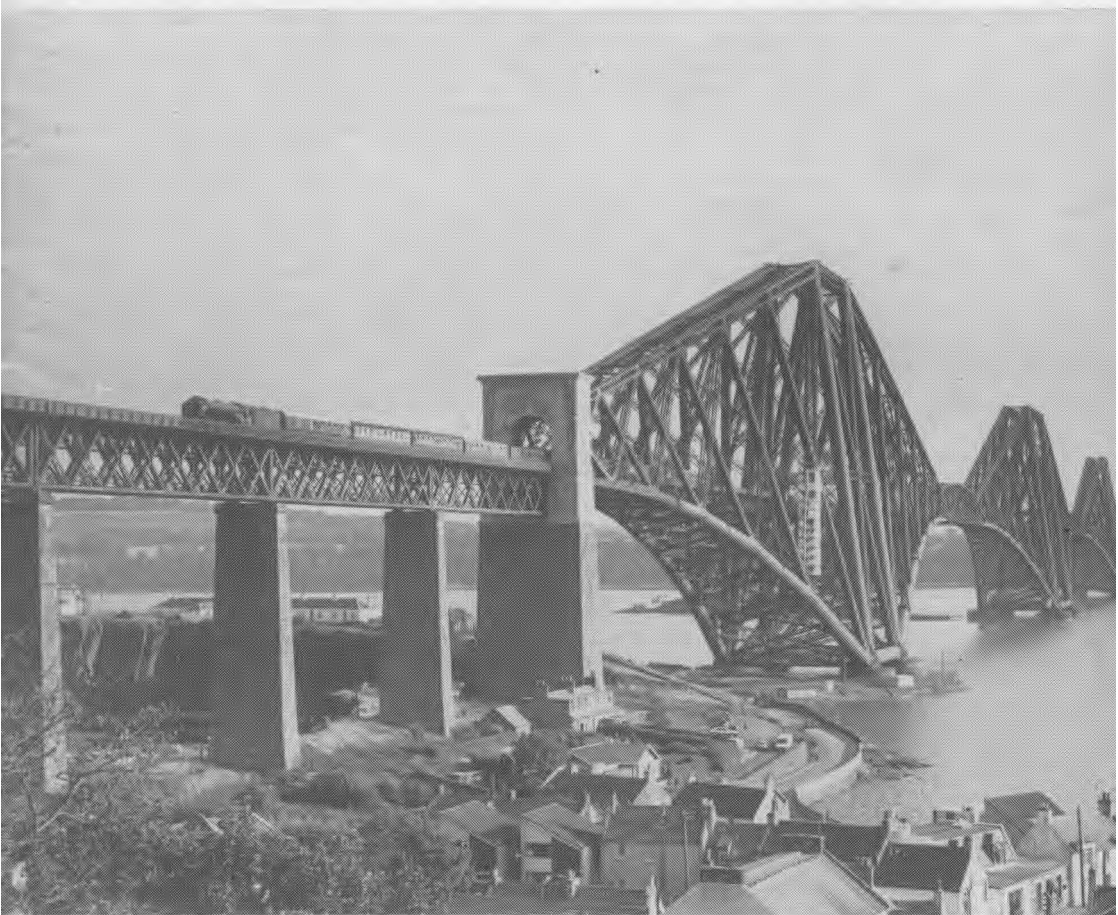


# N.E.L.P.G. NEWS



**NO. 157      OCT. 1993**

## EDITORIAL

The last Editorial referred to Blue Peter's return to Scotland, home for much of its working life in BR days. The first excursion, The Fair Maid on 18th September, can be said to have been a qualified success; performance wise the A2 acquitted itself very well, with no problems and, at times, some sustained high speed running, in the experienced and very capable hands of Polmadie crews. On the day the weather was generally benign, particularly for the highlight of the trip, the crossing of the Forth Bridge in glorious sunshine. Sadly, the train was not full, and though a steady flow of late bookings boosted the final passenger figure to a respectable 329, this fell short of the train capacity on the day of 380.

Similarly bookings for The Aberdonian have been slow in coming in, despite a longer advertising period, and whilst it looks as if the 300 mark will once again be exceeded, the train is unlikely to be full. No doubt the two tours will have captured the travelling enthusiasts' imagination and the respective fares should not have been a disincentive: more likely the long day and the absence of the usual convenient picking up and setting down points in the North East account for the shortfall in bookings. It would be interesting to hear members' views in this respect, particularly as we begin to plan for the 1994 railtour programme.

Another factor could well be the seeming surfeit of steam in Scotland this autumn, with the various trains all vying for a limited - and fickle - market. Our tours were the first to be mooted and there is no doubt that those specials subsequently agreed will have had a deleterious effect on our bookings. However, they say that every cloud has a silver lining and despite the above difficulties it does seem that our two tours will more than break even and, maybe, there has been some mutual benefit from the choices available to prospective passengers.

More importantly in the longer term, Scotrail have seen fit to give steam significant backing with agreement to the autumn steam programme and the current crew training on 60009. With similar investment in crew training at Fort William there does appear to be a bright future for continued steam operation on Scotland's main lines, whatever the outcome of privatisation. Since the NELPG does have a leaning towards Scotland with the K1's second home being at Fort William, the A2 going back to its roots and the good relationship with the SRPS, the developments this autumn could auger well for the future.

P3 NO.2392

The overhaul continues to fall behind the original programme and the planned lift of the boiler, frames and tender has had to be put back from September to the end of October.

The loco had to be removed from No.5 depot on 17th September to allow the T2 tender, which was in the centre of the workshop between the P3 and the Deltic diesel, to be taken out for transport back to Grosmont. Unfortunately the loco springs had been removed in readiness for the lift and had to be refitted to enable the loco to be safely moved round several hundred yards of curved track during the shunting manoeuvre; now the loco is back inside, they have to be taken off again!

Other work progresses, however, as detailed below:-

Boiler

The removal of the firebox crown stays began in August but is proving to be much more difficult than the same job on the K1, since considerably more time and effort is being required to remove each stay. NYMR boiler smith, Andy Harper, is also working on the firebox copper lacings. As the fitting of lacings and the removal of roof stays requires the use of a 'windy' impact wrench, it is impracticable to carry out both operations in the confines of the firebox at the same time, thus incurring further delay.

The main steam pipe has been removed from the smokebox and all the smokebox fixing bolts removed. This was made more difficult by the quality of the concrete in the bottom of the smokebox, which had to be laboriously chipped out to gain access to the bolts. If the same stuff was used on roads they would probably last forever!

Ian Ferguson is making steady progress on the work on the smokebox door. The ring and platework to make it fully sealed, as with the K1 and A2, are now cut to size and ready for welding.

Mechanical

Investigations proceed into the fitting of a hopper ashpan and Mick Hammond has been examining the loco as part of the design work. It was hoped to base the new hopper ashpan on the K1s, but the design of the brake gear pull rods under the ashpan are not the same and would foul the hopper doors: research continues.

All the internal motion has been removed and a start made on cleaning and painting. The front sand boxes have been taken down in order to gain access to the bolts holding the smokebox to the frames.

## Tender

With all the corroded platework now cut out of the coal space, the replacement plates have been cut to size and the edges prepared ready for welding into position. Some of the internal stiffening angles were badly corroded and these have been replaced, as have the bottom halves of the rear baffle plates. Once the internal welding is complete the platework of the coal space can be refitted. It is planned to complete this work before the tender is moved outside the depot to be lifted from its wheels.

## T2 NO.2238

On display in Deviation Shed.

The cladding sheet for the LH cylinder has been missing for many years, having disappeared at the time specialist contractors were used to strip asbestos insulation from around the cylinders. At that time it was hoped the Wilton MSC scheme sheet metal worker could make a new cover, but the scheme ended before the job was started. The offending cylinder cannot be seen at present as it is on the side nearest to the shed wall. However, with suggestions that the locomotive might be moved, the job of making a new cover has been contracted to Maurice Johnson.

As the J72 was returning by road from Bo'ness to Pickering on 20th September it was possible to utilise the same low loader, with attendant cost savings, to move the T2 tender from Wilton to Pickering. To extract it from No.5 depot meant removing the P3, then taking the tender down to the loading point at the ICI rail depot, and this took place on 17th September. Four days later the tender finally left the site, having arrived there on 26th February 1986 as a project for the MSC scheme. From New Bridge yard at Pickering the J72 hauled the T2 tender and a brake van to Grosmont on 24th September.

On the tender itself, the paintwork is still incomplete as the first coat of gloss revealed many imperfections in the tank sides. These will need filling and rubbing down before the final coats can be applied. This will now have to be done inside Deviation shed.

## VI NO.2005

By mid September the K1 had run 2,609 miles, somewhat more than its allocation for the year of 2,400. A few more miles will be added to the total as the loco was in traffic for the NYMR autumn gala on 2nd/3rd October, and was to be used on the NELPG members' special on 23rd October and possibly the wartime weekend of 30th/31st October.

The K1 has worked its rostered duties only requiring running maintenance, though an intermittent problem with the brake

has caused some head scratching. On occasions when the brake was applied the reservoir vacuum would fall with the reduction in the train pipe vacuum, causing the engine steam brake to be slow to apply. As the fault did not occur with every brake application it was difficult to trace, but was eventually tracked down to a faulty spring in the ejector.

The K1 has been requested by BR for the Fort William to Mallaig service next year and at the end of next season, with the boiler at the end of its 7 yearly main line ticket, the loco will require an overhaul. Therefore to give members the chance to ride behind the K1 on what might prove to be its last run on the NYMR for some time, it is planned to use the 2005 to haul the members' special on 23rd October.

#### Q7 NO.901

The loco has operated with only normal routine maintenance, and had accumulated 2,208 miles by mid September compared with its allocation this year of 2,400. Like the K1 it saw traffic at the autumn gala and is expected to be used on the wartime weekend.

A non return valve on the cylinder lubrication system failed but was exchanged for a valve off the T2. The steam heat pipe has a slight leak on a pipe joint under the LH running plate, but this will have to be attended to over the winter as several sections of pipe will have to be removed to get at the troublesome joint.

Since the loco was repainted by Martin Lloyd in May, an instruction was issued not to clean the boiler, cab or tender sides with the usual paraffin/oil mixture, but to use wash/wax shampoo (as used on the A2) instead. The result is that not only does the engine stay cleaner but so does the chap who is cleaning it!

#### J72 No. 69023

The J72 was moved by road from Bo'ness on 20th September to New Bridge yard at Pickering; it moved back to Grosmont on Friday 24th September, hauling the T2 tender and a brake van. Whilst in Scotland 69023 was steamed on 34 occasions, covering 1,000 miles, with only routine maintenance.

The engine was used at the NYMR autumn gala, double heading with No.5: this combination worked one passenger train each day between Grosmont and Pickering, as well as the goods train from Grosmont to Levisham on the Sunday.

#### A2 NO.60532 BLUE PETER

Following the completion of its rostered Cumbrian Mountain Express duties with its final outings on 4th and 11th September (the former deputising for 71000), all was set for the A2's Scottish forays.

A working party at Carlisle Upperby on 17th September prepared both the A2 and, for once, the-support coach for the historic expedition north of the border, including coaling the loco at the last possible moment to ensure that the tender was full to capacity for the long journey ahead.

A report on The Fair Maid appears elsewhere in this issue, but suffice to say the A2 ran superbly, especially in the-very capable hands of the Polmadie crews, with some lively running during the day.

During its Scottish sojourn the A2 will be based at Bo' ness on the Bo'ness and Kinneil Railway for its workings between Edinburgh and Glasgow on 10th October and The Aberdonian on 17th October. The A2 is also expected to 'star' at the B&KR's steam gala on Sunday 24th October, along with fellow visitor 60009 Union of South Africa, as well as 44871 and 673 Maude, all of which are likely to be in steam. The following day, and two days before the expiry of its six monthly BR certificate, 60532 is expected to return to ICI Wilton for winter maintenance..

Whilst only routine attention has been necessary during the summer season, a number of essential repairs need to be carried out before the loco is recertificated for main line running, hopefully in February 1994.

#### A4 NO.2509 SILVER LINK

On display at the Stephenson Museum, Newcastle.

The loan agreement with the museum, drawn up in 1988, was for an initial period of three years, thereafter renewable yearly with twelve months notice from either party required to terminate the agreement.

In view of the confidential information contained in the last issue of the NEWS, the Group has now given the museum the requisite 12 months notice. However, the museum has kindly offered that, up to a certain point in time, if the present negotiations do not succeed, it would be willing to continue with the present agreement and retain the locomotive.

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#### RAILTOUR REPORT

After reporting the saga of railtour dates in the August NEWS, no sooner had that issue been published, the route changed! Originally planned to cover over 260 miles of steam haulage, the actual total turned out to be nearer 280. Coming on the train at Carlisle, 60532 ran without a diesel

pilot under the WCML overhead wires to Gretna Junction, then had a very fast schedule (95 minutes net for 91 miles) to Kilmarnock where water was taken instead of at Kirkconnel. Just over 2 tons of coal was also loaded at Kilmarnock. From Kilmarnock the A2 made light work of the 1 in 76 climb to Stewarton, before descending to Barrhead, then round Glasgow to Cumbernauld where there was a second water stop. Once again there was no diesel pilot under the Glasgow wires.

From Cumbernauld instead of heading north at Carmuir South Junction, to Stirling as planned, the train took the right hand line to Falkirk Grahamston, Polmont Junction and Winchburgh Junction, in order to join the ECML at Dalmeny. This meant a northbound crossing of the Forth Bridge which was in glorious sunshine. A further diversion involved routing via Dunfermline and Cowdenbeath because of a bridge problem at Kirkcaldy on the coast route. Unfortunately the alternative route is beset with PW restrictions which added to the delays caused by a late running DMU at Garnqueen North Junction and watering at Cumbernauld, so that arrival in Perth was some 40 minutes late.

Turning the A2 at Perth's north yard took longer than anticipated and eventual departure from Perth station was 80 minutes late as darkness fell. However, a spirited run back to Edinburgh via Stirling with some splendid running on the Glasgow - Edinburgh main line after Polmont Junction, managed to recover some lost time, but eventual arrival back in Newcastle was not until 23.40 instead of 22.25.

Despite the late running the 329 passengers had been able to enjoy an historic and memorable day out. Blue Peter performed faultlessly, the sun shone for much of the day, and the SRPS on-train services were very much appreciated. Those passengers who have subsequently commented on the tour have been full of praise! So 'well done' all concerned.

The A2 and support coach are now based at Bo'nness, in the good care of old friends! Not a bad swap, 60532 for 69023!

#### GLASGOW - EDINBURGH 150 SPECIALS

These are planned for Sunday 10th October but unfortunately confirmation of dates and arrangements by Scotrail came too late for inclusion in the August NEWS and will be history by the time this issue is published.

For the record, the specials to celebrate 150 years of train services between Scotland's principal cities, involve two return trips from Glasgow to Edinburgh using 60009 and 60532 on each leg. Union of South Africa starts proceedings in spectacular fashion by taking its train of eight coaches out of Queen Street station and up the fearsome Cowlairst Bank, albeit with rear end class 37 assistance! At Edinburgh Blue Peter takes over for the return to Glasgow Springburn before continuing back to Edinburgh; here 60009 comes on to take the train back to Queen Street, while the A2 returns to Bo'nness.

## THE ABERDONIAN

As this issue goes to press the proposal to get Blue Peter back to Aberdeen on Sunday 17th October is imminent! To see the A2 at the head of The Aberdonian on the Edinburgh to Aberdeen route for which it was built and on which it spent most of its working life will be the realisation of a long held dream (at least for the Editor! ). This tour, too, has been beset with route changes; now starting from Bo'ness Junction the train is still routed via Dalmeny, to pick up Edinburgh passengers who will travel by special train from Edinburgh, and will travel over the famous Forth Bridge in the northbound direction. As with The Fair Maid, however, The Aberdonian must also be diverted via Dunfermline instead of going via Kirkcaldy as planned, to Markinch (home to 60009), thence to Ladybank, and down to Perth where water will be taken.

There should then be a fast run along the north bank of the Firth of Tay to Dundee where, after a brief stop, 60532 rejoins the east coast route to Aberdeen, through Arbroath, Inverkeilor, Lunan Bay, Montrose, Stonehaven and Cove Bay. After a 2 hour stop to service the A2 at Ferryhill, the outward route will be retraced, as far as Perth. Because clearances on the 'up' line over the Forth Bridge preclude the passage of the A2, The Aberdonian has to return to Edinburgh Waverley via Stirling with the prospect of a much faster run as a consequence.

Passengers will be able to join and leave the train at Linlithgow (08.05/20.08), Dalmeny (08.28/N.A. ), Perth (10.03/18.23) and Dundee (11.16/17.45). Passengers from Edinburgh would catch a special service at 07.45 arriving at Dalmeny at 08.15, in time to photograph the arrival of the A2.

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## DEVIATION SHED REPORT

In the last issue of the NEWS it was reported that the box van inside Deviation shed was being repainted, but to what livery? It can now be revealed that the van has returned to its original G.W.R. colours as outshopped from Swindon in 1931. The livery was chosen by the small band of Grosmont regulars who were willing to do the work.

The transformation of the van has been done at very little cost, as all the materials used have been provided by





60532 about to cross into Scotland at Gretna Junction with The Fair Maid on 18th September 1993, for the first time since 8th October 1966.



Fireman Kate Harding and Driver Alec McDonald on 44767 at Fort William on 13th July 1993 - see Martin Lloyd's article.



69023 and 5 storm under Darnholm bridge on the 1 in 49 between Grosmont and Goathland on 2nd October 1993.



60532 comes to rest in platform 10 at Edinburgh Waverley station on 18th September; the Chairman can be seen rushing to get his picture on the right! (All John Hunt).

donations. The van now looks very smart but, at present, is only painted on the three sides that can be seen by the public. It may be more difficult to motivate people to paint the side that cannot be seen by anyone!

Last year we had the idea of installing a pot bellied stove in the shed to provide some warmth for the winter working parties, but failed to find a suitable one. If any member has such an item or can locate something suitable, we are still interested!

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#### COACH REPORT

##### BSK 99760 (E34557)

The major outstanding job, involving the replacement of a cross member between the frames that supports the floor, has still to be completed. The steel part of the support is badly corroded and has to be replaced. The method of doing this is still being investigated.

Despite the problems which meant that 60532 operated without the support coach over the Settle and Carlisle line, things are now back to normal, and the vehicle accompanied the A2 to Scotland.

##### ADB 975455

In store at Wilton.

The likely future requirement for air braking of steam operated main line stock is being addressed by the Steam Locomotive Operators' Association. There are two options; either air brake the locomotive or provide a vehicle to act as a conversion from vacuum to air. Both avenues are being pursued with a recent suggestion that 975455 might be a suitable candidate for such a vehicle. Watch this space!

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1993 LUNCHEON SPECIAL

Despite over 90 bookings, there are still a few seats available on this years NELPG Luncheon Special over the NYMR, scheduled for Saturday 23rd October. See the August NEWS for booking details.

The train, which is to be hauled by the K1, is scheduled as follows:-

Grosmont	dep.	12.40
Pickering	arr.	13.41
	dep.	14.30
Levisham	arr.	14.47
	dep.	15.10
Grosmont	arr.	15.45

Passengers will have the opportunity to take advantage of a photo run past at Levisham.

Additional coaches will be available for non diners should anyone wish to come along for the ride (booking not required).

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VOLUNTEERS' ANNUAL MEETING

The annual working volunteers' get-together is planned for Wednesday 3rd November in the ICI club at Wilton, starting at 7.30 pm. It is expected to follow the usual format - a review of achievements, plans for the future, and thanks to all concerned - with a buffet meal available for £2.10 per head.

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Isn't it strange how we always think of ships and railway locomotives as ladies, even those with a man's name? In June this year I witnessed a sort of two way gender confusion. I was asked to join the support crew at Fort William on June 27th for the first week's running of Ian Storey's loco, black five 44767 "George Stephenson-. Ian is, of course, one of our Vice Presidents and his loco was named as part of the S&D 150th anniversary celebrations at Shildon, partly because it is the only British loco to be built with outside Stephenson valve gear. Despite the name the loco still gets referred to as "she or her".

On Tuesday June 29th British Rail history was made when Kathleen Harding became the first operational BR lady fireman. She likes to be known as Kate and prefers to be called a fireman rather than a firewoman (or fireperson). Kate had already completed her training on the SRPS's black five 44871 -Sovereign-, so spent a few hours with driver Albert Trimbell on the Monday looking round 44767 -George Stephenson- whilst it was over the pit. Tuesday was to be her first day on a service train.

On the Tuesday the driver was to be Davey Barrie and Traction Inspector Gordon Alcock turned up to see his protegee fireman in action. The members of the support crew, Ian Storey, Sheila Bell, Paul Carling and I were witnesses to this significant occasion. On the way out to Mallaig, Gordon Alcock did some of the firing, in particular for the climb up Beasdale Bank. Gordon made the most of his day out of the office by driving for the return journey whilst Davey Barrie supplemented Kate's efforts on the shovel for the climb up the side of Loch Eilt. Kate did very well considering the gallery of onlookers with inspector and the support crew looking on, (not all on the footplate at the same time, I hasten to add).

Wednesday was -Royal Scotsman- day when Kate had the fireman's job to herself but the opulent -Royal Scotsman- has a coach less in the formation and only about 20 passengers rather than 300. With a lighter train and a very free steaming engine Kate had no problems - in fact she tended to fire too much too often with safety valves lifting frequently (both valves on more than one occasion!)

Those of you who have not met Kate might have a mental picture of some butch Eastern European field-athlete on an anabolic diet. Far from it. She stands about 5'5-tall, is slim in stature with light blue eyes and long blonde hair - - but she is no Barbie doll either. She is married to a professional mountain guide who's business is taking climbers around the Alps and the Canadian Rockies. Kate herself is (so I understand) part of the local mountain rescue team. Above all she is a very charming lady who after working for British Aerospace at Hatfield is tackling an unusual job and, as Ian pointed out, is not afraid to listen to advice about the engine and the way to handle the fire. The men of Fort William shed have obviously taken her to their hearts.

If you get to Fort William this summer as part of the 44787 support team or next year with our K1 and a wee blonde lassie in bib and brace overalls strolls across to the engine just before 10am, don't be disappointed. The journey to Mallaig will be just as exciting as ever.

To make the point - the culmination of Kate's first week was the Thursday service train of six bogies packed with passengers, Three weeks earlier the other black five, 44871, with one of the regular firemen, had come to a stand on Beasdale Bank and driver Davey Barrie, after two further attempts at the bank, had had to split the train to reach Arisaig. He then had to make a light engine dash to Mallaig for

water whilst the train was taken back to Fort William by a class 37 diesel. On another occasion, again with 44871, Albert Trimbell had had to have three goes at the tender first climb along the side of Loch Eilt, only being able to top the bank after a thunderous re-start which set fire to half the hillside. For our journey, with a different engine, some drizzle to wet the rails and no assistance for Kate, as you can imagine, reputations were at stake.

With Davey's tuition, Kate's firing was more controlled this time. (What a sensible piece of rostering to put Kate in Davey's fatherly care). Beasdale Bank was proof. The approach was a very cautious trundle, to let Kate get water level and fire just right. Then as we rounded the curve before the dip down to Nan Uamh viaduct at the start of the gruelling climb, Davey gave her the gun, (George that is!).

The climb of over a mile at 1 in 48, which goes through 4 tunnels and round numerous tight curves, was spectacular. The sight, sound and sensations of the loco working at its limits inside a single bore tunnel was enough to make you wet your trousers with excitement. As, with regulator up in the roof and reverser wound right out, we topped the summit in fine style, Davey gave George a -cock-a-doodle-do- on the whistle and gave Kate a big hug.

George and Kate make a lovely couple!

#### - - & SCOTT

There was a sequel a month later when again I was privileged to be part of the 44767 support crew along with Gordon Wells, Nigel Hall (with bikes) and RO Keith (Rab C) Nesbitt, when another young fireman, Scott Gillies, started his first week of active service. Scott lives in Mallaig and has to travel to Fort William to do the 82 mile round trip on "the steamer- then return home. However he can pop in home to collect his lunch whilst we queue outside the fish shop.

On the Tuesday driver Albert Trimbell guided the young lad (in his early twenties and built like a whippet) through his baptism by fire. Again traction inspector Gordon Alcock rode the footplate for the young lad's first run, firing on the way out and driving back.

Sky TV Newsmen were filming the steam operation and the BR crew were promised a copy of the video-tape. When Albert was asked for his address, he gave .... Albert Trimbell, Driver, Scotrail, Fort William. "Och that'll faend uss noo bootherr-, he said.

Scott had been warned about the free steaming qualities of the 44767 boiler and by the Thursday had got the hang of firing economically. We pointed out that an even better engine, with a proper firehole door. would be next year's challenge. (In fact two if the K4 joins our K1).

If, instead of a wee blonde lassie, you see a sandy haired lad in his early twenties stroll across the yard, don't worry he'll no- let you down either. The future of steam in The Highlands seems just a little more secure knowing that young men and women are still being trained and are keen and capable enough to tackle this physically demanding job.

Unlike George or Kate, there is no gender confusion when referring to Scott. -A man's a man for a' that-, unless he's a railway locomotive or a lady fireman!

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FLASHBACK

The return of Blue Peter to Scotland on 18th September prompted long serving member Chris Smyth to send the following nostalgic reminders of 60532's 'last' outing on BR, a mere 27 years ago!

**British Railways Scottish Region**

Edinburgh Division  
23 Waterloo Place  
Edinburgh 1  
Way 2477 Ext. 229

A. B. Arundale Divisional Manager

C.G. Smyth, Esq.,  
5, Newlands Avenue,  
WEST HARTLEPOOL,  
Co. Durham.

y/r

o/r E.F.1

5th October 1966.

Dear Sir,

Yes, we are running a last A.2 excursion from Edinburgh on Saturday, 8th October.

Departing Edinburgh 10 45 via Hawick to Carlisle, arrive 13 08. Return Carlisle dep. 17 15 via Beattock to Edinburgh, arrive 19 20. Fare 35/- return.

There are still a number of tickets available and you should be able to purchase a ticket on Saturday morning at Waverley Booking Office.

Yours faithfully,

For A. B. ARUNDALE.

*R. R. Cotton*



## AN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

Chris Lawson supplies the following extract from the Friends of the Settle and Carlisle Line newsletter - an American's view of a trip behind Blue Peter, with some interesting turns of phrase!

### A MOST GLORIOUS DAY

This August I was allowed to share the best-kept secret in England, a part of the world well hidden from the usual tourist trappings. A part of the world that is wild, natural, exciting, untouched and awesome in its beauty. My eleven year old daughter, Heidi, and I had the singular privilege to travel on the Cimbrian Mountain Express behind steam locomotive 'Blue Peter' along the Settle to Carlisle line.

August 8th 1992, in London at least, dawned bright and promising. While Heidi and I had arrived at Euston early, our train had not. Finally the C.M.E. pulled in. We found our seats and settled down. Doors banged, footsteps journeyed stairs and shuffled along the aisles. Hearty greetings bounced up and down the coaches. Snatches of train trivia sprinkled back to us from both directions. We strangers in a special world, with a language of its own.

Our friend, Gordon Keers, would be joining us, most likely in Wigan. Gordon had sent us a calendar showing the Settle - Carlisle line. As it seemed so beautiful in pictures, and as we had to travel to Europe to visit relatives, Gordon told us of an opportunity to see the line for ourselves - and here we were.

The train moved out of Euston on time at 8.20am. Slowly it lurched its way through Willesden Junction and stopped at Watford Junction. To our immense surprise and relief, Gordon made it to Watford. The further north we journeyed, the worse the weather became:- It was downright unpleasant at times, rain lashing our coaches and fogging the windows.

In Crewe we picked up our other seat mates, Gary and his brother from outside the Crewe area. Alan started up the aisle, doing an excellent P.R. job and dispensing stories. He turned out to be a gold mine of train lore and wonderful tales.

away. 'Blue Peter' hacked into place. We could feel the change of engines as the movements vibrated through the coaches. With each puff of steam, with each pull of 'Blue Peter's' pistons, smiles grow and conversations become more animated.

At Blackburn we stopped for water. Rain pelted us as we dashed out from the cover of the station. Alan loaned Heidi his enormous mac so-that she could see the engine.

We started up the long drag. Steam drifted by the windows. I'd lean out and take a picture and, upon sitting down, discover the entire lens was pocked with impurities. Hopefully the pictures would be sharp. This was a once-in-a-lifetime occasion.

At Garsdale, we stopped. The clouds were merciful and the train emptied as everyone took the opportunity to photograph 'Blue Peter' in its glory. My pictures show a proud engine on the top of a rise, framed against a white-fog sky, steam hissing from pipes near the front wheels. Trainmen gesticulate at each other and crawl over the coal in the tender.

Alan ~~wells~~ me more train stories. He looks for Heidi to ask her if she'd like to climb into the cab. We can't find her. By the time I do, she is in the coach and we must continue.

We cruise through Appleby. Because of a problem at Blackburn, watering our train, we were a little late, so we had to skip our scheduled photo-stop at Appleby. Lucky for us our stop at Garsdale was possible.

Ore by ore the stations and mileposts slide by. As I lean out of the window, rain drops pricking my face like pins, I marvel at the people lining the tracks, waving, shooting pictures and videos, and grinning. Aren't we the lucky ones! They're everywhere. From the time 'Blue Peter' joined us until its departure at Carlisle, there were people lining the tracks at crossings, at stations, opened and closed, and along the roads near the tracks. Gordon told me this would be a special trip, Now I understand.

In Carlisle, before 'Blue Peter' left us, Heidi and other children were hoisted into the driver's cab. She loved it and came down with tales of cups of tea heating on the boiler back. Alan told us about the engineer's breakfast: Bacon and eggs cooked on shovels stuck in the fire.

We watched as our friend 'Blue Peter' de-coupled and puffed away, taking the oast with him. An electric engine pulled the train south from Carlisle. In Crewe, Alan, Gary and Gordon left us. We were alone again. It wasn't the same.

Kitty Werner  
Waitsfield, Vermont.



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Friday 8th October 1993: STEAM IN CHINA - modern day steam in the Gobi desert and the frozen wastes of Inner Mongolia in 1993 by Dave Whitfield.

Sunday 10th October 1993: GLASGOW - EDINBURGH 150 specials trains between the two cities headed by 60009 and 60532.

Sunday 17th October 1993: THE ABERDONIAN - NELPG railtour featuring 60532 between Edinburgh, Perth and Aberdeen.

Thursday 21st October 1993: NORTH EASTERN RENAISSANCE slide show presented by Chris Lawson to the Stephenson Locomotive Society meeting held at 7 pm in St. Johns United Reform Church Hall, Mowbray Road, New Barnet, London (5 minutes from New Barnet station). Any NELPG members in the area are welcome to attend.

Saturday 23rd October 1993: MEMBERS' LUNCHEON SPECIAL on the NYMR featuring 2005.

Sunday 24th October 1993: GALA DAY AT BO'NESS featuring 60532, 60009, 44871 and 673 in steam, and 256 Glen Douglas.

Wednesday 3rd November 1993: WORKING MEMBERS' GET-TOGETHER at 7.30 pm in the ICI club, Wilton.

Friday 12th November 1993: STEAM ON THE WAVERLEY ROUTE AND ACROSS GALLOWAY by Charles Dean.

Meetings held at 7.30 pm in the upstairs room, The Ladle Hotel, Ladgate Lane, Middlesbrough.

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## COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

Front: In glorious sunshine 60532 crosses the mighty Forth Bridge with The Fair Maid railtour on Saturday 18th September.

Back (top): 2005, appropriately paired for the first time with the recently outshopped, teak finished Gresley buffet, emerges from Grosmont tunnel on Sunday 3rd October.

Back (bottom): 901 leaves Levisham with the 'Malton goods' on Sunday 3rd October.

All John Hunt.

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