

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



**NO. 125**

**JUN. 1988**

## EDITORIAL

So often it is both pleasing and gratifying to be able to reflect on the Group's successes, and quite rightly so, but the membership should also be aware that it is not always plain sailing and problems do occur. May has been a traumatic month with all our active locomotives suffering failures, though fortunately none has yet proved terminal.

The P3 has twice run hot necessitating remedial attention to first a big end, the cause of overheating being due to lack of lubrication, now cured, and then to the right hand side driving axle box. Although the latter still runs very warm the engine managed a concerted weeks running at the beginning of June.

The J72 was beset with safety valve problems which resulted in its being stopped at Goathland, curtailing prematurely a day of special runs; a cure is currently being effected.

Finally the K1 also succumbed to safety valve problems at the end of May and whilst the valves are being examined to ascertain the cause and cure, the co-operation of the owner of B1 Mayflower saved the day with the loan of 1306's safety valves.

The P3 problems are yet another chapter in the long running saga and, perhaps, will not raise too many eyebrows, and one can only hope that it will soon be concluded one way or the other. The safety valve episodes are totally unexpected and the cause more difficult to identify. To meet insurance company and railway requirements the valves must be tested and certified by approved contractors and this was done, in the case of the K1 as recently as March. Hopefully the problem will be identified and a recurrence avoided.

These problems have occupied much volunteer time and it is perhaps unfortunate that attention to such pressing matters as keeping our locos running should be distracted by yet another membership ballot. As detailed elsewhere members are to decide on the naming of the K1, as a result of a motion raised under any other business at the May AGM. Though constitutionally correct the procedure and lack of prior notification may be of concern, especially as the motion is not supported by the NELPG committee. Nevertheless this is the democratic

way and the membership will decide by voting - or not voting - on this questionable issue. Ironically these vexed matters of locomotive identity are likely to raise more hackles than whether to spend £50,000 on a locomotive overhaul!

We live with the P3, T2 and K1 in liveries democratically determined, but with only the T2 being correct historically, and it is a moot point whether a re-run of the K1 livery ballot would have the same green result after its sojourn in black. The membership also decided to remove the name from the J72, when agreeing to put the engine in a genuine livery, and were overwhelming in their choice of an authentic livery for Blue Peter. To name the K1 would hardly be consistent with the tenor of these previous ballot results and to agree to do so, one fears, is to perilously enter a veritable minefield.

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#### LOCOMOTIVE REPORT

Gordon Wells

#### P3 No 2392

The P3 ran its first train of the season on 3rd April, but failed after only one trip to Pickering with injector problems. Back on shed it was found that the left hand big end oil reservoir was empty. The problem was found to be the pin restricting the feed of oil to the bearing being too small. This allows too much oil to flow and thus the oil supply runs out with resultant damage. A larger pin has been fitted and a close watch will be kept on the oil consumption.

The injector clack boxes have been overhauled with the valve seats re-cut and ground in. The water feed hoses have been repaired and leaks attended to on the left hand injector body.

The rear sanders have been completely overhauled and are now operable for the first time in many years!

Mike Oliver, who has taken the P3 under his wing, has designed, made and fitted a gravity operated catch on the firebox damper lever. This is to prevent the damper jumping shut as the loco pounds its way up the bank.

The loco was in traffic again on 8th May but again only worked one

trip as examination on shed gave concern over the left hand big end. The bearing was taken down again and it was found that the white metal was damaged. The brass has been repaired and refitted and the bearing run in on 28th May and stayed cool all day. However, the RHS driving axlebox was running very warm. Following remedial work by Mike Oliver, 2392 successfully worked two service trains to Pickering on 5th June, though the axlebox was still warm. A cylinder lubricator problem was identified and cured by replacing a non-return valve with one from the T2.

#### T2 No 2238

In store in Deviation shed.

At Wilton no further progress made on the tender since the last report.

#### K1 No 2005

As reported in the last NEWS the K1 arrived back on shed at Fort William at 12.30 on 18th March.

The loco is now fitted with radio signalling equipment with the aerial currently mounted on the back of the tender.

The area was very dry during April and after several lineside fires on 4th May, trains on 11th and 15th were diesel hauled.

To reduce the risk of spark throwing the smokebox spark arrestor has been improved and a baffle plate, to deflect the draught down through a mesh screen, has been fitted between the tubes and the blastpipe. With the fire risk reduced by several showers of rain, the loco returned to service on 17th and 18th May. On the latter date B.R. Glasgow traction inspector George Steele rode on the loco and pronounced himself well pleased with the loco and its performance. The loco was in super shine condition due to the splendid cleaning efforts of three converts from the DPS - well done lads!

The only repair required has been to repack the regulator gland in the cab, though on 25th and 26th May it was noted that the safety valves were blowing variously between 230 and 245 p.s.i., above the normal 225 p.s.i. At first it was thought a faulty pressure gauge was to blame, but subsequent testing at Alcan's Fort William works on Bank Holiday Sunday showed the gauge to be correct. Unfortunately the Sunday train had been cancelled - unknown to the support crew who had the engine ready to go! However, the disappointment was turned to good effect by resetting the safety valves. This was successful so enabling

the public train on Whit Monday to run as planned.

The valves were removed after the working on 2nd June for detailed examination and possible repair, since although they were blowing off at the correct pressure, the pressure drop before re-seating was not satisfactory. Due to the kind co-operation of the owner of 81 1306 Mayflower on the Great Central, the B1's safety valves have been borrowed, tested by ICI and fitted temporarily to the K1, being set in steam on 8th June.

Up to 8th June the K1 had worked 11 trips to Mallaig, clocking up 1032 miles. So far the support crews have performed admirably but the most poignant quote must come from volunteer John Marsland who said:- "I have learnt more about the K1 in two days than in the previous 8 years!"

#### Q7 No 901

The axlebox repairs are now complete and of the eight overhauled boxes the rear pair are now refitted on the axle.

The repair work has entailed the following:-

Both leading axleboxes have had a new front inside lip welded on to replace the damaged original, the damage being caused by excessive side play in BR days. All faces have been built up and machined to the correct clearances to suit the refurbished horn guides.

A complete new left driving axlebox brass has been cast and this plus the right driving, both rear trailing axlebox brasses and all the side rod brasses have been re-metalled and machined.

On the tender, the water filler has been refitted and the whole of the rear top area of the tank is now painted in gloss.

On the boiler, all the small tubes are now beaded over in the firebox with only a small number of large tubes left to complete.

#### J72 No 69023

It is sad to report that when the loco was being cleaned on 10th April it was discovered that the left hand builders plate had been stolen. The theft occurring some time earlier in the week and while the loco was inside Deviation shed. The police have been informed but recovery is unlikely. The plate was not the 'genuine article' but its replacement is an inconvenience that we could have done without.

The loco was steamed on 16th April and ran a special trip to Pickering with the Great Western saloon for a party of ICI management and guests. This trip was arranged by the Group as a small thankyou gesture for any inconvenience caused at Wilton during the recent

overhaul of the K1. Joem performed well and the MSC scheme supervisors was satisfied that we were looking after her.

The loco was in traffic again for a special on 21st May but failed with a faulty safety valve. The valves have been removed and are receiving attention.

### A2 No 60532 "Blue Peter"

Boiler - work is now in progress on the time consuming task of fitting the copper lacings to the seams in the firebox. In the areas denoted by the boiler inspector, alternative rivets are being burnt out, holes tapped, countersunk with a special tool and the new lacings fitted. When all are complete the rivets between the new lacings will then be dealt with.

To avoid the need to repeatedly crawl through the firehole door, (tricky with no grate in the firebox) an access hole has been cut in the ashpan.

The special arsenical copper bar for the lacings is to hand and a local firm is to carry out the machining under contract.

An order has been placed for the casting for the firegrate plus a quantity of spares for use in the future.

Mechanical - All side rods were removed on 5th May and measurements have been taken of the crank pins and brasses. The results confirm that no work is required as a full overhaul of these items was carried out at Doncaster Works in 1970, and the loco has run less than 1000 miles since then.

The slidebars have been removed in order to ream out the mounting holes and fit new bolts.

The left hand crosshead requires remedial work, the surface of the taper where it fits to the piston rod has been found to be badly pitted. Both front foot steps and the vacuum brake pipe have been removed so that the front buffer beam can be used as a jacking point when the loco is lifted for the axlebox examination. The 'H' section jacking beams are now to hand and preparations for lifting continue.

Tender - The new casting for the tender brake cylinder is now on order, with a delivery of 8 weeks.

Priority of work is being given to the needle gunning and cleaning of the underside of the tender and the overhaul of the axleboxes. Once the tender is back on its wheels it will be moved outside No 5 Depot where the inside of the tank will be grit blasted. This cannot be done indoors due to the mess it would cause in the workshop.

### A4 No 2509 "Silver Link"

All work on the A4 was completed by the third week in May and the end result is an apparition in silver. The finished loco looks superb, a tribute to MSC supervisor John Maynard and his team and to the small band of NELPG members who have worked on the silver machine.

Much attention has been given to small details in order to obtain the best possible finish, even the bolt heads fixing the valences were turned to the correct profile; 144 bolts on each side!

Len Clarke spent several weekends after Easter signwriting the lettering and numbers on the tender, cab sides, boiler and front casing all to Len's usual high standard.

A special ceremony was held at ICI on 14th April to mark the completion of the part conversion of the Wilton power station back to coal firing. The A4 was specially positioned outside No 5 Depot where it was admired by the respective chairmen of ICI, British Rail and British Coal, drawing much favourable comment.

Following an examination of the loco by York BR inspector Bob Willis on Wednesday 24th May, Silver Link was taken out of No 5 Depot on the 26th and moved to the ICI exchange sidings.

The loco left the Wilton site the following day at 3.35pm hauled by 37.069. This loco was newly painted in the latest railfreight livery and proved a perfect colour match to the A4.

The loco will be handed over to the NRM at a ceremony taking place on the museum turntable at 7.00pm on 16th June and will then be on public display.

As inspiration, ICI sponsored artist Pip Harrison has produced a superb painting of the A4, hauling the 'Silver Jubilee', storming through a landscape that looks not dissimilar to the NYMR.

### 5MT No 44767 "George Stephenson"

In regular NYMR traffic paired with the tender of 45428.

work continues on the overhaul of George's tender at Ian Storey's workshop at Morpeth, and was expected to be delivered to Pickering New Bridge by the end of June.

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### 2005 ENTERS THE ELECTRONIC AGE

Gordon Wells

Radio electronic token block (RETB) signalling was introduced onto the west Highland line in December last year with the new system

replacing all the traditional signalboxes and semaphore signals.

The lines from Craighendran to Fort William, Crianlarich to Oban and Fort William to Mallaig are now all controlled from a new signalling centre located at Banavie.

All locomotives working the line are now fitted with a radio telephone incorporating the special electronic token display.

The equipment is designed around a modified radio telephone and includes buttons to send and receive the token, plus the display unit which indicates the current section for which the token is held. The radio forms the link between the driver and the controlling signal centre which contains specially adapted solid state interlocking and radio interface equipment. Also included is a voice recorder which records all transmissions for record purposes.

At each station the starting signal has been replaced by a board with the instructions 'Stop and obtain token before proceeding'. At this point the driver must use the radio to contact the signal centre and report his position. On being asked to give up the token for the current section, he must hold the send button to return the electronic token. When the token has been transmitted back to the signal centre the token display blanks and the driver must report 'I now have a blank display'. The next section is requested and the driver instructed to hold the receive button, the token is transmitted and the display indicates the new section. i.e. Loch Eil Outward Bound to Glenfinnan. The driver acknowledges receipt and the train may then continue.

The RETB equipment was installed on the K1 on Saturday 19th March (refer to the article Return to Lochaber in the last issue of the NEWS). The following day 2005 became the first steam locomotive to work a scheduled train signalled under the new system.

As the RETB sets were designed for use with modern traction with dry, relatively quiet cabs its installation on a steam loco presented the B.R.S. & T. Department with several problems.

Radio equipment requires a power supply. On a diesel this is taken from the loco electrical system but for a steam loco it must be supplied from a battery; in the event the battery may go flat, it is also necessary to carry a spare.

The radio requires an aerial, on a diesel this is a small unit mounted at each end of the loco.

The equipment was designed for a modern loco cab and is therefore not waterproof. Due to space restrictions on the K1 it cannot be





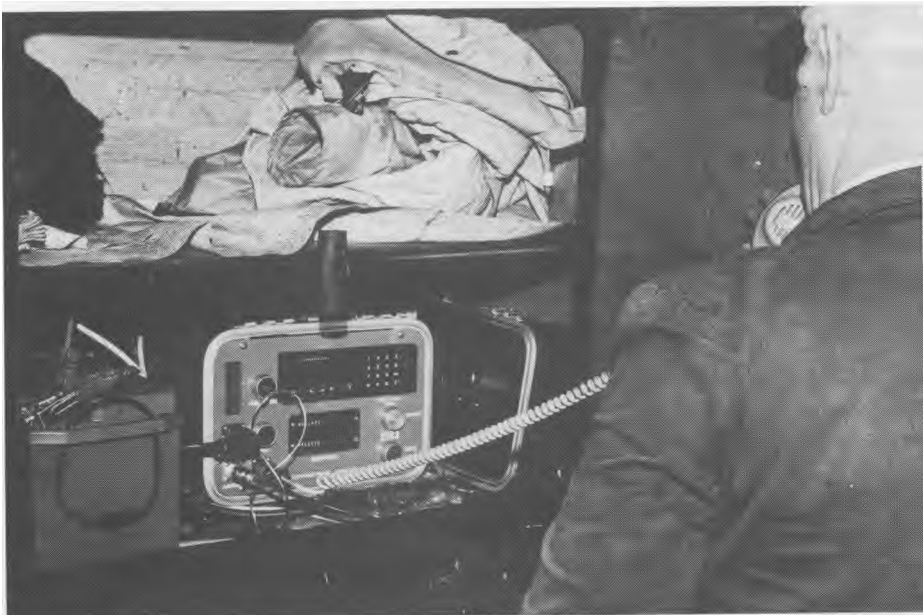
Len Clarke painting the shading to Silver Links name at Wilton during May (Maurice Burns).



60532 Blue Peter far from home at Axminster on the L. & S.W. main line, with a Waterloo to Exeter special on 14 August 1966 (David Idle).



Ted Parker takes a video recording of Peter Townend giving an interview on the operation and maintenance of Peppercorn pacifics, at Wilton on 13 May (Maurice Burns)



Driver Neil Macrauld using the R.E.T.B. instrument in the K1 tender locker on 9 April. The display records that the driver has the single line token from Mallaig to Arisaig. (John Hunt)

mounted in its normal position, directly in front of the driver.

The RETB radio is normally fitted with a telephone type handset however on a steam loco this would be impossible to hear due to the noise from injectors and safety valves and the additional high level of background noise when the engine is running.

To try and solve the above problems the radio set and its supply battery have been put in the bottom of the large tender locker with the spare battery on the top shelf. After trials with aerials of different sizes mounted in various places on the loco, the aerial is currently a four foot long aluminium device fixed to the right rear tender handrail.

To try and overcome the high level of noise in the cab a hand held microphone is provided for the driver combined with a high volume horn loudspeaker fitted each side of the tender locker. The system is working but it is still often impossible to hear messages when both safety valves are blowing off. As this is the first installation on a steam loco, lessons are still being learnt and further modifications are possible.

The RETB was officially brought into operation on 19th May by transport minister David Mitchel who exchanged a test token between the K1 and Banavie box. The minister then rode on the footplate from Fort William to Banavie, even taking a turn on the shovel, before retiring to the train for the journey to Mallaig and back. During the trip the minister was introduced to the members of the loco support crew and finally left the train wearing an NELPG badge and clutching a copy of North Eastern Revival!

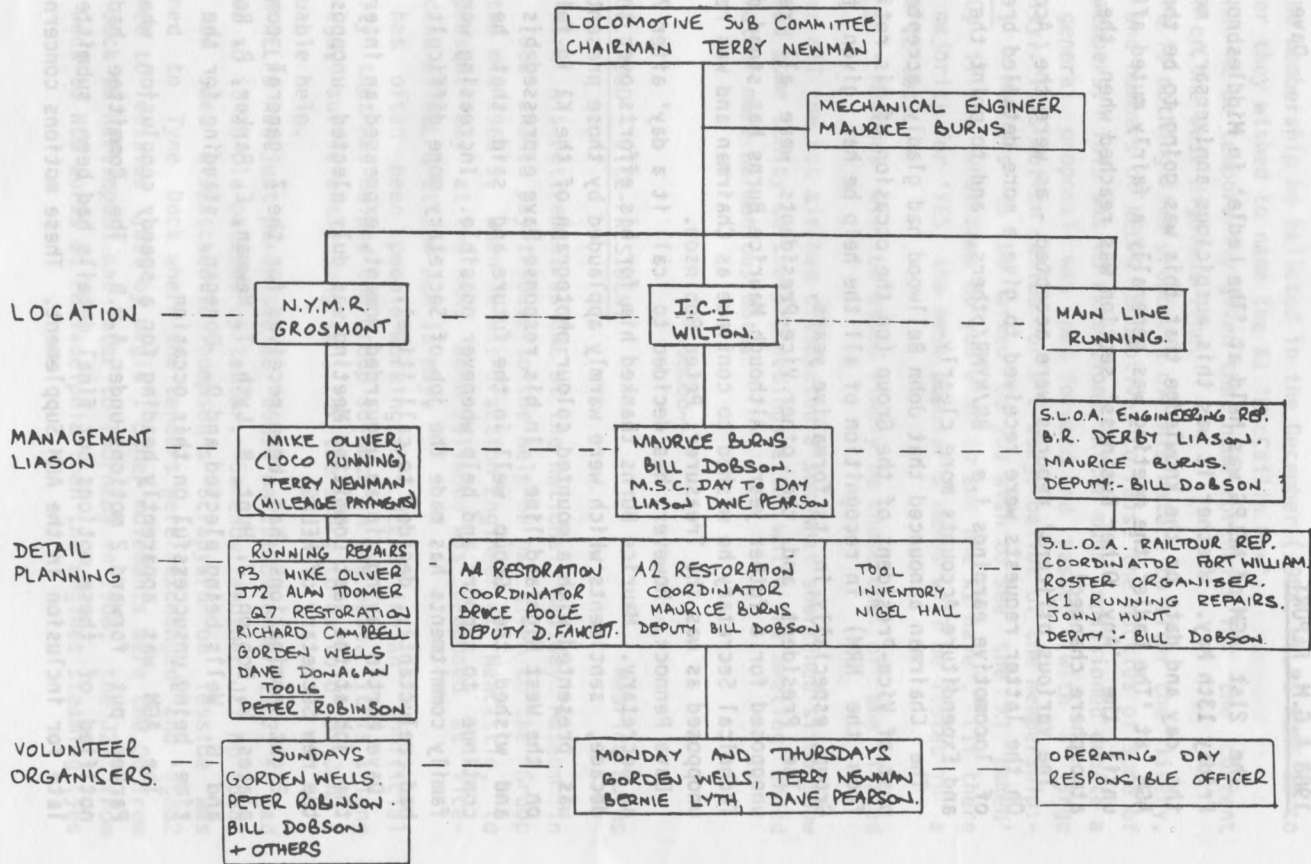
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#### WORK ON LOCOMOTIVES - NEW ORGANISATION

Following the resignation of Maurice Burns and a meeting of loco volunteers at Wilton on 21st April, detailed responsibilities for all the Group's locomotive activities have been allocated as per the accompanying chart. Hopefully this will share out the burden of work and responsibility more equitably and enable existing workers - and future volunteers - to see who is now in charge of what.

Working parties continue unabated as usual on Sundays at Grosmont and on Monday and Thursday evenings at Wilton. Please turn up and keep the momentum going on the Q7 and the A2.

# N.E.L.P.G. LOCOMOTIVE RESTORATION, RUNNING AND REPAIRS.



The 21st AGM of NELPG was held at 'The Ladle' in Middlesbrough on Friday 13th May. Whether it was this auspicious anniversary meeting, the day and date or the knowledge that this was going to be the last AGM at 'The Ladle' the meeting was generally a fairly muted affair - until the 'Any Other Business' section was reached when the whole atmosphere changed!

The various officers' reports were accepted - as were the Accounts. On the latter requests were received to give a more detailed breakdown of locomotive earnings i.e. BR/NYMR/others, and to print the Income and Expenditure Accounts more clearly.

The Chairman announced that John Bellwood had gladly accepted the post of Vice-President of the Group (on the occasion of his retirement from the NRM) in recognition of all the help he has given to the Group, especially in its formative years.

The President and the other Vice-Presidents were all returned unopposed for a further year. Although Maurice Burns has stood down as Technical Secretary he wished to continue as Chairman and was returned unopposed as was the Treasurer, Peter Robinson.

Dave Pennock, however, has decided to 'call it a day' after 7 years as Secretary. Maurice Burns thanked him for his efforts over the last decade, sentiments which were warmly applauded by those present. Dave was presented with a mounted colour photograph of the K1 in full cry on the West Highland line. In his response Dave expressed his thanks and wished the Group well in the future and said that he would continue to support and help whenever possible. Increasing work and family commitments has made the job of Secretary more difficult and he had, reluctantly, decided to call 'time'.

Dave Martin having, in an unguarded moment, expressed an interest in the job at the last Committee Meeting was duly elected unopposed as the new Secretary of NELPG.

Eight nominations had been received for the 7 general committee places. W. Dobson, J. Hunt, B. Lyth, T. Newman, E. Parker, P. Robinson and G. Wells being elected and D. Donegan, standing for the first time, being unsuccessful on this occasion.

The AGM was apparently heading for a speedy conclusion when Ted Parker put forward 2 motions under A.O.B. The Committee had been notified of these motions but final details had been submitted too late for inclusion in the AGM Supplement. These motions concerned the

naming of the K1:-

- 1) The membership be balloted in the December (1988) NELPG NEWS as to whether they wished to name the K1 'MacCailin Mor'.
- 2) The K1 be temporarily given that name forthwith for the current season on the west Highland line.

There is nothing like proposals of this nature to alter the livery, names and numbers of NELPG locomotives to raise the hackles of some of our members. This was no exception! After much impassioned debate a more general proposal was put forward and passed (with a large majority). This motion called for a 2 stage ballot of the membership:-  
Stage 1 - Members to be asked 'Do you wish to see the K1 named' YES/NO, if YES 'what name do you wish to see the K1 have'. (If there is a majority for 'YES' the most popular 5 names will be listed in a second ballot).

Stage 2 - Members will be asked simply to chose one of the listed names.

After all the hot air had dissipated a somewhat shortened slide show restored some sanity to the proceedings after which the meeting ended on a rather more harmonious note.

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JOHN BELLWOOD - VICE-PRESIDENT

Maurice Burns

To mark his retirement as CME of the National Railway Museum in April 1988 and to pay tribute to the help he has given to the Group from the mid 1960's, when he was Traction Engineer at Newcastle, to the present day at the NRM, John Bellwood was proposed as Vice-President of NELPG at the AGM in May.

It has often been people working for NELPG in an 'unofficial capacity' that has helped the Group so much in the past. It is a long time ago, sufficiently long ago, for the story to be told of John's invaluable help.

When NELPG had just purchased J27 65894 on 1st December 1967, it had coupled to it an old patched up tender. 'Somehow' another J27 No 65882 that had been dispatched to Thompson's Scrapyard on Tesside was returned to Tyne Dock where the tenders were exchanged and 65882 returned to Teesside 'just by magic'. Other movements were the Q6 from Tyne Dock to Hartlepool and later to Thornaby in 1968, the J27 from Tyne Dock to NCB works at Philadelphia then the engines steaming (yes

steaming over BR metals!) from Philadelphia to Thornaby (via Newcastle) one occasion when John Bellwood rode on the footplate. Other movements were the K1 62005 from Leeds Neville Hill to Thornaby where it was used to demonstrate the wheel drop facility during an open day in 1971. Yet for all these movements BR strangely never submitted at bill! Such happenings were frequent before the end of steam when many members of BR management made 'invisible contributions' to the steam preservation movement when societies were financially stretched to the limits buying their locomotives.

We are delighted to say that John accepted our invitation to be a Vice-President and was unanimously elected at the AGM.

The final word must come from John himself in accepting the proposal:- "It has been a pleasure to be associated with NELPG since the mid 1960's, and like all LNER enthusiasts I am grateful for the work which the Group has done to keep memories of its locomotives alive in such a positive way. I would be most honoured to accept the position of Vice-President of NELPG, but conscious of the fact that I shall of necessity have to be a pretty inactive one.

With best wishes to you and all the members of the Group".

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#### RAILTOUR REPORT

A proposal has been agreed in principle by BR for a two day railtour on Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th October using 2005 over the entire West Highland line, approximate times as follows:-

##### Saturday 8th October

Newcastle	dep	06.45)	
Edinburgh	dep	09.00)	
Glasgow	dep	10.15)	diesel
Fort William	arr	14.10)	
Fort William	dep	14.30)	
Mallaig	arr	16.30)	2005
Mallaig	dep	17.10)	
Fort William	arr	18.30)	

Participants provided with dinner, bed and breakfast at various hotels in Fort William.

Sunday 9th October

Fort William dep 09.15 2005

stops at Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge (W), Tulloch,  
Corrour, Bridge 212 (W), Rannoch and Bridge of Orchy  
for photographs.

Crianlarich arr 13.50

Crianlarich dep 15.00 W

Craigendoran arr 16.35 attach diesel pilot

Craigendoran dep 16.45

Cowlairs arr 17.30 detach K1

Cowlairs dep 17.40)

Edinburgh dep 18.50 diesel

Newcastle arr 21.00)

Reserve locomotive : class 37 diesel

Stock: coaches supplied by S.R.P.S. and limited to 6  
vehicles (excluding support coach) between Fort  
William and Craigendoran Junction.

The inclusive cost from Newcastle, Edinburgh or Glasgow (Westerton)  
is likely to be in the region of £79.

Confirmation of the tour has been received from BR but precise  
details are yet to be finalised. A booking form will be included with  
the August NEWS, but as demand for this unique, excellent value tour  
is likely to be very high and as accommodation will be strictly  
limited (no more than 300 seats) prospective patrons are advised to  
send an S.A.E. marked Railtour in the top left hand corner as soon as  
possible to:-

NELPG Railtours  
57 Millview Drive  
Tynemouth  
Tyne and Wear  
NE30 2QD

and a booking form will be forwarded as soon as possible.

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CARRIAGE REPORT

A new item for consideration in the NEWS, since there is action on  
two fronts.



Thompson coach DE 321120

The coach was moved into No 5 Depot on 26th May and a survey is to be undertaken to determine if it is possible to restore this vehicle as a support coach for use with Blue Peter.

BR BSK 34557

This vehicle has been operating as the K1's support coach since June 1987 on the understanding that it would be purchased from BR in due course. Agreement has now been reached following negative asbestos tests and it is likely that by the next issue of the NEWS the vehicle will be Group property.

Pending the result of the Thompson coach survey the BSK will not be structurally altered in order to preserve its ultimate resale value. The vehicle will need to be formally registered as a private owner vehicle once the sale is complete.

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69023 TO GO NUCLEAR!

The weekend of 9th and 10th July sees the opening to the public of Hartlepool nuclear power station. Visitors will be able to go on a 50 minute conducted tour of the station, part of a national move to help allay public fears over nuclear power plants in the wake of Three Mile Island, Chernobyl and Sellafield.

To further encourage visitors there will be a number of other attractions including the Hartlepool lifeboat, a Sea King helicopter doing circuits round Hartlepool Bay, refreshments and, not least of course, a shuttle service on the station's internal rail layout using the J72 69023. Some form of passenger accommodation is to be provided so that visitors can have a short ride behind steam.

Entrance is free and hours of opening are 12 to 5 on the Saturday and 10 to 5 on the Sunday.

The J72 is expected to move by low loader from Pickering New Bridge on Thursday 7th July, with a trial run at Hartlepool on 8th July, and return straight after the event. NELPG Sales will be in attendance, with a small display. Any volunteers who are able to assist in loco movement, operation and cleaning, please contact Alan Toomer on Stockton (0642) 530301.

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## MEMBERS' DAY ON THE YORKSHIRE DALES RAILWAY

Sunday 4th September sees a joint NELPG and Vintage Carriages Trust members' day at Embsay when both 69023 and the VCT's Bellerophon are expected to be in steam together and working trains on the YDR.

It is proposed to organise a coach outing to Embsay for this unique event, leaving Teesside at about 9am, picking up at Northallerton and returning from Embsay at about 5pm. There could be an optional side trip into Skipton for part of the day. Cost for the trip would be £4.00 payable in advance. Travel on the YDR would be free on production of a valid NELPG membership card.

Full details are available from and bookings should be made to:-

Alan Toomer  
18 Mapleton Drive  
Glebe Estate  
Norton, Stockton  
Cleveland  
Tel: Stockton (0642) 530301

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Thursday 16th June 1988 at 7pm for 7.30pm in the National Railway Museum, York. FORMAL HANDING OVER OF 2509 SILVER LINK. Free entrance on production of valid NELPG membership card.

Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th July 1988 from 12 noon (Sat) and 10am, (Sun) to 5pm at Hartlepool power station. OPEN DAYS with 69023 in steam and on display. Entrance free.

Sunday 4th September 1988 at Embsay, Yorkshire Dales Railway. MEMBERS' DAY with 69023 and Bellerophon in steam and working trains. Free travel for members.

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## COVER PICTURES

Front: Turning the clock back 53 years - Silver Link reincarnated at Wilton on 27th May 1988

Back (top): 2005 approaches Banavie on 9th April 1988 with snow capped Ben Nevis dominating the back drop

Back (bottom): 2392 and 69023 await departure from Levisham on the 1987 members' special. Both locos have been in steam this year. (All John Hunt)

