed form and send it to me at this address:-

**18 Holburn Way,  
Ryton,  
Tyne and Wear,  
NE40 3RT.**

or alternatively e-mail me on [hdrew@fish.co.uk](mailto:hdrew@fish.co.uk) and I shall forward the form to you.

On a similar matter there have been changes to the Data Protection Act and now ALL details held on individuals by what ever means, have to be advised; previously it was only details held on computer. In light of this I have transferred details of all active covenanters/gift-aiders to my home computer; the details I hold are as follows:-

*Member No Surname Christian name or initials Address Covenant expiry date /Gift Aid? Paiment Date of payment*

This information will be retained for six years following the date of claim to the Inland Revenue and this will greatly assist the administration of the system. It may be that others in the Group need to hold other information and if so they must declare the additional information and where it is held. If any member has a problem with this or wishes to see the actual information that I hold, then please contact me.

The scheme is very valuable to the Group since all tax reclaimed helps pay the costs of running the NELPG, so please sign up if you can.

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## **LETTERS**

Dear John,

I was very disappointed to read in the latest issue of NELPG NEWS that the planned repainting of the J27 back into NER livery had again been

delayed. The reasons for this latest delay are understood but I am not clear why the repaint had been delayed until the end of 2001 in the first place.

According to the results of the original livery ballot reported in NEWS 168 the locomotive was to appear in BR livery for the first five years of its 10 year boiler life, after which it would revert to NER livery. The successful insurance company steam test took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1996. by my reckoning that means the repaint was due in April 2001. The edition of the NEWS for that month however, baldly reported that the repaint had been postponed until the autumn — without any explanation. Now we learn that the locomotive will be repainted at the "earliest opportunity". As this delay is contrary to the wishes of the membership as democratically expressed back in 1995, and a year in NER livery has now been lost, perhaps the Committee could confirm in NELPG NEWS when the repainting will now actually occur, and the reasons for the postponement in April 2001.

At the same time, could I express my concern on two other items reported in the December issue of the NEWS. Firstly, Dave Martin reports the acquisition and overhaul of a new support coach at a cost in the region of £25,000. I had understood though that the Committee limit on non-locomotive expenditure was £10,000. I am sure that this purchase was necessary and does indeed represent good value for money compared to other options, but I am not aware that the necessary approval of the membership has been given at a Special General Meeting as is required. I presume the Committee will be taking urgent action to regularize the position.

My second concern is about the reported response to the NRM over the Group's future plans for the Q7. As written, this hardly seems designed to endear the Group to the NRM but is presumably consistent with the original terms of the loan of this member of the National collection to us. Doubtless members will be kept informed of developments with the NRM in relation to the commitments the Group made when initially taking the locomotive on loan.

Chris Lawson,  
Woking.

*(I would respond to the three points as follows: -*

- 1. The great majority of the Group's earnings comes from locomotive hire and once an overhaul is complete we must maximise the earning potential of our locomotives. This is usually coincides with*

*the NYMR running season with the winter period used for annual maintenance. Members may recall that we were hard pressed to get the J27 ready for traffic last spring before it went to the KWVR and it was impossible to allocate the several weeks required to repaint and line out (a considerable task in itself) without impinging on the necessary work to get the locomotive into traffic or delaying its delivery to the KWVR. On its return from Keighley it went straight into NYMR traffic, only to be withdrawn for a boiler retube which has only now been completed. However, the Committee has no intention of not fulfilling the membership's wishes and has, over the last 12 months, endeavoured to find a contractor to carry out the livery change. Len Clarke declined to do the job, and enquiries of the painters at the SVR, KWVR, NRM, Carnforth, and Midland Railway Centre all drew a blank. Mark Holborn of the NYMR's C&W Department was lined up to do the job once a suitable window opened up. Hopefully, an end to this saga is in sight as Richard Pearson has set aside the July August period when the locomotive will not be required for NYMR traffic for the repaint.*

- 2. The expenditure on the support coach is in three separate parts — acquisition, overhaul and internal refurbishment, and none of these parts exceeds £10,000 and therefore prior approval of the membership is not required.*
- 3. The arrangement with the NRM is expanded upon in the Locomotive Report but the original agreement had been fulfilled by the Group and had expired. Recently the NRM wished to regularise the situation and suggested a three year extension of the loan. This agreement has recently been signed which expires at the end of 2004.*

*Ed.)*

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Dear John,

Following Tuesday's workers' bun fight and at your suggestion, I have done a little research into 61997's name. As usual it is not as straight forward as it first seems and perhaps warrants some debate in NELPG NEWS.

I think the idea to name the K1 for the Fort William season is an excellent one as it and the B1 are very similar, even to enthusiasts. But why not go the whole hog and renumber the locomotive 61997 and fit (easily removable/dummy) curved footplating to the front running board?



61997 was built in Darlington Works and entered service in January 1936 as No.3445. It was rebuilt as a K1/1 by Doncaster Works in December 1945. It was withdrawn in June 1961. As regards the name, originally 3442 (not 3445) entered service in July 1938 with the name *Mac Caillein Mór*, honouring the Duke of Argyll as head of Clan Campbell. The name is Gaelic derived from that of a father (or ancestor) meaning 'Great Son of Colin'. Within a fortnight, however, 3445 had been renamed at Eastfield shed *The Great Marquess*, which it still carries of course.

When 3445 entered service it was named *Mac Cailin Môr*- with the spelling altered, though why is not known. Gaelic authorities are by no means unanimous as to the spelling and several renderings have appeared in reference books. Ian Gimble in 'Clans and Chiefs' uses the spelling as used on 3442's original nameplates and in addition this is the version quoted in Dwelly's Gaelic Dictionary. The later rendering on 3445 *Mac Cailin Môr* I understood to be quite wrong by Gaelic scholars. A good picture of the (wrong) plate appears in locomotives of the LNER — Part 1, figure 80 — note the acute accent over the letter 'o'.

Interesting don't you think? My view is to name the locomotive correctly in Gaelic, renumber it as 61997 and fit curved plates at the front to complete the picture. It would be nice to know what others think and will no doubt produce some strong feelings. Over to you!

Dave Whitfield  
,Hart.

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## **NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Members are reminded that the 2002 Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.30 pm on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2002 at The Ladle Hotel,; Ladgate Lane, Middlesbrough.

Any member, other than a Junior member, may apply for Committee membership. Any such nomination should reach the Secretary on or before Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2002. each nomination should be signed by the nominee

and a proposer, both of whom should be fully paid up NELPG members. The following details of the nominee should also be provided:-

1. Full name
2. Address
3. Date of birth
4. Any existing Directorships
5. Vocation/profession
6. Short CV

The three retiring Committee members this year are Paul Hutchinson, Terry Newman and Peter Robinson. All three are prepared to stand for re-election.

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## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2002 – **B.R. STEAM IN THE 1960s** by Ken Horan.

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2002 – **FIVE DECADES OF BRITISH STEAM** by John Hunt

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2002 – **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Friday evening meetings commence at 7.30 pm in the upstairs room of The Ladle, Ladgate Lane, Middlesbrough.

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## **COVER PICTURES**

Front: 62005 leaves Hull Paragon station on 23.2.02 (John Hunt).

Back (top): The Q6 frames leave Grosmont hound for Pickering on 7.1.02 (John Hunt).

Back (bottom): 65894 outside Deviation shed on 27.9.01 with the Q6 boiler behind it (David Warren).

*STOP PRESS - the Group's boiler insurance company has agreed to a 12 month extension to the A2's boiler insurance. Great news!*

