

N.E.L.P.G. NEWS



NO. 139 OCT. 1990

EDITORIAL

The mega activity of the Group's locomotives highlighted in the August NEWS, masks a worrying trend that, unless arrested, might undermine the achievements of the past few months. It has been apparent for a long time that there is a polarisation of volunteer activity at Wilton, at the expense of Grosmont, to the extent that even on Sundays in the summer, working party attendances at Grosmont have struggled above 1 or 2. Even the final push to get the Q7 into traffic did not produce the numbers that once were taken for granted. Coercion tactics have been resorted to to get certain jobs done. Why?

It is easy to come to the conclusion that volunteers are spoilt at Wilton because of its far greater accessibility and superior working conditions, compared with Grosmont.

Whilst this is undoubtedly an important factor there are other equally valid reasons; the Group's volunteer workforce is ageing, with few new, young volunteers coming along to help. Attitudes harden and habits change as a result. Family and work commitments may mean that it is an easier and more socially acceptable option to spend three hours on a mid-week evening at Wilton, rather than spend a whole day at the weekend at Grosmont. Also increased 652 of contractors, and the prolonged absence of Group locomotives from Grosmont, outstationed instead around the U.K., may have further removed volunteers' incentive to go to Grosmont.

In 1991 this will all change and by next Easter all the Group's working locomotives, including - it is to be hoped - Blue Peter, should be on the N.Y.M.R. During the year these locomotives might be expected to run up to 12,000 miles, to be shared between the P3, Q7 and K1. For the first time for many years the Group should be able to make a significant and valuable contribution to the N.Y.M.R.'s motive power position, but this prospect would be in severe jeopardy if the Group has to rely on one or two volunteers on Sundays!

Hopefully the prospect of a substantial and prolonged active locomotive presence at Gosmont will encourage volunteers to regain the habit of going to Deviation shed, not necessarily at the expense of Wilton, but to ensure that the Group can deliver the goods in its silver jubilee year.

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P3 NO. 2392

Following the P3 rebuilding at the Stephenson Museum, and light running in on two coach trains, the P3 engine and tender were moved to the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway on August 9th respectively. Midweek activity saw one broken loco spring repaired in three days and delivered direct to Haworth, just in time for Richard Campbell and Maurice Burns to fit, then recouple engine and tender on August 10th. Facing downhill 2392 entered K.W.V.R. service on August 12th. Having never worked backwards under power since overhaul since some 'high spots' did cause heating of axleboxes but the following weekend, on August 17th, 2392 became the very first loco to be turned on the K.W.V.R.'s Keighley turntable. This turntable was the original Garsdale turntable (on the S & C) famed for its stockade, built following a night of high winds when a loco being turned could not be stopped:

Now facing uphill, all the P3 bearings ran cold on August 18th and during the following week the loads were increased from 4 to 6 coaches without problems.

Attention to injector clacks, mechanical lubricator, packings and boiler washout have all been competently carried out by K.W.V.R. volunteers under the direction of the P3 caretaker Chris Hulme.

It should be said the K.W.V.R. volunteers are quite amazed by the P3. The size of its boiler compared to the 4F is very noticeable.

Robin Higgins the P3 driver was quoted as saying "Its very economical on coal does not use much oil and is a great engine to drive on the type of line like the K.W.V.R." Very noticeable is that if steam pressure is "down the nick" the P3 quickly responds unlike the LMS 4F. By the first week in September the P3 had covered nearly 1,000 miles and future steaming dates are September 29/30th, October 13/14, 27/28th and December 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23.

These latter trains are Santa Specials which will involve double heading. Please ring 0535-44246 to check if the P3 is working before setting off, - just in case.

The K.W.V.R. experience has certainly been an enjoyable one and we recommend all NELPG members to both see the P3 and the award winning Worth Valley stations, new carriage museum at Ingrow and loco museum at Oxenhope.

STOP PRESS

Agreement has just been reached with the N.Y.M.R. for the P3 to be moved from the K.W.V.R. on January 2nd to enable 2392 to work every Sunday between Grosmont and Goathland (5 trips) on the new N.Y.M.R. winter services. All we now need is the bufferbeam snowplough, owned by N.E.L.P.G., and the only one preserved from the steam age, to be replated. Any volunteers to have this finished by Christmas for some useful publicity - especially if it snows:?

T2 No. 2238

The T2 is on display in Deviation shed, however several items have been removed from the loco recently in order to speed the completion of the Q7. The whistle linkage, steam brake valve handle assembly and other small items now require replacements providing.

At Wilton, the requirement to move the tender, which stands over an isolated length of track, and extend the main length of track before the arrival of the Deltic, has now become urgent. Efforts are now being made to get the tender back onto its wheels.

The axleboxes have been examined and problems have been discovered due to the wheelsets have been exchanged, the original set having a large number of cracked spokes. The original brasses, which fit the original axleboxes are shorter than the replacement axle journals. The brasses that are the correct length for the replacement axles do not fit into the original axleboxes as they are a different type. Complicated isn't it

It is intended to make the tender mobile in order to allow the track-work to be carried out and then complete the repair of the axleboxes brasses after the shunting has been done to allow the Deltic into the depot.

A tidy up operation is taking place on the Wilton site at present which includes a scrap for charity scheme. Scrap is being collected and sold with the proceeds used to help the local hospitals. The old T2 tender tank which was used as a pattern for the construction of the new tank has languished in the compound at the rear of No. 5 Depot for some years. It was cut up for scrap during September, by E.T. scheme members, and the remains put in the charity scrap skip.

NO. 2005

The K1 has performed very well on West Highland duties, the only notable items requiring attention have been the replacement, in July, of two damaged firebars, a cracked tender spring and the smokebox door seal.

2005 worked a number of extra turns in August due to the failure of the Black Five. The trip on Sunday 12th August had to be diesel hauled but Richard Campbell dashed to Fort William, at very short notice, in the early hours of the Monday morning, and the K1 then worked the rest of that week.

2005 performed its final rostered duty on 8th September, bringing its total number of trips between Fort William and Mallaig to 58, and its total mileage for 1990 to 5, 343. The K1 has run almost faultlessly during its stay in Lochaber, with no major problems. Cancellations early in the season were attributable to fire risk, and problems with the luxury trains. However, these losses were all but made up when the K1 deputised for 5305 in August. Sincere thanks are extended to all those who made up the various support crews and who helped to make the whole operation a success for the Group.

B.R. have requested that the loco remain at Fort William until early

November to act as standby for 5305. It was originally expected that the loco would return home at the end of September. The K1 will therefore require a full exam and steam test by B.R. inspectors Colin Wood and Sam Foster in order to renew its six month main line certificate which expires at the beginning of October. The loco will not now be back at Grosmont for the NYMR gala weekend.

Q7 NO. 901

The Q7 had its first steam test on 18th July and this was most satisfactory with only a small number of items requiring attention. While steam was available the operation of the steam reverser was tested and the travel of the cylinder between fore and back gear equalised.

Following the steam test the cab was refitted on 22nd July enabling Len Clarke to complete the painting and numbering. The loco was steamed again on 6th August for examination by the boiler insurance company and again on the 8th to have the loco in steam in the shed yard, for the press and T.V. coverage of the launch of the NYMR share issue.

Several Thursday evening working parties were held in August to complete all the outstanding items required to make the loco fit to run, attention to the tender axlebox brasses plus the fitting of the final split pins and cotters to the motion.

Although the loco is now a runner, a lot of work remains to be done to the underside of the tender, cleaning down and painting, etc. This work will now be undertaken during the winter months.

The Q7 commenced running-in light engine between Grosmont and Goathland on 9th September. After several days light engine running the loco was tested on a four coach ECS train on 13th September and the loads will be increased during the running-in period. When this is completed, including a gauging trial trip to Pickering, the loco will be released for traffic.

The Q7 rides superbly well, runs very quietly and is very powerful. Maurice Johnson comments that as more load is put behind it the better it becomes!

J72 NO. 69023

"Joem" continues to perform excellently on the East Somerset Railway at Cranmore and by 29th July had covered 995 miles and earned E5,550, quite remarkable for an engine that we thought would see little use:

The month of August passed without incident working 4 days per week, every week without a standby. In the last NELPG News mention was made about the loan extension. This has been agreed and "Joem's" last working will be on January 1st 1991. Loans as long as 9 months are not ideal and this point is fully appreciated by the committee but these are very special circumstances as the letter reproduced elsewhere in this NEWS explains.

The NYMR Railway Board fully understand the situation and support the loan extension. "Joem" will be heading north (ICI or Grosmont) for planned winter maintenance in the first week in January.

A2 No. 60532 "Blue Peter"

Since the boiler was fitted in July little significant progress has been made on the A2 due to the diversion of effort onto the completion of the P3 and Q7. During August the Monday evening working parties ceased and the Thursday attendance was down to an average of five. However, things are now moving again and work is again taking place on Monday and Thursday evenings and it is probable that Sunday working parties will also be required in the next few months.

A meeting was held in mid September between the Group and the E.T. scheme supervisors to plan the work programme required to complete the loco. The E.T. scheme is to end early in the new year, no new members are being taken on and numbers are declining as the existing members leave. The loco will not now be finished until the beginning of 1991.

Boiler - The superheater header is now completely stripped down. One of the regulator shaft bearing plugs was damaged and much time has been spent effecting its removal. A new plug is now required. The valves are to be reground and complete new seats machined; the regulator will then require setting up to obtain the correct sequence of valve events. The hydraulic test for B.R. cannot take place until the superheater header is back in place on the boiler.

In accordance with the new B.R. requirements, all the boiler washout plugs have been scrapped and brand new plugs will be fitted.

Tender - Len Clarke is to visit Wilton in the near future to varnish the tender and complete the outstanding paintwork. Prior to Len's visit it is intended to fill the tender with water to prove there are no leaks; the fallplate area can then be reassembled.

A4 No. 2509 "Silver Link"

At the Stephenson Museum, Newcastle.

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TINS APPEAL

The June issue of the NEWS contained an appeal for old tins for storage purposes at Grosmont. Shortly after the NEWS was published Mr. Lawson Little of Newark, Notts., phoned and explained that although he could not help at Grosmont in person, due to distance, this was one area where he could help and how many tins did we want as he works for the Metal Box Company. In due course three packages containing a large number of tins arrived at Grosmont - many thanks.

All we need now is someone to put things into them - any offers?

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STOP PRESS

On 30th September the Q7 entered revenue earning passenger service for the first time, working through to Pickering and back. Unfortunately, despite relatively trouble free running-in, the LH rear driving axlebox ran very warm, with a temperature of 108 °C. While 6619 ran the Q7's second trip, the lubrication was checked and the loco deemed fit to run its scheduled train at 16.50. However, this time the temperature of the axlebox measured 175 C and a decision was taken to remove the axlebox for examinations.

This took place during the following week with evening working parties rising to the occasion. The offending axlebox was removed, machined to improve clearances and refitted. Thanks are due to the N.Y.M.R. and to the Group's volunteers for their efforts.

On the Saturday of the gala weekend the Q7 was restricted to the Grosmont to Goathland shuttle and though the axlebox still ran warmer than the others, the temperature was nowhere near that of the previous weekend. The next day, 901 was again on the shuttle but with the axlebox now giving normal temperature readings, the final trip of the day was a return trip to Pickering with 6619 and six coaches. The journey was uneventful with all axleboxes running cool.

It seems, therefore that the axlebox has settled down and will hopefully not give, any further trouble. A number of minor jobs require to be carried out before the members' special on 28th October, with some outstanding work on the tender to be carried out over the winter.

'JOEM'S SOMERSET SOJOURN by Barry Buckfield. East Somerset Railway's
Director of Operations

Saturday 31st March saw the first day's use of J72 No 69023 'Joem' on the East Somerset Railway. The event was in connection with a special charter train arriving from BR. At the same time, NELPG staff were on site for the locomotive's hand over to the ESR for the hire period.

Prior to the arrival of the BR train, trials were conducted using 69023 on a four coach train formation. This the locomotive handled well, albeit slowly on the 1 in 56 grade back from the Mendip Vale terminus of the ESR. The following day, opportunity was taken, prior to the first public train, to have a photographic session along the line, as Maurice Burns appeared to be in his element balancing off the sides of cuttings etc, to get the shots in. Later an official handing over ceremony took place at Cranmore Station as ESR Chairman David Shepherd accepted the J72 for the Railway's 1990 season.

Since this initial weekend, 69023 has handled all ESR passenger services, apart from off peak Saturday services which were worked with the ESR's only current working locomotive, an Andrew Barclay 0-4-Ost No 1719, hauling a one coach train.

As crews became more used to the J72's free steaming capabilities, efficiency improved greatly without the visible sign of the safety valves regularly lifting. At first some crews were unable to work more than one return trip without taking water, but as performance improved, two trips can easily now be managed and probably even three, but no one has yet dared to try it.

With peak train services being run at Easter and the May bank holidays, some problems did occur with late running. This was due to the fact that under normal conditions, these services are operated using two locomotives

(working alternate trains, changing locos at Mendip Vale). With only one locomotive at our disposal, the service was proving hectic for both the crew and locomotive working the four coach train set. To ease the situation therefore, the service was cut from seven to six trains and the load reduced to three coaches. This greatly improved the situation and has been the standard for our peak July and August services.

Midweek services which began on Wednesday's at the end of May, increasing to Thursday's also in the peak period, had 'Joem' working without problem for four days a week. With the midweek and Saturday services finishing at the beginning of September, 69023 can now look forward to a sedate Sunday only use until the end of October.

Few defects have come to light since the J72 has been at Cranmore, where, so far, she has had three boiler washouts and mechanical examinations. The continuing problem of leaks around the dome cover has still not been fully resolved, nor, also, the leaks emanating from the front steam chest cover, but the performance of the locomotive has not been affected.

At NELPG's request, the boiler was placed on feed water treatment back in July, which has improved injector efficiency and clearly cleaned the boiler as was witnessed at the last washout in early September.

The hiring of 69023 this season has proved worthwhile in maintaining ESR services, and all at Cranmore are grateful to the NELPG for their co-operation. 1991 should see an improvement in the ESR motive power fleet with hopefully at least three working locomotives, thereby restoring our locomotive availability back to that enjoyed in past years.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

One consequence of the late appearance of the NEWS is that perennially late contributors like myself, are given more time to write their next articles: The 'Going Loco' series of railway programmes on TV's Channel 4 has shown that they, at least, appreciate the large numbers of railway enthusiasts nationwide. On one of these programmes one of the stars of 'The Railway Children' made a nostalgic return to the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway (20 years after the film was made). Which locomotive hauled the train - Big Jim, City of Wells, Bahamas, Standard 4-6-0, Ivatt 2-6-27? No, it was NELPG's P3 0-6-0 currently on loan to that railway: Free publicity is always very welcome - although credit is not always given when it is due.

2392 should be one of 5 NELPG locos in steam when the Group is to hold a special 25th Anniversary Gala Weekend on 18/19 May next year. The NYMR have kindly agreed to set aside the normal service that weekend so that we can celebrate in style: Details of the GALA and other events planned for "NELPG 25" will be covered in future editions of NELPG NEWS. If members have ideas or positive suggestions for other events to celebrate this anniversary please let me know - as long as they don't entail detailed and lengthy planning or cost a small fortune:

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EAST SOMERSET RAILWAY COMPANY LIMITED

EAST SOMERSET RAILWAY

**CRANMORE RAILWAY STATION, SHEPTON MALLET, SOMERSET.
TELEPHONE: CRANMORE 417**

Maurice Burns, Esq.,
5, Blackfriars,
Yarm on Tees,
Cleveland,
TS15 9HQ.

22nd July 1990.

Dear Maurice,

As you know, we were expecting our E1 class locomotive No. 110, to be in service during this summer. However, due to some difficult problems which have arisen, completion of the locomotive's restoration will almost preclude it from entry to service during the current season.

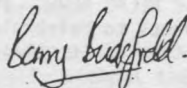
Having no other motive power of our own available at present, I am writing, cap in hand, to ask whether the current hire agreement for J72 class No. 69023, could be extended from the present end of September, through to 1st. January 1991, in order that we can maintain our services. I feel most awkward about making this request, as I believe 69023 was expected back at Groomont for October, and I can only apologise for any difficulty or inconvenience it may cause.

Our October services are usually quite busy, and of course the December Santa Trains are very lucrative, and we feel we must maintain such business. The extension of the hire will probably involve some 12 to 14 additional operating days, which would bring the total mileage run by 69023 this year, far in excess of what she ran in 1989 I would imagine.

This current period has been most difficult for us, as you know doubt appreciate, yet it is the first motive power shortage we have ever had since we opened in 1974. We are confident the situation will be much improved next season, with the E1, 9F and hopefully the class 4MT back in traffic. Work will then begin on Jinty 47493, following its withdrawal in February, after thirteen years in continual service.

Once again, I must apologise if I am tending to make the situation a little difficult, but appreciate your kind assistance in helping out a fellow organisation in times of need.

Yours sincerely,



Barry Buckfield,
Director of Operations.

REGISTERED OFFICE: CRANMORE STATION, SHEPTON MALLET, SOMERSET

TEL. 074-908-417

CHAIRMAN: DAVID SHEPHERD

DIRECTORS: AVRIL SHEPHERD, JOHN RHODES, BARRY BUCKFIELD, RICHARD FLENK, W. H. McALPINE

FULL MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION OF RAILWAY PRESERVATION SOCIETIES

REGISTERED IN CARDIFF No. 1261079

REGISTERED CHARITY No. 271599

ANOTHER APOLOGY

Not only was the last NEWS published very late, but was also despatched without adequate postage. It seems that many members were surcharged by the Post Office, sometimes at unreasonably early hours causing not a little resentment and dissatisfaction.

By way of explanation the pre-stamped envelopes were delivered to the printers well in advance of the postal increase. Unfortunately publication did not take place until after the increase took effect, and the envelopes were inadvertently sent out at the old rate.

Sincere apologies are extended to all those members surcharged or inconvenienced as a consequence. Steps have, however, been taken to ensure that there is no repetition.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 9 November 1990 - B.R. NORTH EASTERN REGION IN THE 1960s by John Boyes. Further historic slides from John's collection, with plenty of local interest throughout our region.

Friday 7th December 1990 - NELPG 1990 - a study of our activities in 1990 provided by members' slides of our engines throughout the length and breadth of the country.

N.B. Any member who wishes to contribute to this informal presentation should ring Steve Alder on 0609 770302.

The above meetings are held at 7.30 p.m. in the upstairs room of The Ladle Hotel, Ladgate Lane, Middlesbrough.

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COVER PICTURES

- Front A immensely rewarding sight as 901 forges up the 1 in 49 at Green End with one of its running-in turns on 16 September 1990, (Maurice Burns)
- Back 2392 being turned on the ex. Hawes Junction (Garsdale) turntable (top) at Keighley on 17 August 1990. (Maurice Burns)
- (bottom) On the same day, 2392, now facing south, climbs over Mytholmes viaduct. (Maurice Burns)

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