

N.E.L.P.G. NEWS



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EDITORIAL

Another summer, another chapter in NELPG history, but a familiar story! June should see all five of our active locomotives in traffic at five very separate and different locations - the J72 in southern England at Swanage, the P3 in Wales at Llangollen, the K1 in Scotland at Fort William, the A2 on the Settle and Carlisle line, and the Q7 on the NYMR. For once No.5 depot is empty and the working parties are enjoying a well deserved rest or - more likely, such is their insatiable appetite for work! - outstationed at Keighley, Carlisle or Fort William! Soon, however, the J72 will return to Wilton for an intermediate overhaul and the A2 should follow at the end of August for main line recertification and the working parties, suitably refreshed, can get back into the swing again, with the Thornaby open day as yet another incentive.

However, whilst the membership nationwide will benefit from the wide choice of venues to see the Group's locomotives, there is a view that they should be seen more often on their home line, the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. After

all the NYMR as an ex LNER or BR (NE) line is the most appropriate home for locomotives associated with the area; one expects to see mainly GWR and LMS engines on the Severn Valley Railway, SR locos on the Bluebell and K&ES Railways, and LMS engines on the KWVR and that, largely, is the case in practice. Not so on the NYMR. In the past the P3, T2 and , ably assisted by the Lambton tanks, were the mainstay of the line's passenger services, but not now. Strange interlopers with little affinity to North Yorkshire usurp services, with spurious logic and contentious economics as justification.

Why? The debate about NYMR locomotive policy continues, as yet unresolved. Hopefully it can be concluded amicably and with proper regard to those owners, such as the NELPG, who have, over the years, steadfastly supported the NYMR, particularly in its many hours of need. Those who ignore the lessons of the past, do so ill advisedly. The Group's commitment to the railway over the last 25 years has been inestimable, but those who chose to have short memories, or those who pass by as 'ships in the night', should reflect on the NELPG's and other locomotive owners significant contribution to the railway's success.

This may seem at odds with the philosophy of sending the Group's engines to the four corners of the land, but the reasons are well known; a steam loco in working order is a wasting asset if not in use and the Group just cannot afford to have its active locomotives standing idle. So long as there is no work available for our locos on the NYMR because of flawed financial reasons, prejudice or whatever, the present policy will have to continue. In 1993, however, the P3, J72, K1, Q7 and perhaps even the A2 could be available for NYMR use. It may be a pious hope, and nice though it may be to see our engines in pastures new, it would be very welcome to see them working regularly where they truly belong! Let us hope that the powers that be on the NYMR in deliberating on the locomotive policy will allow that to happen.

LOCOMOTIVE REPORT

P3 No. 2392

The P3 was steamed for the first time this year on 29th March. On this date the NYMR held an open day where visitors were given the chance to have access to areas of the railway which would normally be out of bounds. During the day the safety valves were set and the loco was used to bank an afternoon service train as far as Goathland to give it a test run. The run was satisfactory with no problems encountered.

Before entering traffic a repair was carried out to the sanding gear, after the R.H. back sand valve broke off inside the sandbox. These valves are very difficult to work on due to the sand pipes being behind the cab footstep with access restricted by the injectors and pipework. The left centre tender axlebox cover was also repaired after being found to be cracked.

The loco was allotted 1000 miles by the NYMR for running in the early part of the season, when loadings are within the P3s six coach haulage limit. However, after running 250 miles it was intimated that the loco would not be required further, since the NYMR is currently trying to save money on loco hire. It was then that the hand of fate intervened with the failure of both 80135, with a faulty regulator, and 30841, with a faulty R.H. piston valve; the P3 returned to service. Old faithful?

After running a total of 1044 miles the P3 left the NYMR by road on 18th May for its summer loan to the Llangollen Railway (see separate report). By 12th June the loco had been used on 15 occasions.

T2 No. 2238

On display in Deviation Shed.

At Wilton, the tender remains in store in the siding outside No. 5 Depot where it has stood since December 1989. The original sheeting covering the tender has been slowly destroyed by the wind and as a good quality tarpaulin became available recently this has been fitted over the tender tank. During this operation it was found that the back of the tank around the water filler has no drain holes and was six inches deep in evil green water. This had to be baled out before the tender could be covered. When returned to the workshop a pipe will have to be fitted to drain this area.

It is hoped to be able to move the tender into the workshop in June.

K1 No. 2005

In late March both rear tender axle brasses were remetalled on the thrust faces and the tender and engine steam brake cylinders were overhauled and fitted with new rings. Also the piston valves were removed, the R.H. side proving very difficult to extract due to heavy carbon build up on the valve.

The loco was moved outside the Depot on 2nd April and lifted the following day, by the I.C.I. riggers with a road crane, for the removal of the rear axle for attention to the axleboxes. On examination the boxes and the horn guide faces proved to be in a very worn condition. Both axleboxes were remetalled and remachined by Ian Storey on contract and the horn faces were ground true.

While the loco was outside the Depot the siderods were cleaned and the overhauled bushes pressed into the rods. A new ejector exhaust pipe was fabricated to replace the corroded pipe in the smokebox.

The loco was rewheeled on 1st May and moved back into the workshop the same day. Work then commenced on reassembly of springs, motion, pistons, valves etc.

Len Clarke repainted the boiler and cleaned and varnished the rest of the loco before it was once again moved outside the depot and steamed on 22nd May in order to test the repairs.

A satisfactory B.R. cold mechanical exam was carried out on 26th May by Brian Penny. The right leading tender spring had a suspected cracked leaf and had to be changed. Brian returned the following day with boiler inspector Sam Foster for the in-steam exam, and once again all was found to be satisfactory. After disposing of the fire the loco was moved back into the workshop to allow further cleaning and preparation work to be carried out.

The K1 left Wilton at 11.30 on Saturday 6th June and travelled via the coast route to Newcastle then onto Carlisle to pick up the support coach. The loco departed Carlisle on the Sunday morning to travel to Fort William via Glasgow, arriving just before mid day on Monday 8th June. The K1's first scheduled run is on Sunday 28th June (see separate report).

Q7 No. 901

The Q7 had its first steaming this year on the 29th March, the NYMR open day, the loco remaining static in the shed yard all day later returning to Deviation Shed.

More time has been spent on the steam reverser indicator linkages in order to get the pointer in the cab to correctly correspond with the actual reverser position. This problem now appears to be solved.

The loco entered traffic on 24th May, but after running only 400 miles problems were reported with the reverser being difficult to operate and the engine exhaust being off beat. The centre cylinder valve was removed and examined by Maurice Johnson and once again was found to have heavy carbon deposits. The valve was cleaned up and refitted on 7th June by Trevor Mussett and Mike Oliver, and the cylinder lubrication system checked. The feeds have been reduced as it was discovered that too much oil was being used. Extra concrete has been added in the bottom of the smokebox to increase the thickness to the correct level.

Maurice Johnson also checked and adjusted the operation of the reverser steam shuttle valve and drained and refilled the cataract cylinder which acts as a movement damper and also locks the reverser in position once set.

The loco is available for traffic when required.

J72 No. 69023

In traffic on the Swanage Railway.

A2 No. 60532 BLUE PETER

In traffic on BR. The A2 has successfully worked five trains over the Settle and Carlisle line; future trips are scheduled for 20th June, and 8th and 15th August (see separate reports).

A4 No. 2509 SILVER LINK

On display at the Stephenson Museum, Newcastle.

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COACH REPORT

BSK 34557 (99760)

Due to shortage of space in the last NEWS it was not possible to thank Arthur Robinson and George Atkinson for the further work they have carried out to the kitchen area of the coach over the winter. A sink unit was installed, complete with built-in cupboards and the old loose dining table has been replaced with a fold down table fitted to the partition wall. This can then be lowered to give more space when use of a table is not required. The original four chairs have been replaced by six stacking chairs, again to save space.

When the coach was overhauled in 1990, first class seats were fitted to one side of the second class compartments. This was because first class seats are wider and better for sleeping on. However, some members have still found it difficult to get a good nights sleep on these seats. Arthur and George have now constructed some removable extensions to make the seats into wider, and hopefully better, beds.

The NELPG support coach must now be the best equipped of any of the main line support coaches.

The BSK was used with the A2 for its railtours on March 7th, 20th & 27th. The coach was red-carded on one of its visits to Carlisle due to low buffer heights, a defect traced to a suspension fault. Repair work was contracted to upperby Carriage Maintenance Depot who readjusted all the suspension heights to obtain the correct clearances.

The southbound CME on 18th April was worked without a support coach in order to leave the BSK at Carlisle where it was collected by the K1 on 7th June and taken to Fort William for the summer.

ADB 975455

In store at Wilton.

BFK M17019

This vehicle is the City of Wells support coach which the Group has hired for use with Blue Peter while our own BSK is with the K1 in Scotland. It was not required by its owners for main line use as the West Country is currently undergoing overhaul and they kindly made it available to NELPG.

The coach has only recently been refurbished and was intended for use with the KWVR dining train; it was reregistered for running on B.R. lines in May and is likely to see use with the A2 for the rest of this year.

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THE P3 GOES TO WALES

The preparations for the move of the P3 from the NYMR to Llangollen were fraught with difficulty due to a succession of locomotive failures on the line. Shedmaster at Grosmont, Chris Newton, saw little use for the P3 in April and early May, until the phone rang unexpectedly " could we use the P3 for one more day?". This happened on no less than five more occasions! Consequently it became difficult to organise volunteers to prepare and clean the locomotive for its move



60532 crosses Arten Gill viaduct between Garsdale and Blea Moor with the record breaking southbound run on 18th April 1992 (David Warren)



Delving into the Group archives reveals 62005 crossing the road to Catterick Camp at Walkerville, with the SLS Three Dales tour on 20th May 1967 (Hilda Stoddart)



2392 passes the refurbished Deviation shed and an NELPG working party of some 20 members on 12th May 1991 (Maurice Burns)



69023 at Buckfastleigh with its first train on the South Devon Steam Railway on 22nd June 1991 (Maurice Burns)

to Wales - one day the cleaning party turned up at Grosmont to find the P3 missing, having just left on a Pickering train! Finally, with the prospect of a last chance to clean the loco in New Bridge yard at Pickering on Sunday 17th May, the necessary rags and tools were loaded onto the P3 at Grosmont on Friday 15th May prior to the engine working its last day of service; on arrival at New Bridge the working party found that all the materials had been off loaded at Grosmont!! Eventually the engine was prepared and thanks are due to Chris Davison, Martin Lloyd, Charles Dean and Stewart Dennis and son for all their efforts, despite the odds set against them!

The P3 arrived by road at Llangollen on 21st May and the boiler was immediately washed out and steam tested. The first day in traffic was 25th May in the presence of Maurice Burns and Paul Hutchinson, and the P3's first train was the 13.37 from Llangollen to Glyndyfrdwy (not only more difficult to spell than Grosmont or Bo'ness, but much more difficult to pronounce! - Ed.), and proof that we were really in Wales! This train was to be double-headed with GWR No.7822 FOXCOTE MANOR, which brought the remark from a NELPG representative "What? We have to pull five coaches AND the Manor up the hill?!". If ever there was a contrast in styles, this was it. The uneventful run was followed by the P3 working the last train by itself, again without problems. On 26th May the locomotive worked all services and made light work of the 1 in 80 maximum gradient, with Paul (trainee NELPG fireman) showing just how easy the engine was to fire.

For those members who have not visited the Llangollen Railway, it is strongly recommended. Now almost six miles long it has some attractive stations and follows the River Dee through some spectacular countryside. The staff and volunteers are extremely friendly, and were a pleasure to work with. The P3 is expected to run 40 days in traffic and if you want to check if it is being used, phone 0978 860979. Dave Owen in the line's CME and he can supply plenty of cleaning rags!

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THE NORFOLKMAN

When "Blue Peter" made its main line comeback on March 7th the one person missing on that memorable day was NELPG President Bill Harvey.

NELPG were determined to let Bill, who recently celebrated his 85th birthday, enjoy a ride behind the A2 and a date of June 13th was agreed some time ago with David Madden, General Manager of the North Norfolk Railway, who was to escort Bill from his home in Norwich to Euston to join the train.

Bill, who had read all the press reports about the A2, was eagerly looking forward to the ride behind the Peppercorn Pacific and as he made his first inspection of the engine at Blackburn since its restoration and marvelled at its condition, "The Norfolkman" headboard was appropriately put on the locomotive. Bill said "Whoever thought of doing that - it was a marvellous gesture". The headboard was on kind loan for the day from the National Railway Museum who were more than happy to make Bill's day in view of his immense contribution to steam railway preservation.

And what was Bill's expert opinion of the A2? As he listened to the three cylinder beat "it sounds spot on" was his verdict and he had great praise for the volunteers of NELPG who undertook the work.

It was a proud day for Bill and the Blue Peter support team and as David Ward, a traveller on the train, said "I think he now looks 10 years younger!

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BLUE PETER ON THE KWVR

In celebration of NELPG winning the "Steam Heritage Award" the Group's friends on the KWVR have obtained special dispensation for the 22 ton axle loaded A2 to make one round trip of the KWVR between Oxenhope and Ingrow. Keighley has a bridge under major repairs at present hence the Ingrow departure.

The A2 will be in steam all day on Saturday July 11th at Ingrow Museum (well worth a visit) and footplate access for the public will be available. We are in need of NELPG volunteers to do a P.R. and perhaps sales job here. Any volunteers ring Maurice Burns.

After the last service train the A2 will depart Oxenhope about 7 pm for a round trip from Ingrow. This train will not be a high speed dash but the only ever opportunity to see the A2 at the head of a train on the Worth Valley.

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BR THORNABY OPEN DAY 20th SEPTEMBER 1992

NELPG officials have recently had a meeting with B.R. officials to confirm, subject to availability, the involvement of NELPG in this "Open Day" at the BR Depot in September.

The Group has had a long friendship with the staff at Thornaby since 1969 and it was considered by BR that the steam locomotive presence should come from NELPG.

At the last open day over 20 years ago in 1972, our P3, recently then restored, was there, and the K1 totally was moved dead from Leeds Neville Hill shed to Thornaby to demonstrate the wheeldrop facility. This latter "free" move was the brainchild of our late Vice President John Bellwood, and enabled the K1 to be overhauled in the Thornaby roundhouse between 1972 and 1974 by our volunteers.

The proposals for September 20th are as follows:-

A2 60532 BLUE PETER

Loco will move after its last S & C run on August 15th to Wilton for recertification, then move in steam to Thornaby on 10th September. Loco will be in steam on the open day with footplate access.

P3 2392

BR particularly wanted this engine as it was a J27 that was the last steam locomotive allocated to the Depot. Subject to final agreement with the Llangollen Railway the P3 will move by road to Middlesbrough Old Goods Depot and then be diesel hauled to Thornaby.

J72 69023

With a decision to return the J72 to Wilton for an intermediate overhaul in mid July, the opportunity presented itself to have the engine at Thornaby also. This BR staff readily agreed, so the J72 should move with the A2 from Wilton.

On the "Open Day", expected to draw over 20,000 people, there will be a sales stand and photographic display. The Group will require about 20 volunteers to man all three footplates, which will have public access, and the sales stall. Also BR are looking for stewards, so there is plenty of opportunity to get involved! The three NELPG locos are expected to form the centrepiece of the display and should be positioned for photographic purposes.

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NYMR FUTURE STEAM POLICY

As we have indicated previously the NYMR Board was considering the NYMR General Managers proposals and those of the owner maintained engines such as NELPG at a special board meeting on May 20th. The NYMR Board had previously deferred a final decision on three previous occasions and at the May 20th meeting it was deferred yet again.

The NYMR indecision is due to mounting problems between the NYMR Trust and the PLC. These delays are very unfortunate in that the NYMR Board only allowed the loco owners some 14 days to produce collectively their views by the end of January. Considerable burning of midnight oil saw our 16 page document delivered on time only for the NYMR final decision to be deferred for over 4 months.

At the NYMR Council Meeting on June 5th Derek Hanson (NYMR Board Chairman & former NELPG Secretary) had to advise NYMR Council the matter had, to his regret, been deferred yet again. No firm date has been fixed for a decision to be made.

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AGM REPORT

The 2nd AGM of NELPG Ltd was held at the Ladle Hotel, Middlesbrough on Friday 8th May and was attended by some 50 members. In introducing the Chairman's report Maurice Burns reminded members of an almost endless list of successful achievements in 1992 that ended with the return of "Blue Peter" to working order. He thanked all volunteers for the efforts and in particular the locomotive caretakers for their organisation.

The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer's reports were all accepted by the members present. The Treasurer gaining particular praise for his endless work behind the scenes and introduction this year of a deferred maintenance fund and likely future expenditure on each locomotive when due for overhaul.

A vote of thanks from the floor thanked the committee for their efforts in 1992. This received unanimous approval. In the election Messrs. Maurice Burns, Bill Dobson and Alan Toomer were successful; Dave Martin was unsuccessful.

There being no more formal business the AGM was closed, and

there followed a slide presentation by Maurice Burns of our many achievement during the last 12 months, with the last slide of the night being of the volunteers themselves - the ones who made all the achievements possible.

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THE LOCHABER

The K1 will be sharing the Fort William - Mallaig operation with 'Black Fire' 5407; the K1 is scheduled to run in the weeks commencing 28th June, 12th July, 26th July, 9th August, 23rd August, 6th September and 14th September. Thereafter 2005 will work all trains until 21st November when it is scheduled to work a special train back from Fort William to Glasgow.

The Lochaber service runs on Tuesdays up to 15th September, Thursdays up to 24th September and Sundays from 28th June to 6th September. Departure on weekdays is from Fort William at 10.30, with arrival back at 15.15; corresponding times on Sundays are 12.25 and 18.35 respectively. Fares are £15. 00 return for adults and £7.50 for children. Advance booking is free and is strongly recommended. Postal and telephone bookings should be made to the Travel Centre, Scotrail West Highland, Fort William, PH33 6DY, or telephone 0397 703791.

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BLUE PETER ON THE SETTLE AND CARLISLE

Passenger loadings on the June trips were rather disappointing, that on 20th June being barely half full. Nowadays the locomotive operator does not receive a fixed hire fee, but an agreed proportion of the total passenger receipts. Thus if the train is only half full, the Group only receives 50% of its potential income.

The A2 is scheduled to work two more S & C workings, northbound on 8th August and southbound on 15th August. Members and friends who may want to travel on these trains should contact Flying Scotsman Services, P.O. Box 4472, Lichfield, Staffs. WS13 6RV, or ring 0543 419472. Fares start from E38.00. At the present time no further trips with the A2 are planned.

RAGS WANTED

Rags are urgently needed for cleaning both the A2 and the K1. If you can help please leave any rags at either No.5 depot, Wilton, or at Deviation shed, Grosmont, preferably tied up in sacks.

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COVER PICTURES

Front: 2392 in action during its early season use on the NYMR at Darnholme on 10th May.

Back (top); 2392 again, this time near Moorgates.

" (bottom): 44767, now unnamed, steams past Beckhole on 16th May. (All John Hunt).

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