

N.E.L.P.G. NEWS



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EDITORIAL

As we come to the end of the main operating season, both on the main line and on heritage railways, it would seem that our three operational locomotives will have earned over £150,000 between them by the end of the year. It could, of course, have been more, since the Q6 did not re-enter traffic on the NYMR until 7th July and the J72 spent most of the main summer period under repair. Nevertheless, it is a creditable performance and, once again, a big pat on the back for all those involved in repairing, maintaining and helping to run our locomotives.

However, it is not getting any easier to keep our fleet running, particularly as we rely heavily on those who have the time and engineering/operational expertise to devote to our locomotives. This is all too obvious with the overhaul of the J27. Many members, like me, will be hugely disappointed that it is now very unlikely that the locomotive will be ready for our 50th anniversary celebrations in 12 months time. This is not due to a lack of enthusiasm or motivation on the part of our volunteer workforce, but because we simply no longer have the necessary technical expertise to devote to the management of the project.

The latter weeks of the Jacobite season have also put this issue in the spotlight, since we had to draft in from elsewhere, at very short notice, Responsible Officers with known experience – one of whom we had to pay - in order to ensure we were able to fulfil our commitment to operate the service. Over the winter months, therefore, we will be looking very closely our ability to continue to resource the management of our various activities.

On a more positive note, we are pleased to welcome Michael Chyriwsky to the Committee: he attended his first meeting on 12th October. Michael's professional background was teaching physics and he is currently employed as the Regulatory Compliance Officer at GlaxoSmithKline at Barnard Castle.

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LOCOMOTIVE REPORT by Neal Woods, Paul Hutchinson and Fred Ramshaw

J27 NO. 65894

At Crewe little progress is being made on the boiler as LNWR are waiting for the tube plate material to come back from Initial machining.

At Hopetown, I am relieved that the tender frames are back inside work, and work is progressing on the rear axle boxes and it is planned to white metal and machine the brasses prior to refitting the axle boxes to the frames. The journal diameter will need skimming on all axle boxes, as this has migrated towards the front of the loco when the brakes are applied. New gaskets are being cut for the front and rear of the tender axle boxes and these will be refitted prior to the wheels being refitted.

Trevor Wilford is continuing to work on the renewal of all of the angle iron on the tender frames, and a contractor will be on site shortly to build up the areas of heavy wear on the tender frames.

On the engine, the side rod brasses have been inspected and the ones that are fit for further service have been sent away for white metalling. Material will be ordered shortly for the replacement bushes that will be required. The crossheads have been thoroughly examined and sent away for machining to true up the faces and the taper, so that they are correct to each other. The horn guides have been secured with fitted bolts and these have been split pinned.

The good news is that the engine is nearly ready for re wheeling, but this will only take place when the crossheads, slide bars, and pistons have been assembled and fully lined up.

Q6 NO. 63395

Since the report in August NEWS, the Q6 has seen regular use, only being stopped for the occasional spring change, routine boiler washouts and water changes, because of a propensity to prime (carrying boiler water over into the cylinders). However, by the time the daily running season finishes at the end of October, it is expected that the locomotive will have covered around 4,500 miles and earned a very useful £40,000.

The locomotive is scheduled to work the NELPG diner on Saturday 24th October

At the beginning of November winter maintenance will start in Deviation shed under the auspices of Andy Lowes. Any help gratefully received.



*63395 drifts down Newtondale on 27th September with the 11.43 from Grosmont
(Ken Snowdon)*

K1 NO. 62005

Following the cylinder lubrication problems and broken springs during the week commencing 26th July as reported in the August NEWS the K1, had run very well, with only routine maintenance, weekly boiler water changes and one more broken spring (in the week commencing 9th August). However, in the week beginning 24th August, a heavy exhaust beat was detected, particularly noticeable at short cut offs. A static steam test for blows was inconclusive but suggested a problem on the LH side. When Paul Hutchinson and his team travelled up to do a washout in the week commencing 30th August, further static tests were carried out, which seemed to confirm that the problem was on the LH side, so the LH valve was removed for inspection. More carbon than would normally be expected was found and the leading exhaust ring on the back head was stuck in. Given the results of the static tests it appeared that we had found the problem. The valve was therefore cleaned up, the “stuck” ring replaced and the valve refitted.

However, when the locomotive was next used, on Sunday 20th September, the heavy exhaust beat was again noticeable and over the next two days got appreciably worse, to the extent that it adversely affected the locomotive’s performance en route from Fort William to Mallaig on Tuesday 22nd September. It was therefore agreed that the K1 should be withdrawn for further examination after successfully getting the train back to Fort William.

Under the leadership of David Knight (who was RO that week but would normally be looking after 60009 and 61994!), the two valves were removed by 17.30 that same day and nothing untoward was found. John Graham arrived the next day and stayed with the K1 and support crew to ascertain what the problem was. The valve gear seemed to be in order, so it was necessary to remove the pistons for examination. This proved easier said than done! Our crosshead splitting gear (required to extract the piston rod from the crosshead) was collected from Darlington and transported to Fort William on Thursday 24th September and the LH piston was thereafter quickly removed for examination, upon which it was found that the piston rings were jammed in the bottom of the piston heads, but free at the top. The RH piston proved much more difficult to remove – our splitting gear failed and we had to borrow the B1's crosshead splitting gear to separate the piston rod from the crosshead. This had to wait until Friday 2nd October, just three days before the K1's next booked Jacobite. The rings on this head were also found to be jammed in.

It was clear from the scoring in the cylinder bores and by the state of the piston heads, that both cylinders had been starved of oil at some point (although there was cylinder oil in evidence when the pistons were dismantled). This had resulted in material from the piston heads being pulled across the face of the heads, to effectively remove the clearance between the ring grooves and rings, thus nipping the rings into position. What was not clear, was why the oil starvation had occurred.

Whilst it had not been possible to remove the RH piston until 2nd October, we were aware that the rings were jammed into the head before this time. It was also clear that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to remove the rings from both heads without breaking them. We had no suitable spare rings but did manage, with the excellent cooperation of William Lane (Foundry) Middlesbrough and M'Machine, Darlington, to get some cast and turned in time to collect and transport to Fort William on Thursday 1st October

The new rings were fitted, and the pistons replaced, by Saturday, 3rd October. The cylinder lubrication system was checked over and, following advice from Clive Goult from the NYMR, the non return valves, which prevent oil being fed into the steam supply pipework when the locomotive is being moved "cold", were modified. Clive had advised that these non return valves can work the wrong way and shut the steam supply off, which could explain why the problem with the K1 had occurred. On the morning of Sunday 4th October the locomotive was prepared for the Jacobite service for the week commencing 5th October and on the afternoon of the 4th the locomotive successfully completed a loaded test run from Fort William to Spean Bridge and back.

The reaction to the problem by those in Fort William, including John Graham, was great and I would like to thank all concerned for sticking at what had been a difficult job with the K1, whilst supporting the operation of the Jacobite for the latter half of that week with Ian Riley's Black 5, 44871. I would also like to thank Steve Andrews for lending us the B1's crosshead splitting gear and Clive Goult for his help and advice.



62005 passes the chapel at Polnish on Friday 9th October (Dave Richards)

The K1 subsequently worked the Jacobite service from Monday 5th to Friday 9th October, plus a special to Mallaig and back on Saturday 10th October, all without any problems – if it had a tin, it would do exactly what it says on it! The only thing that tarnished a successful week was the discovery of a two broken leaves in the RH trailing engine spring upon disposal on the Saturday.

At the time of writing, the K1 is scheduled to do the final week of the Jacobite before returning to Carnforth on Saturday 24th October. Winter maintenance will commence almost straight away: the main areas to be tackled are the reboring of the cylinder and valve liners (and the replacement of the valve heads and rings), the replacement of the RH clack box, and renewal of approximately 70 roof stay nuts (a lovely job for somebody). The driving wheel set axleboxes are also to be removed for examination and repair where necessary. In February it is expected that the locomotive will move from Carnforth to Grosmont.

Working parties will take place most Saturdays and one mid week day every week from the beginning of November. If you are able to help then please contact Paul Hutchinson on 07964 988551.

J72 No. 69023

A phone call was enough to put a spanner in the works! Monday 17th August was the day to fit the new liners to the cylinders but, alas, it was not to be. Delivery problems with the liquid Nitrogen meant the fitting day had to be put back two days but eventually everything was in place. Two days may not seem much but when the hiring railway are clamouring for the locomotive, every second counts.

The Metalock men arrived at Hopetown mid morning, closely followed by the Nitrogen tanker, and no time was lost in placing one liner in a bath of Nitrogen to shrink the liner. After twenty minutes or so, the liner was lifted out and slid into to cylinder. A little bit of worry as the period of time to fit the liner is quite short before it begins to expand and would be impossible to fit. However, all went well and the liner fitted with no problems at all.



With the new liners cooling in a bath of liquid nitrogen, the cylinder bores are prepared for the liners to be slid in (Fred Ramshaw)



The RH liner in situ and cooling down (Fred Ramshaw)



Both liners in, and pistons refitted showing, in between, the two slide valves (Fred Ramshaw).

The second liner was now prepared and again it slid into place in a very short period of time. Checks were made, all was in order, and almost immediately, assembly of the front end of the locomotive began, with the pistons being put in (after the liners had fully returned to normal temperature). Crossheads and piston rods were reunited and cottered, and the cylinder and valve covers were fitted. Piston and valve packings were fitted and then the heavy lifting began in order to refit the buffer beam, which seemed to be at times two steps forward and one step back, but again, it was completed in a relatively short period of time.



Nigel Hall guides the smokebox door ready for refitting (Fred Ramshaw)

The buffers were lifted into place as was the front running plate, steam heat and vacuum pipes were bolted into place, cylinder cocks and linkage was fitted. The smoke box door was lifted into place and the painting began and as soon as it was completed the draw hook was fitted and a few days later the loco was pulled out a for a steam test but unfortunately a mud hole door joint was fizzing so the steam test was cut short but only after our C.M.E. John Graham had fully examined the repair.

A few days later when the offending mud hole door joint had been replaced a further steam test took place and all was well. The locomotive was driven on the DRPS line for two hours or so, giving an opportunity for some of the working members to try out their driving skills.



Steve Gibson refits the cylinder drain cocks (Fred Ramshaw)

In the meantime, a meeting with the Wensleydale Railway had taken place and arrangements put into place to move *Joem* to Leeming Bar. This duly took place and since then test runs have taken place, as have timetabled service runs. Up to date, the locomotive has performed well with no noticeable problems, apart from small snags, such as nipping up packings and re-setting safety valves.

Following several months of work in Hopetown on 69023 it is only right that thanks must be given to all those who have worked on the locomotive and, whilst it is unfair to single out individuals, a special mention must be made of Steve Gibson, Harry Sams and Trevor Wilford who quite often gave more than was expected.

As a NELPG member said a long time ago "NELPG is poor at planning but brilliant in emergencies". Of course our planning is now brilliant as well but it proves, as has been demonstrated recently, that we can still respond to emergencies in NELPG's traditional manner.

It was particularly pleasing to meet Mr. David Milburn, a NELPG patron from Lochearnhead, Scotland, who was on holiday in the area. David, along with his wife and two friends, had made a special journey to see and ride behind the J72

to Redmire and return and was intending to visit the NYMR the following day to see the Q6.



69023 departs from Northallerton West on 26th September (Maurice Burns)

Proposed running dates at Wensleydale are as follows:-

October:

24th, 25th and 31st (service),
26th and 30th (Driver experience),

November:

1st, 7th, 8th, 21st, 22nd, 28th, and 29th (service),
2nd, 6th, 20th, and 27th (Driver experience)

December:

19th, 20th, 22nd, and 23rd (service)
18th and 21st (Driver experience)



WORKING PARTIES

The regular Monday and Thursday working parties continue at Hopetown on the J27. The Thursday working parties are now usually during the day only. If you want to join them and help at Darlington, please contact **Terry Newman on 01642 654675**. Please try to turn up if you can. The phone number for **Hopetown Carriage Works** is **01325 382155**.

If you would like to help out with the J72, then please contact **Fred Ramshaw on 01325 377306**.

Finally, there are regular working parties on the Q6 at Grosmont; if you are interested, please contact **Paul Hutchinson on 07964 988551**.

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PATRON AND FUND RAISING UPDATE by Dave Pennock

NELPG 50th Anniversary

During 2015 the Fundraising Sub-Committee has been overseeing the Group's 50th Anniversary events planned for 2016. Whilst not all the details can be confirmed, the principal events are highlighted below to allow placement in diaries. The main focus is related to the actual anniversary of the Group's formation in October 1966. In summary, the planned events are as follows:

April

NELPG Railtour – Saturday 9th April a railtour from Newcastle to Scarborough. K1 haulage from York to Scarborough via Goole, Hull and Bridlington (and back via Bridlington, Hull and Selby), in association with the Railway Touring Company. Details in due course on the NELPG website and from enquiries@railwaytouring.co.uk

May/June/July

- NELPG photographic and artefact exhibition 7th May to 3rd July - at Darlington Head of Steam Museum.
- Art exhibition – Hartlepool Art Gallery and formal hand over of Hartlepool station clock (dates to be confirmed).

October

- NELPG 50th Anniversary reunion at the Bridge Hotel, Newcastle on Friday 28th October.

- NYMR – NELPG Gala Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th October maximising the use of NELPG locomotives with a North Eastern theme.
- NELPG 50th Anniversary commemorative dinner with guest speaker on Saturday 29th October at an hotel in the Guisborough/Stokesley area.

Other activities

- Possible exhibition from archive at NRM York with formal hand over of archive to NRM.
- Production of a 50th Anniversary DVD and 50th Anniversary commemorative book.

Patron and member events

Since last writing, the Group has, in conjunction with the Wensleydale Railway, agreed to defer a committed visit of the Q6 to the line to 2016. Hopefully, we will be able to offer the promised fish and chip supper which was originally planned.

The good news is that the J72 is now operational and back on the Wensleydale Railway and they have consented for the NELPG to reserve seats on a service train in late October, early November. This will allow the fulfilment to Patron Members, as part of the Patron Membership scheme, to arrange specific events for those who provide a monthly income or significant lump sum to the Group. Working members will also be entitled to travel.

Two tickets per eligible Patron and working member will be available. Prior notification will be necessary to Bryan Orange as the number of seats will be limited. There will be a pay buffet/bar provided by the Wensleydale Railway on the train and at Leeming Bar prior to departure. Given that we will forego our steaming fee, donations towards the coal consumption will be most appreciated on the day. The preferred date is Sunday 1st November with a proposed 12.15 departure from Leeming Bar for a return journey to Redmire. The exact details are expected to be available in mid-October and due to the short notice likely to be involved, we will email Patron and working members and update the NELPG web site when confirmed. For those who do not have email please either contact Dave Pennock (01423 868138) or Bryan Orange (0113 259 1672) after 19th October for the latest information.

Funding News

The J72 fund for the cylinder repairs has now topped £6,000 – thank you to all who sent additional monies in response to the continued appeal in the August NEWS.

Legacies

It is always worth placing a reminder in the NEWS about leaving a contribution to the Group as part of a Legacy. Whilst it is important to fully consider your loved ones in the making of a will it is a unique opportunity to leave a special gift to help any causes you support.

Nick Stringer is our Legacies Officer and if you are considering leaving a legacy to NELPG, and you would like to talk with someone confidentially then please do get in touch with Nick. Also, if you have already made a provision for NELPG, then it would be good to have the opportunity of thanking you in your lifetime, so do please let him know. Again, all conversations will be treated in strict confidence. His contact details are telephone 01423 340331, mobile 07973 215251, or email nickstringer701@btinternet.com .

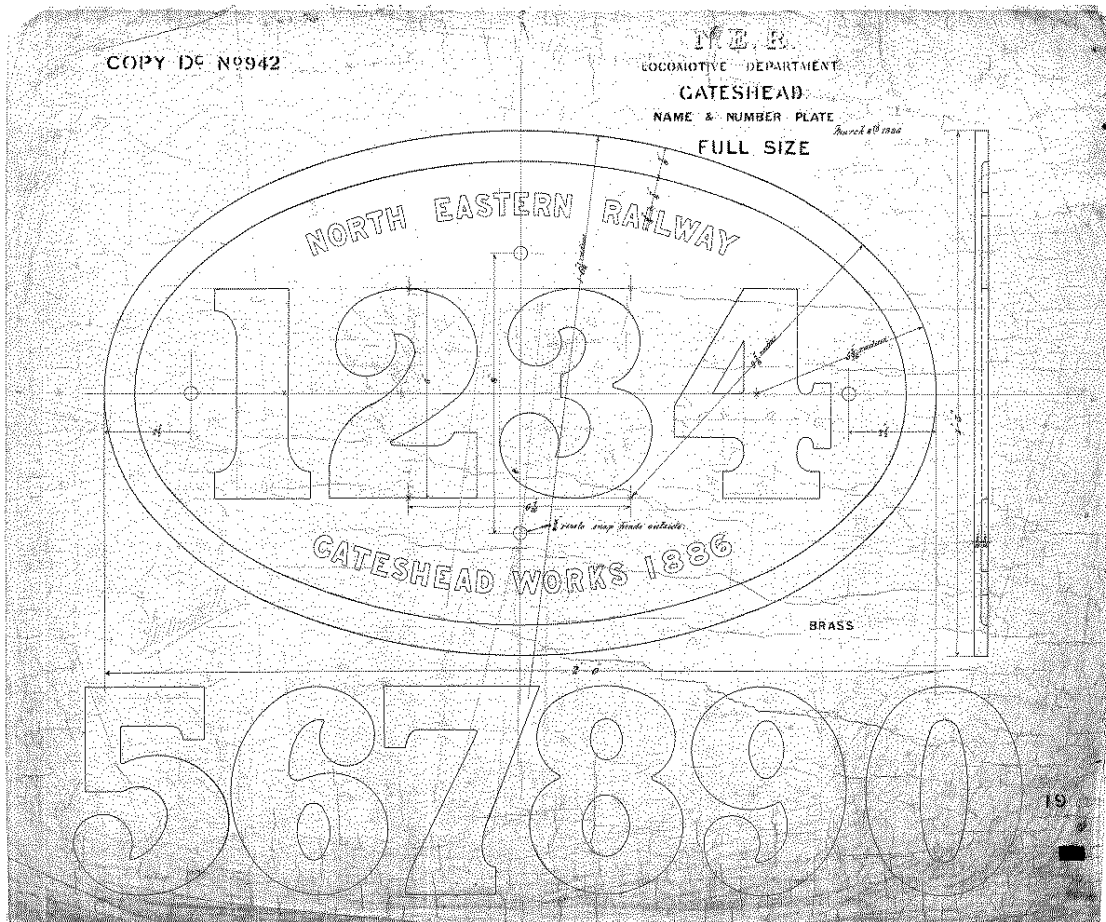
North Eastern Cabside Discoveries

When writing in the August NEWS about recreating the North Eastern cabside style for our 50th anniversary logo, I believed it would be a straightforward task to find a suitable Victorian typeface matching the brass cabside styles carried by both the T2 and P3 when painted in their North Eastern liveries.

Whilst we still have the cabside plates applied to the locomotives, enquiries around the Group drew a blank regarding the actual form of the numbers. The nearest font style found was a ‘Gloucester MT Extra condensed’ but it still did not look quite right.

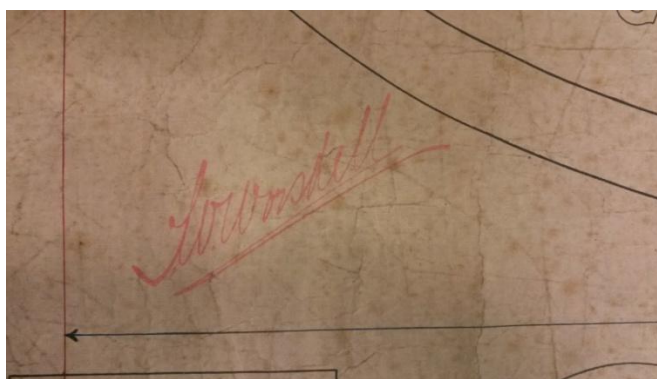
The next line of enquiry was to search the National Railway Museum archives to see what they may have. Visiting the NRM web site uncovered a list of Darlington Works drawings held in York. The list includes both T2 and P3 drawings but the archive is some 174 pages long with at least 5,000 drawings listed. I was still potentially looking for a needle in a haystack.

When visiting the NRM, search engine drawing retrievals are limited to three drawings per session, so the odds were somewhat stacked against me. I selected a name and number plate drawing dated 1886 and cab drawings for the T2 and the P3. Upon unrolling the name and number plate drawing, bingo, it was just what I was after, the name tile referring to the ‘North Eastern Railway’ and number element referred to 10 digits 0 to 9. See Figure 1 below.



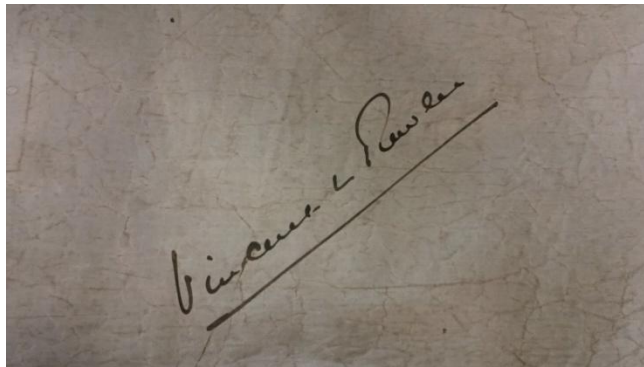
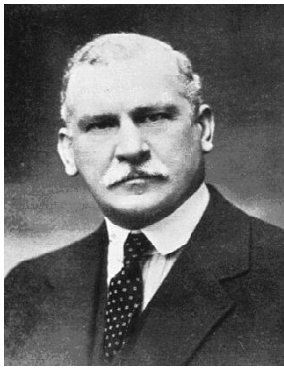
North Eastern Railway – name and number plate drawing

Equally fascinating, within the drawing, is the approving signature of Thomas William Worsdell the Locomotive Superintendent of the North Eastern Railway at the time. Our P3 (J27) was designed by his younger brother and successor Wilson Worsdell, who became the NER Locomotive Superintendent in 1890.



Thomas William Worsdell and his signature

Another discovery, on the T2 cabside drawing, was the signature of Vincent Raven the designer of the T2 (Q6).



Sir Vincent Litchfield Raven and his signature. He was knighted in 1917.

We are now working to complete the logo, hopefully now with a good North Eastern flavour and will publicise it in the December NEWS.

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ARCHIVE CORNER by Chris Lawson

Contributions

Only a few contributions to report this issue, but Tony Richardson, a non member, has donated a disc with photographs of the last train over Stainmore following a conversation with him during a visit to Deviation Shed. Not directly involving NELPG locomotives, but of interest, as the archive already contains some very grainy (Kodak Brownie?) photographs of 63395 on a track recovery train on Deepdale viaduct after closure.



69023 crosses Mytholmes viaduct in February 1969 (Robin Lush)

In addition, Robin Lush has provided a photograph of the J72 as Departmental No 59 standing at Heaton Shed on 15th August 1965, along with 14 more taken of 69023 on the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway in February 1969 when it was in the ownership of Ron Ainsworth. My thanks, as always, to them for their generous donations which are very much appreciated.

Remember, if you have **any** other items, no matter how large or small, related to the Group (and particularly of its early days) hidden away in your loft, cupboard or garage then please go and find them and let me know – but do please give me a ring or drop me an email before sending anything, and particularly bulky material, in the post. I can be contacted at 67 The Mount, York YO24 1AX, telephone 01904 655003 or email chrisjlawson@btinternet.com. I look forward to hearing from you.

40 years ago (from NELPG Newsletters)

The October 1975 issue was a special one for two reasons – it was the 50th issue of News - and that well known NELPG roving commentator, ‘Guillemot’, provided a 600 word personal review of NELPG and its activities - but it also reviewed in depth the events of the summer and the 150th anniversary celebrations at Shildon in August 1975 of the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway.

Locomotives –the **K1** put in good performances on the Battersby - Whitby line during June, returning to NYMR traffic in early August, before leaving Grosmont on 19 August to appear at the Darlington Locomotive Exhibition before moving to the main event at Shildon. The chances of the **P3** appearing however, were rapidly diminishing through July whilst waiting for the NYMR to go ahead with the necessary repairs to the axleboxes. The go ahead was finally given with 14 days left to complete the work. Cranes lifted the engine, the wheel sets were removed, the bearings remetalled and reinstalled within the week. Then the broken spring, which was away in Newcastle for repair was stolen, along with many others, and the only spare we had was not thought to fit. In addition, new side rod brasses had not materialised and the old ones had been damaged. No work was done by NYMR staff during the next five days due to staff shortages, and with 48 hours to go, the position seemed hopeless. If we wanted to see the locomotive at Shildon, we were told we would have to reassemble it ourselves, and with a mass turn out of members, springs were refitted and the locomotive readied for movement with much of the motion and other parts loaded in the tender. The plan was to tow the locomotive to Thornaby in kit form and complete the re-assembly there. As for the **T2**, it passed its hydraulic test, reassembly was completed, the paint squad got to work and it was steamed and moved under its own power for the first time in four years on 27th July. A further steam test was carried out on 7th August for BR

inspectors and it then travelled light engine to Goathland, where some warm axleboxes were found. A similar test the next week had similar results, but, after further lubrication, they cooled and enabled a passenger train to be worked. It was next steamed for its move to Shildon. Restoration of **4767** to its original livery was successfully completed on 22nd August, hours before it was steamed for its movement to Shildon that day.

However, that was only the start of the trials and tribulations involved in getting the **P3** and **T2** to Shildon for the event. Both engines ran hot boxes on the way to Thornaby, and the immense amount of work involved there by both volunteers and BR staff, determined to complete the necessary repairs so both locomotives could join in the celebrations, was set out in a daily diary reported in News. This involved seemingly permanent use of the wheeldrops, involvement of the BR coppersmith in constantly remetalling axleboxes on both locomotives, a second hot box failure on the **T2** on an out of steam test run to Northallerton resulting in the coppersmith being persuaded to come in, not only on a Sunday, but from his holiday as well, to carry out the necessary remetalling. The **P3** was reassembled and also revarnished to give it a much needed facelift.

By this time (Sunday), the **K1** and **4767** had arrived at Shildon, and the celebrations had already started. Monday was a Bank Holiday, so it was agreed with BR that both locomotives would be tested on the Tuesday. This was successful and the **P3** and **T2** finally arrived on the Wednesday, having had to travel by a circuitous route to avoid a derailed freight train at Eaglescliffe!

As for the celebrations themselves, and the role played by our four locomotives, Maurice Burns gave a full report on the various events that took place during the week, culminating in the Grand Cavalcade on Sunday 31st August. But that was not the end. Maurice reported that every Sunday in September there were main line steam runs between Newcastle and Sheffield; Stockton held its own celebrations between 20th and 27th September with the K1, P3 and T2 on display at Stockton Station with *Flying Scotsman* and *Sir Nigel Gresley*; a Royal Pageant was held at Preston Park, Eaglescliffe on 27th September, attended by the Duke of Edinburgh who earlier that day had officially opened both Darlington North Road Museum and the National Railway Museum in York; and a grand dinner was held in Stockton near the site of one held in 1825.

NELPG sales were also very active throughout all these events, with many sales techniques developed specially for the occasion and every opportunity taken to relieve visitors of their cash. It was reported that well over £1000 was banked as a result of the efforts at Shildon, with over £500 being taken during the exhibition at Stockton Station, never mind the enormous publicity which we obtained as a result of our efforts. None of that could have been achieved

without the major contribution made by the countless number of willing volunteers who gave up so much of their time to man sales stands, seek out and acquire stock to replace that which was sold, and help out in so many different ways: sincere thanks were recorded to one and all.

And finally.....

A pictorial record of the Cavalcade was made by NELPG photographers and sets of colour slides, black and white prints and colour prints showing all the locomotives actually taking part were advertised for sale. Within a few days of order forms being issued, orders for over 100 sets had been received, including from the United States and Australia.

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MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT by Colin Smith

Since the last newsletter we have welcomed the following new members to NELPG:-

Mr. D. Bonnett from Derby,
Mr. A Daly from Lanchester,
Mr. E. Humble from Whitby,
Mr. D. Knight from York,
Mr. S.J. Lunn and family from Richmond,
Mr. R. Parks from Darlington and
Mr. D. Rees from Stockton

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SECRETARY'S SCRIBBLINGS by Chris Lawson

2015 Open Meeting

A reminder that the annual Open Meeting will be held on Friday 20th November, starting at 7.30pm, in the Railway Athletic (RA) Club, Brinkburn Road, Darlington DL3 9LF. It provides an opportunity raise questions and

discuss any aspects of the Group's activities. All members are welcome. As usual, light refreshments will be available.

Head of Steam/Heritage Campus developments –

At long last, an update on progress has been received from Darlington Borough Council. The Heritage Campus Vision, Action Plan and Masterplan, are now apparently in draft form, and the Council is setting up and holding meetings with key stakeholders (such as NRM, Network Rail and Heritage Lottery Fund) to ensure that the Heritage Campus has support, buy in and that it is both deliverable and sustainable over the next 10 years. This is seen as a key step to ensure that expectations are not raised beyond what can be realistically delivered within funding, time and physical constraints. These meetings were due to be held by the end of September, and once the documents have been refined, local Councillors and on site stakeholders (such as ourselves) will be fully briefed in October before the documents are made publicly available. A meeting of the Heritage Railway Group, on which NELPG is represented, is therefore planned for mid October.

Public consultation is scheduled for October/November, and once any consequential changes have been incorporated, the intention is to seek adoption by the Council's Cabinet early in 2016.

As has previously been reported in these pages, 'Heritage Campus' has been seen as a working title only, and one which has not been popular among members of the Railway Heritage Group. The Council has pointed out that the 'Vision' focuses not only on the Museum site and its other railway assets, but also its reach into the town centre and beyond – for example The Station pub and Edward Pease's house, both on Northgate. As part of the public consultation, the Council wants to offer some other names for the 'Vision' and ask for the public to vote on their choice. It is therefore inviting suggestions now: if you have any ideas, then please send them to the Council at getonboard@darlington.gov.uk

Hopetown refurbishment

Significant progress has now been made with the renovation work at Hopetown. The windows have now all been installed and there has been a major improvement in the working conditions as a result. There is now natural light flooding in and it has made an amazing difference to the workshop. The re-rendering is also progressing well and the Council has confirmed that having got so far, they will now press on to completion, in spite of moving into the autumn period of less favourable weather. That work is expected to be completed by mid October, and with roof repairs and attention to the gutters,

completion is now expected by the end of that month/early November, when the scaffolding will be removed and the building revealed in all its new glory! The total cost to the Council is expected to be in the region of £220,000.

With the installation of the windows, concerns have been raised about security, particularly on the field side of the building. Agreement has been given for frosted film to be installed on the glass on the lower half of those windows, to obscure vision from the outside, but retain as much of the natural light as possible. Consideration is also being given to any additional security measures that might be necessary. We will also have to start on the herculean task of putting all the tools, equipment, and shelving back on those parts of the walls without windows, and checking that we still have all the parts of the J27 that were stored for refitting.

Hopetown Open Days

The normal practice is for Hopetown to be open to the public on the third Saturday of the month. However, during September, it has also been open over the weekends of 12th/13th September as part of the national Heritage Open Days scheme, 26th/27th September in connection with the 190th Anniversary celebrations of the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, and 3 October when the A1 Trust had its annual covenanters' meeting including a visit to their workshop next door. A large number of visitors were welcomed throughout that period, and considerable interest raised in the Group and its activities. There were some very positive comments received, both on the work on the J27 but also on the friendly and informative welcome received from the NELPG guides. That resulted in some extensive use of the donations box, but grateful thanks need to be expressed to Norman Crokit and his sterling team of guides who turned up to look after our visitors on four consecutive weekends, and, without whom, these opportunities for positive public engagement would have been lost. Many thanks to all – your efforts are much appreciated.

2025 - 200th Anniversary of the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway

Council officials from Stockton, Darlington and Durham County Councils have apparently been meeting with representatives of the NRM (both York and Shildon) and the Friends of the Stockton and Darlington Railway to take forward the 2025 preparations. This group is currently looking at commissioning an audit of the track bed to ascertain where the track went, what still remains, and how it can be preserved. In the first stage of this, a pilot area is to be chosen. Once this pilot is commissioned, consultants will apparently be tasked with working where possible with the public and key community groups to gather local sources of intelligence that will help the study.

PAT testing

Tony and Glynis Frith have recently completed the annual Portable Appliance Testing exercise. This involves the checking of all our portable electrical appliances in the support coach, Deviation Shed and Hopetown, to ensure that they meet electrical compliance standards. They provide a report to Bryan Orange on their findings (this year there were no major problems) and repair where practicable, or dispose where not, any equipment found to be non compliant. Our thanks are due to them for their continuing efforts with this hidden, but vital, work on our behalf.



Tony and Glynnis Frith, with Norman Crockit, during PAT testing inside Hopetown on 19th September, showing the impact of the new windows on the natural light inside the building (Chris Lawson)

Deviation Shed

Following the completion of the Q6 winter maintenance in July, one or two working parties have been held to tidy up the workshop, and get rid of some of the rubbish that had accumulated over the winter. Bryan Orange has installed some new rubberised floor panels to help take some of the cold from the concrete floor in the depths of winter, along with a large number of magnetised racks to hold some of the smaller tools, previously scattered across the workbench. In the upstairs store, a start has been made on creating an inventory of the vast amount of material that has been stored up there, so that any that is surplus to requirements can be disposed of, and the rest is properly catalogued

in a register. Renovation of the two benches has also been completed: the one outside in the viewing area now carries a plaque in memory of the late Godfrey Yeomans who left us a substantial legacy this year, and the one inside now carries a plaque, found at the back of a cupboard in the workshop, in memory of Bryce Greenfield, our first Chairman. Finally, the large NELPG sign on the outside wall of the shed is also being refurbished, with the frame currently being stripped and repainted. It is presently in white undercoat – or at least it is white until locomotives come under the coaling plant when it quickly turns grey!

NYMR News

After 11 years in the role, Philip Benham retired as NYMR Managing Director on 16th October, and has been succeeded by Chris Price, whose appointment was reported in the August issue of the NEWS. Chris took up his post on 29th September, giving a three week handover period, to supplement the visits he has already made to the NYMR over the summer.



Philip Benham (l) and Chris Price shake hands on the changeover on 30th September (John Hunt)

At the NYMR Board meeting on 7th August, the performance of the NYMR against the Business Plan was reviewed. At the end of the second quarter (end of June), the targets for income had not been met and costs were higher than planned resulting in a shortfall of £200k against target. Over the next few months, the PLC will be required to identify how income can be boosted and

costs kept under even greater control, including a hold on schemes not yet commenced, to turn the position around. Paid staff have had to fill the gaps in obtaining volunteers for operating turns and this has created pressure for budgets. This is an area to be further reviewed.

A preliminary discussion of the 2016 timetable agreed to scale back journeys in the low/shoulder seasons, also allowing capacity for more commercial opportunities.

Danielle Ramsey, the NYMR Marketing Manager, left on 14th August to take up a position with 'Welcome to Yorkshire'. Hopefully some of the budget shortfall will have been recouped during the high season but, to be on the safe side, it was decided that an extra marketing effort was required in the autumn period. To this end, Board approval was given to take on Phil Bustard, as a PR element of the marketing team, for 2 -3 days per week until October, whilst Laura Hepburn and Peter Fisher carry on with the day to day activities and concentrate on income generation.

Following an open competition, Edwin Knorn has been appointed Traction and Rolling Stock Engineer. A Chartered Mechanical Engineer, he is currently employed by Trans Pennine Express as Fleet Standards Engineer. He will be taking up his new post in January 2016.

In the last few weeks of the Gold timetable a new innovation in catering services was introduced using the Gresley buffet carriage 641. On a Tuesday or Wednesday continental breakfasts or cream teas (as appropriate) were served on two departures from Pickering and two from Grosmont. On offer were chilled Prosecco, Pimms, or refreshing hot drinks, Danish pastries, croissants as well as homemade scones and ice cream.

Locomotive news –

The priority for MPD staff to focus on maintaining the running fleet and trying to bring locomotives back into traffic has had an adverse effect on overhauls. It has been very difficult to deliver the planned level of steam haulage: winter maintenance for some locos identified more substantial problems than had been envisaged with the consequent delay in their availability, as a result of which there has been more diesel substitution than was intended. The weekend of 19th/20th September saw the final operation of A4 No 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* which has now been withdrawn from service for its latest major overhaul, which is expected to take some three years to complete.

During a farewell ceremony for 60007, Philip Benham handed over a cheque for £1,000 to the Sir Nigel Gresley Locomotive Trust, donated by passengers on

the two Pullman trains run over the last 12 months in relation to the locomotive's last year. In addition, the NYMR has agreed to donate 20% of its ticket sales from the final weekend – expected to be around £6,500 – to support 60007's overhaul.

Limited edition print, '*Spirit of the North Eastern*' signed by John Wigston

A framed copy of this print, featuring 65894 on the turntable at York MPD with an A4, A1 and other locomotives on the turntable roads, was spotted for sale in a recent railwayana auction where it sold for £80. A number of unframed, numbered copies of the limited edition print, (23 inches by 16 inches - see photograph), signed by the artist (and NELPG member) are still available from me priced £25, post free. If you would like a copy, please contact me at the usual address.



Anonymous fundraising suggestion involving 69023

I have received an anonymous unsigned and unaddressed note with a suggestion for fund raising involving the J72 No 69023. Without knowing who it is from however, I am unable to discuss it with the correspondent, which I need to do before putting it to the locomotive caretaker and the Fund Raising Sub Committee for their consideration. So if the person involved is reading this, could they please get in touch with me so it can be taken forward. Otherwise, I am afraid it will have to be consigned to the waste paper recycling.

AGM Report – audit of NELPG Enterprise accounts.

The report of the AGM contained in NELPG NEWS accurately reported John Marsland as assuring members that the accounts for NELPG Enterprises had been subject to an audit. Ben Duncan, the Independent Examiner of our Accounts has asked that the following correction be made to that statement:

“From the date of me taking over as independent examiner, neither NELPG Ltd nor NELPG Enterprises have been subject to audit. Under the Companies Act neither NELPG Ltd nor NELPG Enterprises require an audit due to their small size.

Under the Charities Act NELPG Ltd (being a registered charity with income above £25,000) requires an independent examination. An independent examination is much less stringent than an audit and thus provides less assurance over the accounts than an audit would.

*NELPG Enterprises is not a charity. Therefore an independent examination does not make sense as this is a Charities Act test with charity requirements that Enterprises is not required to meet. Therefore I have **not** examined nor audited NELPG Enterprise’s accounts.*

The articles were specifically changed to remove this requirement as I have not received the authority from my professional body, nor my employer, to undertake an audit under my own name. Such authorisation would incur significant additional costs and may not be possible due to me being put in a competing position with my employer. Anybody wishing to discuss this further can contact me on 07706 095859”

The Treasurer has commented that his compilation of the accounts was done against a background of expectation by him that both Enterprises and NELPG Ltd would be subject to an audit process. This expectation achieved the necessary deterrent to any inappropriate action by the Treasurer.

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REPORTS OF RECENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Reports of recent Committee Meetings

10th August 2015

Present: Martin Lloyd, John Hall, Nigel Hall, Paul Hutchinson, Chris Lawson, Richard Pearson, Richard Wheeler.

In the absence of the Chairman, Martin Lloyd took the chair. Bryan Orange attended for the discussion on Deviation Shed and was welcomed to the meeting.

Richard Pearson declared an interest as an employee of NRM Locomotion, Shildon

Of the **matters arising** not covered elsewhere on the agenda, the Secretary reported that Hartlepool Museum was most appreciative of the Committee's agreement to donate the Hartlepool Station Clock to the Museum, and wished to arrange a formal handover with press publicity. It was agreed that ideally this should be done by the Chairman, and the Secretary was asked to check on his willingness and availability. Dave Whitfield and Maurice Burns should also be involved.

Following discussion at a previous Committee meeting, the sub group dealing with the NELPG 50th anniversary celebrations had developed a strap line incorporating the Group's full name, as had been requested. Subject to the removal of the reference to '50th anniversary', as this was obvious from the logo, this was approved as follows: 'North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group – keeping North Eastern steam alive for future generations'.

A request had been received from Darrin Crone on behalf of the SNGLT to house the tender from 60007 in **Deviation Shed**, and possibly to accommodate the locomotive itself temporarily, following its withdrawal in September for major overhaul. In discussion, it was agreed that the Q6 and the K1 would require the centre pit road for winter maintenance this year, the intention being to bring the K1 over from Carnforth as soon as the work on the wheel sets had been completed. The S15 (Chris Parrish) was occupying the J27 space, and No 5 was occupying the space owned by the Lambton Trust. The space owned by Ian Storey for 4767 was occupied by *Hartland* currently, but 3814 possibly, dependent on the outcome of the present dispute over the use of that space between those concerned. That was not a matter for NELPG and was for the parties concerned to resolve. That left Joem's space which it was agreed could be made available to SNGLT for the tender of 60007. As for the locomotive, it was felt that with some squeezing up, it could possibly be fitted in, but subsequently it was pointed out that, as the K1 was unlikely to arrive until the turn of the year, its space could be offered on a temporary basis. This was agreed, and could provide a considerable visitor attraction.

As a result, the NYMR would need to remove the Drewry shunter and the Lambton Trust decide on whether No 29 or No 5 would remain in its space: the other would also need to be moved out. It was agreed that the Group should not get involved in decisions about which non NELPG locomotives should move where: that was for the respective owners to sort out. The Secretary should however, advise Darrin Crone of the agreement in respect of 60007, and the NYMR and other space owners of the outcome for their action as necessary. It was also pointed out that under the agreement with the NYMR, the insurance of Deviation Shed was their responsibility, but no copy of any policy was held by the Group. The Secretary was asked to remedy this.

The **Monthly Financial Report** was noted, with the J72 appeal donations now totalling £5,922 and the Patron Fund continuing to increase by £1,465/month. There had been no invoice from Crewe for July, as no work had been done on the J27 boiler pending arrival of the copper sheet for the new tubeplate. Uncertainty remained over who was authorised to commit expenditure on behalf of the Group. The Secretary agreed to forward the previously agreed schedule of authorities to the Treasurer so they could be issued to the individuals concerned and the position regularised.

The Treasurer emphasised the importance of obtaining VAT receipts at Fort William, so that VAT could be claimed back. It was confirmed that following changes to the Gift Aid rules, allowing claims to be made for ad hoc donations in collecting boxes etc., there was no need for special envelopes to be provided for completion by contributors. Following the move to electronic banking, no cheques had needed to be written in July. To maintain two electronic signatures, payments were still approved by Martin Lloyd, and the actual invoices would be provided to him once a month for random cross checks.

On **Health and Safety**, a repeat conversation had been held with CIRAS who had been told that we had no intention of paying their invoice until it was clear that we remained members and were covered by the Scheme. Confirmation that we were no longer part of Sentinel and now covered by WCRC had been sent by email as requested, but there had as yet been no response. Concern was expressed that we might have paid for a PTS certificate which was not being used to support the Group. It was agreed therefore that appropriate checks should be made in case recovery of the cost might be appropriate. Checks were being made with the individuals concerned to see if they were available at short notice for an imminent PTS course at Carnforth.

Richard Jackson had agreed to arrange a safety briefing at Grosmont for NELPG volunteers. As it was so long since one had been held, it was felt that this should cover all those volunteering at Grosmont, and not just those more recently involved. Martin Lloyd agreed to circulate an invitation on the workers email list to attend once details had been finalised. It would also be important to keep a record of who had attended, and also carry out a similar exercise at Hopetown. It was also reported that the footplate representative training organised for Jacobite Support Crews would be extended to Grosmont volunteers for the Q6, and to the J72 team on the Wensleydale Railway.

There was no progress to report on the outstanding **succession planning** issues.

NELPG Enterprises Ltd

The normal **locomotive** updates were provided, and the latest position is reported elsewhere in this issue of News. The **K1** was continuing to run more or less OK, while the **Q6** had had a stop/start period of running with minor problems. These had been dealt with by the NYMR, and it was agreed that, if chargeable, it was better to pay to get the locomotive back in traffic quickly and earning money, than delay while trying to organise a volunteer working party. A separate meeting to discuss progress with the **J27**, and what could/should be done to speed up progress, had been provisionally arranged for 7pm on 18th August at Hopetown. Only Terry Newman had indicated he would be unable to attend. His absence would be most unfortunate, but, as everyone else appeared to be available, it was agreed that the meeting should go ahead on that date. The **J72** cylinder liners were due to be fitted next Monday (17th). Assuming all went well, re-assembly was expected to be rapid, with a steam test by the end of the week and a possible return to the Wensleydale Railway in time for the Bank Holiday weekend.

Under **locomotive hire** an enquiry had been received from NRM Locomotion, Shildon about the availability of the J72 for use on passenger services during a planned 'Flying Scotsman and Shildon Shed Bash' event from 23rd to 31st July 2016. This had already been discussed with Fred Ramshaw who was reported content. On that basis, the Committee gave its agreement in principle, subject to satisfactory negotiations with NRM Locomotion and the Wensleydale Railway, where it was expected to be next summer. With the J72 unlikely to require significant winter maintenance, efforts should also be made to seek suitable hires in early 2016, to replace some of the lost income over the 2015 summer.

The only item of **any other business** was a report that an apparent NELPG Facebook interest group had been set up. Content seemed to have been culled from the NELPG website. This was open to all to comment as they wished, but, in spite of appearances, this was not an authorised NELPG Facebook page, nor did any answers to questions raised carry any official status as coming from the Group. Concern had been expressed at this development, and it was agreed that contact should be made with the individual concerned with a request to put a disclaimer on the page, making it clear that this was not an official NELPG site, and views expressed did not represent those of the Group. Its name should also be changed to make clear that this was simply an interest group.

It was agreed that, nevertheless, the Group should be providing immediate news on what was happening, and be utilising social media. It was desirable to have a Facebook news feed, but whatever social media were to be used it was essential to find an administrator to manage them. A member had previously expressed an interest in this area, and it was agreed that he should be approached to see if he would be willing to take on the development and running of any NELPG social media sites.

18th August 2015

Present: Martin Lloyd, John Hall, Nigel Hall, Paul Hutchinson, Chris Lawson, Richard Pearson, Richard Wheeler.

In the absence of the Chairman, Martin Lloyd took the chair. Fred Ramshaw, Trevor Wilford and Neal Woods also attended and were welcomed to the meeting.

Richard Pearson declared an interest as an employee of NRM Locomotion, Shildon

NELPG Enterprises Ltd

This additional Committee meeting had been arranged to review progress with the **J27 overhaul**, and to consider what could and should be done to speed up progress. In doing so, it was felt important to first establish the current position with the overhaul, what work remains to be done, the money spent to date, the amount likely to be needed to complete the overhaul, and the funds remaining in the Deferred Maintenance Fund (DMF), before considering what the target should be for completion and then what could, and should, be done to meet that target and at what cost.

In terms of the finances, the Treasurer reported that at the end of July, the J27 DMF totalled £60,982, having spent £58,356 since 1st January 2015 when the opening balance was £119,338. The total payments to LNWR Crewe for the boiler totalled £84,357 against an original budget of £80,000, although additional boiler work, and costs, had subsequently been agreed. The Secretary added that, in addition, a grant application for £3,000 had been made, and agreement in principle had been reached with another grant awarding body to provide funds towards the cost of repainting. Neal Woods advised however, that there was approx £40,000 to spend on the boiler, £36,500 on the tender, and £22,000 on the locomotive, giving a total of £100,000 and a potential deficit of £40,000. To set against that though, there was available the £90,000 Yeomans bequest and £30,000 in the Patron fund.

In those circumstances, it was argued strongly that there was only one realistic option open, which was to continue as at present and complete the overhaul in probably two to three years time. Bringing in contractors to speed up the work was unrealistic. Apart from financial issues, we had not got the technical engineering capacity to manage any contractors, working

up a specification for their work would take a considerable time, and there was very little contractor capacity to take on additional work at present in any case. It could also have a negative impact on volunteer's morale. That of Thursday volunteers was reported as already being adversely affected. Whilst strongly supported by both the Chairman and Secretary, the previously stated aim of having the overhaul completed for the Group's 50th anniversary celebrations in October 2016 was felt to be simply unachievable. The significance of this event was recognised as a once in our lifetime opportunity, as was the importance of the J27 as our first purchase and the last day BR steam locomotive working to Silksworth Colliery, but it was argued that this aspiration had not been approved by the Committee. It was also felt that it was important to husband both resources and finances, as well as taking full account of the potential impact on volunteers and their morale.

Against that background, the position with the three elements of the overhaul was reviewed.

Boiler – this was a self contained sub project which could continue to be managed at LNWR Crewe. With the imminent arrival of the copper for the new tube plate, work should soon restart, and it was expected that that the boiler would be completed by the end of 2015. Retubing by Adam Dalgleish at Hopetown would then take a further two months, so it was expected that it could be steam tested by April 2016 and be ready to go in the frames thereafter. It was agreed that regular visits should be made to LNWR Crewe to monitor progress.

Tender – the materials for the tender tank had now been ordered and work should be completed by the start of 2016. Work on the tender frames had been delayed because of the focus on the repairs and maintenance to the J72. The condition of the wheel set journals remained unknown – one was OK, one was badly water marked, and the other had yet to be looked at – although they were not scrapping size. The axle boxes themselves also needed major attention while the wheel sets were out. It would not be wise to defer this to the first winter maintenance, and, whilst a contractor could probably do the work in a month, the major impact would be on management time.

Frames – rewheeling could be carried out by October, but there then remained a considerable amount of work to be done before the boiler could be refitted. No-one capable was able to devote the management time to organise, instruct and manage a contractor to take on the re-assembly work.

It was concluded therefore that, with the best will in the world, it would not be possible to accelerate the overhaul of the J27 to meet a 50th anniversary deadline. No matter how much money was put in, whilst the expertise was available, the Group had not got the management capacity either to prepare a specification, or to subsequently manage the process should a suitable contractor be found. It was also agreed that ways of easing the load on Neal Woods had to be found to enable him to concentrate on the technical work and relieve him of basic administration. To that end, the Treasurer agreed to maintain a spreadsheet to mark off invoices against planned expenditure. John Hall also offered his assistance which Neal Woods said he would take up as and when necessary.

The opportunity was also taken to briefly discuss the possible **winter maintenance** programme for 2015. It was felt that there was considerable work to be done on the **Q6** this winter, but the first priority was to check the tyres for possible replacement. They would not take a further turning and, if replacement was required, then that would determine the location of any work. For the **J72**, most potential winter maintenance work had already been done while the repairs were underway at Hopetown over the summer, so there should be little

left to be done this winter. That could be quickly completed, and it could then be made available for winter work – possibly at NRM Locomotion, Shildon? – to get some much needed income.

It was agreed that a separate meeting of those concerned should be held to review the winter maintenance programme for the three operational locomotives, and its possible impact on the J27 overhaul, in time for consideration at the October Committee meeting.

14th September 2015

Present: John Hunt (in the chair), Martin Lloyd, John Graham, John Hall, Nigel Hall, Chris Lawson, Richard Pearson, Richard Wheeler.

John Hunt declared an interest as an employee of West Coast Railway Company. John Graham declared an interest in Lochty Railway Co, Sir Nigel Gresley Locomotive Trust (SNGLT) and Wayne Jones & Partners. Richard Pearson declared an interest as an employee of NRM Locomotion, Shildon

Under **matters arising** the Secretary reminded the Committee of the space allocations in **Deviation Shed** agreed at the last meeting, as a result of which he had confirmed with Darrin Crone the use of *Joem*'s space for the tender from 60007, and that, if required, the K1 space would be available for 60007 on a temporary basis until the K1 arrived from Carnforth, expected to be at the end of the year. In view of the interest expressed by the B1 Society to Paul Hutchinson however, a check would be made that this latter space was still required for 60007. If not, it could be made available to the B1 Society on the same temporary basis. Otherwise there was no space into which the B1 could be fitted. The Secretary had also spoken to Chris Cubitt of the Lambton Trust about the need to remove either No 5 or No 29. This had revealed a request two years ago for No 29 to be housed in the Shed, as well as No 5, but to which it appeared no response had ever been made. As however, as a result of a recent agreement with the NYMR, it was likely that both locomotives would be moved from Deviation Shed, thereby removing a possible source of conflict.

A further request had been received from the Robinsons, asking for a letter to go to the NYMR supporting their case for moving 3814 into Deviation Shed. After a brief discussion, it was agreed that the Secretary should reply confirming our position remained as previously advised i.e. that it was not for us to get involved in this issue, but for it to be resolved by the parties involved, a restoration plan be prepared, and NELPG be advised accordingly.

A progress report on the **review of the Articles of Association** circulated by John Hall was noted, with thanks for all the work that had been done to date on this onerous task. At **Hopetown** most of the windows had now been installed and had made an enormous improvement to the working environment. There remained however, questions over security, particularly on the field side of the building, and it was agreed that, as requested by the caretaker, frosted film should be applied to the lower half of the windows on that side to obscure vision from the outside whilst retaining as much of the natural light as possible. A request had also been made for the buffing machine and chain pulley, which were considered surplus to requirements, to be disposed of to M Machine who had expressed interest in having them. This was agreed, subject to a suitable financial arrangement being made, and a check on who had originally provided them to ensure there was no conflict with the donation.

The **Monthly Financial Report** was noted, and the Treasurer requested to continue chasing the Epping and Ongar Railway for payment of the J72 invoice for running in April which was still outstanding. There were no other immediate financial issues reported.

Finalisation of the **statutory accounts** for NELPG Ltd and NELPG Enterprises Ltd, required to be submitted to Companies House by 30th September, was still outstanding. There was a possibility that the deadline might be missed for NELPG Ltd, and the Secretary was authorised to seek a formal extension to the deadline if it was found to be necessary. The deadline for submission of the statutory accounts for NELPG as a charity was 31st October, and these would need to be accompanied by an Annual Report from the Trustees in a revised format laid down by the Charity Commission. This was in hand and a draft would be circulated for comment and approval by the Trustees in the next few weeks.

Co-option to the Committee - Michael Chyriwsky had expressed an interest in joining the Committee, following his attendance at the June meeting. His CV had been circulated, and John Hall proposed that Michael be co-opted as a Trustee of the charity and Director of the Companies. This was unanimously approved.

On **health and safety** attention was drawn to apparent violations of the 12 hour working restrictions at Fort William, and the absence of a confidential reporting system under which concerns about such practices and their consequences could be raised by individuals. The Chairman emphasised that the 12 hour working rule must be complied with and it was the responsibility of ROs to manage their volunteer resources accordingly to ensure this was done. The Chairman agreed to look into the matter, but would issue a note to ROs reminding them of the importance of compliance. He would also act as the point of contact for any complaints about nonbullying volunteer working practices, on a confidential, and, if necessary, anonymous, basis.

The question of our Sentinel membership and therefore our liability for payment of the invoice from CIRAS remained unresolved. It continued to be pursued. An invitation to all workers inviting attendance at an NYMR safety briefing at Grosmont, to be arranged by Richard Jackson, would now be issued.

Under **succession planning** the Chairman agreed to arrange a meeting with Nigel Wilson, Chairman of SNGLT, to discuss possible future co-operation.

NELPG Enterprises Ltd

The normal **locomotive updates** were provided, and the latest position is reported elsewhere in this edition of News. A written report from Paul Hutchinson, setting out the three main areas of work/concern dealt with during the **K1** wash out week, was noted. Following the withdrawal of Nigel Bill as RO and John Marsland from the support crew for the week beginning 19th September, David Knight from the No 9/K4 support crew had agreed to act as RO on a contractor basis. The cost would still be less than the potential loss of earnings if the K1 did not run. Rowland Bingham would replace John Marsland in the support crew.

A number of concerns about the operation of the **Q6** were also raised, which could lead to the locomotive being stopped if satisfactory re-assurances were not received from the NYMR. John Graham expressed considerable concern over the competence of NYMR crews to operate the locomotive properly and to follow instructions. It was agreed that regardless, a meeting should be arranged with the new NYMR Managing Director at the end of the

operating season, and once he had taken up post, to discuss our concerns over the operation of the Q6 in 2015, and its future on the Railway.

The Chairman expressed his disappointment at the outcome of the meeting on 18th August to discuss progress with the **J27** overhaul. There had been a clear perception that it would be completed in time for our 50th anniversary in October 2016. This was a once in a lifetime opportunity and it would be a considerable shame if our first locomotive purchase was not operational by then. He asked whether there was any way in which the work could be accelerated to completion.

As had been concluded at the 18th August meeting however, the problem was a lack of engineering capacity to manage and deliver the work to the required standard, rather than any lack of will. Contractors were unlikely to be available, and would, in any case, want the locomotive moved to their own site. We would also have to have suitable resources available to monitor their work and progress chase where necessary. Time would inevitably be lost, both in getting members approval to the possibly significant additional expenditure over and above that already forecast, and in dealing with the consequences of the disruption caused by the building works at Hopetown and relocating tools and parts. Dependent on the outcome of the winter maintenance strategy meeting on 6th October, that programme could also have an adverse impact on J27 progress.

All in all, it was agreed that there was no realistic prospect of accelerating the overhaul. Neal Woods was revising the overhaul work chart and critical path analysis to bring it up to date and identify the work still to be done, but the realistic target was accepted as completion of the overhaul by October 2017, so that all four of our locomotives would be available for the planned event at Shildon to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of BR steam in the North East, and the 50th anniversary of the purchase of the J27 by the Group.

The **J72** was successfully moved to the Wensleydale the previous week, and a steam test and empty coaching stock run were planned for the next day. Provisional steaming dates have been received, and, if confirmed, could see around 20 steaming days to the end of the year.

Locomotive hire concentrated on the J72. During a meeting with the Wensleydale Railway earlier in the month, a reduction in the daily steaming fee for the J72 had been requested, in view of the transport costs they were having to meet and the limited number of potential operational days left this season. These were likely to total around 20, and it was agreed that as a gesture of goodwill, the daily steaming fee should be reduced. That would be for the rest of this year only however: if the J72 went back there next year, the normal daily steaming fee would apply.

NRM Locomotion, Shildon also required a decision on the daily steaming fee for the J72 hire for the Shildon Shed Bash event at the end of July 2016. This would involve 9 steaming days on brake van passenger shuttles in the yard. An appropriate fee was agreed, taking account of the fees for other locomotives used on the site, and on the basis that NRM Locomotion paid for transport to and from the event and a stall was available at no charge throughout the event for NELPG promotion/sales.

There was a concern however, about the insurance valuations for our locomotives compared to others, and the adverse impact that was reported as having on premiums demanded of the organisers of such events for insurance. It was agreed these valuations should be reviewed with Derek Parry of Bluefin.

It was reported that a proposal had been made to the Railway Touring Company for a K1 hauled railtour in April next year from the North East, out and back along the East Yorkshire Coast to Scarborough, to be run in partnership with NELPG and branded as a 50th anniversary event.

Under **any other business**, an update from Nigel Hall on IT developments, was noted. It was agreed that a further round of invitations to opt in to the members email circulation list should be held, accompanied by an explanatory article in the next issue of NELPG News, and that a company able to provide an IT back up service should be sought as part of our risk management.

The future of the J27 cylinder block currently stored at the Museum was also being considered, following a request from NRM Locomotion.

Future Committee meetings

The next meetings of the Committee will be held on 9th November and 14th December at Middlesbrough Municipal Golf Centre, starting at 7.30pm and finishing no later than 10pm. As ever, members are very welcome to attend, but please get in touch with me first to make sure space is available and so I can send you any necessary papers.

The Fund Raising Sub Committee next meets on 1st December at 3pm at 67 The Mount, York. As with meetings of the main Committee, members are very welcome to attend, but, again, please get in touch with me first to make sure that space and sufficient biscuits are available.

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IT MATTERS by Nigel Hall

And now for something completely different; mailing lists. Email and mailing lists have been with us since the first days of the Thatcher government, though it has only been during the last 10 years that email and the mobile phone have come to dominate how we manage steam locomotive maintenance. During those 10 years our working volunteers have used the working members email list to coordinate their activity, in much the same way as they used the notice board at ICI Wilton 20 years earlier.

We have now set up a mailing list so that NELPG officials can send information to ALL NELPG members. Why have we done this? We've done it for a number of reasons:

- We often need to be able to provide information to members at very short notice and can't, therefore, wait for the next NELPG NEWS.

- Email is much cheaper, quicker and less labour intensive than using a postal service. We estimate that about 75% members on the mailing list will see the message within a day. It is our intention to limit the material distributed this way to matters concerning the NELPG mission, or information about other organisations which have a similar mission to NELPG. We understand that we need to comply with the various “Can Spam” regulations when getting in touch with you in this way, if only as a matter of good practice. We have adopted a particular system for mass emailing which enables us to comply, and ask you to positively opt-in to the “NELPG members” mailing list first.
- If you have not already done so, please opt in to the “NELPG Members” mailing list by completing the web form to be found at <http://eepurl.com/buM8j9> , or see under the “About NELPG” menu item on our web site. When you do this you will be asked for your email address, first name and last name, and can then submit the form. (There may be a “captcha” challenge built in to the system to make sure that human beings rather than computer systems are completing the forms.). An email will be sent to the email address which you supplied as a check upon the address’s validity, and also to establish that you control it. (This prevents internet pests from joining folks without their knowledge.) The email will contain a link to a web page, which in turn can be used to confirm that you received the email and that you really wish to be added to the mailing list. Confirm your intent, and you become a member. That’s it.

You can leave the mailing list at any time. A link to allow you to do so will be sent in the footer of every message which you receive from the list. We will not make your name and address details available to third parties, except as required by law, unless you have a more specialised relationship with the group and agree to the disclosure.

Rejuvenation of the Web Site.

During the summer, work has been taking place to rejuvenate the NELPG web site. Many changes have been made to the There have been considerable changes to the content management systems (CMS) upon which the web site is built, and most of the site content has been moved to the later version of the CMS. However, there’s still work to be done, both technically and to revise the historical and background material.

- If any member is willing to help, please get in touch. My email address can be found inside the front cover of the NEWS.
- If any member has views concerning the content, functionality, or any other aspect of the web site, please get in touch and let me know whilst all this work is in progress.

I anticipate that revision work should be sufficiently complete to allow the release of the new site sometime in the New Year. As part of this work new functions are being added to the web site, and one of them leads us nicely to the next topic.

Membership Table and Administration

For more years than some of us care to remember our membership records have been maintained for by Colin Smith using a card index system which he inherited from his predecessor. This system has served us well, but as others have become involved with member administration, the system is showing its age. Even copying Excel spreadsheets between administrators is not sufficient when several people are responsible for updating the record – all too often the different records contain different information. In an attempt to avoid these problems in future we intend moving to a (set of) membership tables within a web based database. This will give all of the Group's administrators access to the same record system and will allow them to view / amend records as appropriate.

So why am I telling you this? If we make the change successfully most of you shouldn't notice a thing. I say most of you, because there is one change which some of you will notice – some membership numbers will have to change. For the new system to work I need to be able to make sure that all existing members have a unique membership number whilst, at the same time making sure that the system can automatically allocate a unique number to new members. This membership number will be the “key” to a member's records and must not be changed or reallocated. Other material on the site is accessed through this “key”. The present system uses prefix letters in some but not all cases. The prefixes identify the membership deal through which somebody became a member. (e.g. BP for the Blue Peter subscribers, J for the J27 subscribers, etc.) It may also be L to indicate life membership. Unfortunately, at present, the number which follows the prefix is not unique, though the combination of prefix and number is. The number is not at present a permanent feature as new numbers are allocated when a member takes out life membership or moves from one category to another. So, to allocate new unique numbers, I have removed the prefix and, wherever possible, allocated the same number as before, but without the prefix. If several records had the same number then one membership record has retained that number and new numbers have been allocated to the others. I know that some members were very attached to their numbers but I did not see any alternative to this approach. The old membership number, including prefix, are still retained along with the new number within the membership records and can be used for “lookup” purposes. Needless to say you will be informed of your new membership number after the system has been rolled out, and that is expected to be early 2016. I think the new number arrangement should work well. This said, some potential procedural problems

remain when converting between H&W and individual membership or vice versa. If there is a divorce involving husband and wife members where both parties wish to retain their NELPG membership then only one of them can retain the existing membership number - something else for the lawyers to argue about. And as for two H&W members exchanging partners – well let's not dwell on that!!

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CAPTION COMPETITION?

BP member Stephen Rhodes was on the Wensleydale Railway on 10th October and he noted they were having a spot of bother with the water supply at Leyburn. A garden hose was being used to top up *Joem*'s tank but a member of staff had a good idea how to speed up the process by using a watering can! Perhaps the driver was thinking otherwise?



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NELPG CHRISTMAS CARDS

With the night's drawing in and the number of shopping days to Christmas rapidly falling, now is the time to be thinking about buying your Christmas cards. This year, NELPG has available a limited stock of Christmas cards with a front cover photograph of the P3 leaving a snow covered Goathland on 20th November 1971 during the Group's 5th Anniversary celebrations and containing the message 'With Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year' inside. Competitively priced at £3.00 for five, including envelopes, they are available post free from the Secretary at 67 The Mount, York, YO24 1AX. Payment

should be enclosed with orders and cheques should be made payable to 'NELPG'. All monies raised will go to the J27 overhaul fund.



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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 13th November 2015: **RAILWAYS OF NORTHUMBERLAND** by Martin Mills.

Friday 20th November 2015: **OPEN MEETING** starting at 7.30pm, in the Railway Athletic (RA) Club, Brinkburn Road, Darlington, DL3 9LF.

Friday 11th December 2015: **MEMBERS' SLIDES**

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COVER PICTURES

Front: 63395 climbs past Green End with the 16.00 from Grosmont on 27th September (Ken Snowdon)

Back (top):- 62005 gets into its stride past the Tom na Faire depot at Fort William (John Midcalf)

Back (bottom):- 63395 makes a rousing sight as it attacks the 1 in 49 at Esk Valley with the 8.30 from Grosmont on 25th September (Ken Snowdon)

