

NELPG NEWS

No. 345
February 2025



The North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group exists to foster interest in, and to preserve examples of, steam railway locomotives, rolling stock and other items of railway interest connected with the North East of England.

The NELPG is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales No. 2570979. Registered Charity No. 1002017. VAT Registration No. 602 1185 91.

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The views expressed in NELPG NEWS are not necessarily those of the Trustees or the Board.

COVER PICTURES

Front: The final steam line-up inside the Thornaby roundhouse at the end of December 1975. The P3, K1 and Q6 were about to leave for Grosmont after their appearance in the S&DR 175 celebrations at Shildon (John Hunt)

Back (top): The P3 minus its centre driving wheels outside the wheel drop shed at Grosmont on 16th January (Richard Pearson)

Back (bottom): a welcome appearance on the NYMR of NELPG stalwart Terry Newman, pictured with driver Mike McPeake and fireman Neil Colls on 80136 at Pickering on 17th December 2024 (John Hunt)

EDITORIAL

by John Hunt

We enter 2025 with good news all round! Firstly, the long saga of finalising the Inter-Charity Collaboration and Hire Agreement between the NYMR and the NELPG has been signed by the NYMR. We are meeting representatives of the Railway on 17th February to, hopefully, complete the agreement on behalf of the NELPG. In doing so, it is most refreshing to report that as a result of recent meetings with Paul Middleton and staff at the MPD, there is a much-improved working relationship between our two organisations. Importantly, this is currently manifesting itself with the MPD helping with the outstanding work on both the P3 and the Q6. As a consequence, there is the very real anticipation that both locomotives will be available for the main NYMR season.

Over at Carnforth, by the time members receive this issue, the K1 boiler should have been hydraulically tested which should be followed by a steam test, then reuniting with the frames, which should be rewheeled shortly. Then the process of re-assembly can commence in earnest. However, the downside is the depletion in volunteer hours spent on the locomotive, and Paul Hutchinson could really benefit from additional help. Can anyone answer his plea?

Unfortunately, the news on the J72 is not so good as there are problems with the new inner copper firebox which Dave Pennock explains in his locomotive report. A solution is currently being sought but whatever the outcome, the J72's return to steam has inevitably been delayed.

Secondly, the other good news is about the S&D 200 celebrations in Darlington, which are outlined in more detail elsewhere in this issue. Sadly, it won't be possible to replicate what happened at Stockton, Darlington station, and between Shildon and Darlington, culminating in the grand cavalcade, back in 1975. Darlington should still be at the centre of the S&DR200 celebrations, and rightly so. However, the present railway has been shorn of much of its infrastructure and there just isn't the financial support in the prevailing financial climate to facilitate a repetition of 1975.

Nevertheless, the NELPG has, for a long time, anticipated that it's four locomotives will be part of the S&DR 200 celebrations, and this is still the aim, so we look forward to a spectacular event in September. As a reminder, the front cover shows the last time the three locomotives that starred in the 1975 were pictured together, and in the following issues of the NEWS there will be further reminders of that never to be forgotten event in 1975.

LOCOMOTIVE REPORT

by Robson Hewitson (J27 & Q6), Paul Hutchinson (K1), Neal Woods & Dave Pennock (J72)

P3 No. 2392

Work has progressed on the P3 from the last report. The centre wheelset has been removed from the loco to begin working on the replacement of the fitted bolts in the left and right hand hornblocks. These have seen the old fitted bolts removed and the holes reamed in progressive increments till they are cleaned up. New fitted bolts have been delivered to Grosmont and they have been finish machined on site to the correct size and fitted. As this report goes to press the left-hand side is complete and the right-hand side is not far behind. Some minor repairs are required on the axleboxes but nothing major which will correct the side-to-side play.



The P3's centre wheelset being lowered out on the wheel drop on 8th January (Richard Pearson)



*Left: the centre wheelset showing the cranks on 9th January (Richard Pearson)
Right: The two centre axle boxes waiting for inspection on 11th January (Richard Pearson)*



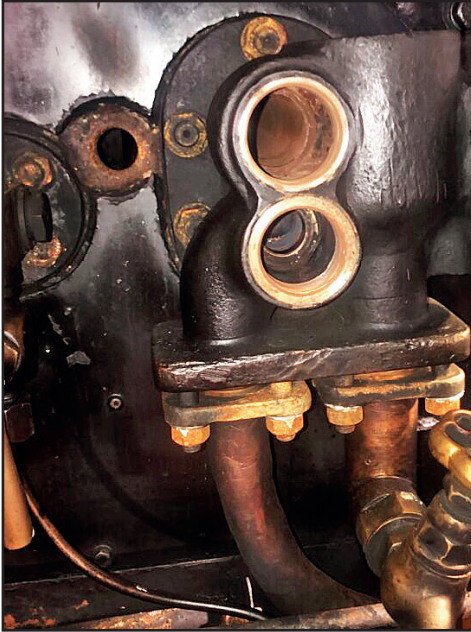
*George Bee reaming out the RH side horn block bolt holes using the magnetic drill on 22nd January
(Ian Pearson)*

Once the centre wheelset is re-fitted to the engine the front wheelset will be removed, and the same process will be carried out. It is expected to not have to change all the fitted bolts on the leading wheelset hornblocks but changing the bolts if any of them are loose. The trailing wheelset needs to be removed for axlebox work but it is envisaged that this will be relatively straight forward. While the wheelsets are out a very deep clean between the frames is taking place.

The front end of the engine has been completely stripped, valves removed and sent to Darlington to be serviced, and the pistons removed to allow the cylinder to be rebored. This was last done a few years ago and the work this time round will hopefully see it through to the engine's next overhaul. As part of this work, the piston heads will be built up and new piston rings fitted; these were well past their usage point when we removed the pistons and have done the engine well since being fitted four years ago.



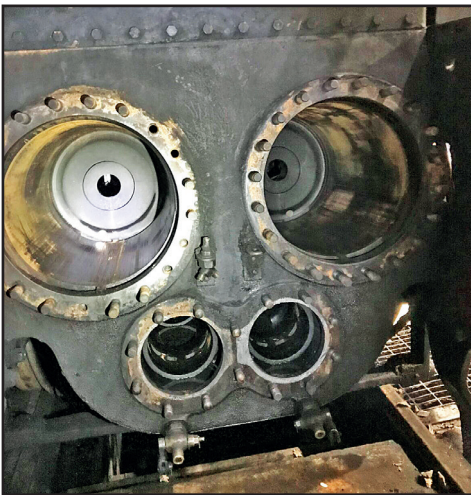
New fitted bolts fitted later the same day (Ian Pearson)



Removal of injector valves for inspection on 15th January (Nik Proctor)

The engine and tender are currently split to allow the biannual draw gear/bar exam to take place. The left-hand injector, which gave some issues last year, has been removed and sent to Darlington to hopefully have the issues bottomed out. The usual winter maintenance of cab valves and backhead exam is taking place and is progressing well, with minimal issues found, and a full set of trimmings is also being made.

The work is progressing well, and the locomotive is expected to be back in traffic for the start of the season and we are looking forward to another busy season with the engine.



Left: The front end of the P3 with the valves and pistons removed on 2nd January; this involved removing the buffer beam (Ian Pearson). Right: The two pistons awaiting attention on the same day (Ian Pearson)



Various drawbar pins and linkages after dye penetration testing on 28th January (Ian Pearson)

Q6 No. 63395

The new cylinder block has successfully passed its hydraulic test and will now undergo its final machining. Outstanding is the line boring of the cylinder and this is expected to take place with the help of the Severn Valley Railway. All being well, the completed cylinder is expected back at Grosmont before the end of February, ready for fitting. A full set of new fitted bolts to secure the cylinder in place is on site in readiness.

The overhauled tender brake gear has been refitted. Otherwise there is not a lot more to report as Grosmont working parties have been concentrating on the P3.



Arthur Jenkins works on the cylinder relief adapters for the Q6 cylinder relief valves (Neal Woods)

K1 No. 62005

Work on the K1's overhaul by West Coast and our depleted volunteer work force continues at Carnforth where the following has been achieved since the report in December's NEWS:

Boiler

1. Retubing, including expanding and beading, completed by West Coast.
2. Expansion bracket studs drilled and tapped; new studs fitted.
3. Boiler boxed up and filled with water – any leaks attended to by West Coast. Hydraulic imminent.
4. Refurbished fire hole door satisfactorily trial fitted.



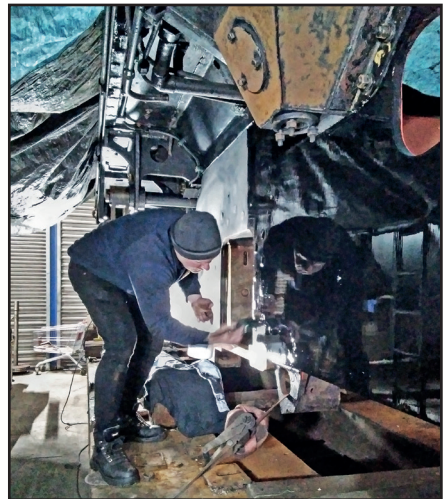
Chris Williams and Kenny Morrison drilling expansion bracket stud holes (Paul Hutchinson)

Loco frames

1. Top coat of black gloss/varnish applied by Alan Hardacre.

Tender

2. Rear frame stretcher descaled and painted.
3. Radio locker top/front radius plate replaced (NELPG/West Coast).
4. Tender front undercoated
5. Built up break table end journals machined to size and new bottom bushes manufactured and fitted to hangers by West Coast.
6. Draw hook, brake pull rod and tables NDT'd by Frazer Nash. All satisfactory.
7. Weld to new/repaiored sections of the water filler and scoop dome fettled.



Alan Hardacre hard at work painting the LH side frames of the K1 on 29th December (Paul Hutchinson)



*Left: the tender front on 23rd December (Paul Hutchinson)
Right: tender brake tables with their refurbished journals and rebushed hangers (Paul Hutchinson)*

All of the above was carried out by NELPG except where stated.

Unfortunately, NELPG volunteer numbers have been generally low in recent months and progress has slowed as a result. We still aim to have the engine ready for service early in the 2025 season, but this will only be possible with more volunteer input. If you are willing and able to get involved Paul would be delighted to hear from you by text on 07964 988551 or by e-mail at Paul.hutchinson62005@outlook.com.

Carnforth working parties are usually held Wednesday – Saturday each week with the company van being available for travel from the Teesside/Darlington area if required. Travelling expenses will be paid from elsewhere. Sleeping accommodation is also available in the support coach if required.

J72 No. 69023

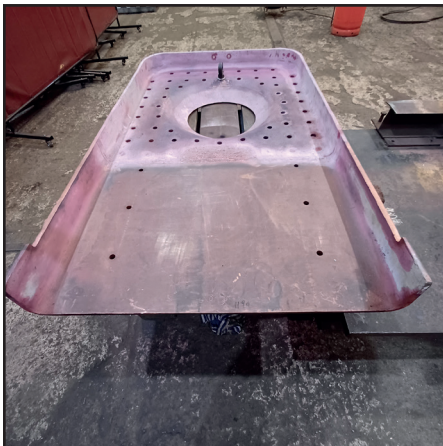
The new cylinder has been welded by Cast Iron Welding, re-tested for porosity and passed. It was then returned for final machining.

The crossheads have been removed from store and examined. They have had an initial assessment on the milling machine, and everything is as expected. The tapers have been cleaned up to remove any small dents etc., and a bung has been made to enable us to check if the tapers are true to everything else. The crossheads will be machined and white metallised as soon as it is possible to do so. The piston packings have been assessed and bored out to suit the piston rods.

All parts of the loco above the running board have been thoroughly rubbed down and primed in black and this was done before Christmas. After Christmas, the loco was rubbed down and undercoated in green. Volunteers have been doing the same to the areas below the running plate.



*Various parts of the J72 receiving green undercoat on 10th January
(Neal Woods)*



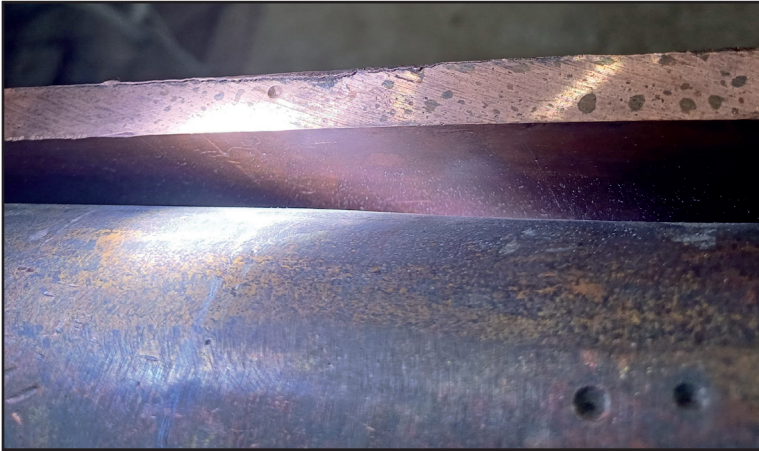
The copper backplate ready for dye penetration testing in January (Dave Pennock)

Boiler

The trial fit of the refurbished backplate in the firebox has been problematic. When presented to the new wrapper (sides and crown), the crown profile of the old backplate has exhibited a variance in profile of around $\frac{1}{4}$ inch at the top of the crown. This stems from the condition and what looks to be the initial assembly or subsequent works by British Railways to our J72 boiler. The trial fitting of the new front tubeplate to the old wrapper has been successful.

Following a review of the backplate and how to take forward this discrepancy, Northern Steam (NSEL) has, by a use of a steel former, made good the crown profile and the corners of the old backplate to fit the new wrapper profile.

The dye penetration as part of Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) of the refurbished backplate has uncovered a range of surface markers. These indications are of concern and further testing is underway to verify if these markings are superficial or demonstrate, for example, underlying cracks and imperfections within the old metal.



The backhead 90-degree lap joint offered to the new crown wrapper, with light shining through the quarter inch gap prior to forming work by NSEL in December (Dave Pennock)

The way forward is now uncertain, and consideration is being given to totally renew the backhead to allay any concerns of future reliability of backhead within the firebox. Regrettably, this will delay the return of the J72 in 2025. The availability of new copper is being explored, either from holdings at other heritage railways, or sourcing from metals suppliers. Renewal of the girder stays consequently is held until the backhead can be completed. In any case, we will have to have the integrity of the backplate presented to our insurer's Bureau Veritas for its accreditation and use.

The National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) grant period for the boiler has been extended to 31st March 2025 to compensate, but this is the maximum which can be permitted. Work is ongoing to maximise both the value of work and advance procurement of boiler materials before the end of March.

The J72 overhaul is supported by

 The Association for Industrial Archaeology
Promoting the study, preservation and presentation of Britain's industrial heritage

and by the

 **NATIONAL HERITAGE MEMORIAL FUND**

WORKING PARTIES

If you wish to volunteer for working parties on our locomotives, they continue, though subject to any instructions in the individual locomotive reports. They are usually held at:

- Grosmont (P3 and Q6) on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 09.00 to 17.00
- Hopetown Darlington to work on the J72, dates and times to be advised
- Carnforth (K1), Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday

The relevant contacts are as follows:

- Grosmont: Ian Pearson, 07956 119932
- Hopetown D'ton: Arthur Jenkins, ajenkins4468@gmail.com / 07960 093756 or Neal Woods, 07773 572659
- Carnforth: Paul Hutchinson, paul.hutchinson@nelpg.org.uk / text on 07964 988551



TREASURER'S REPORT

by **Richard Wheeler**

The financial records for 2024 have now been taken to Ribchesters for production of the annual accounts. The records show that we earned almost £9,000 in interest on our savings accounts during the year, and the value of our CCLA investment increased by £13,770. This last figure includes a gain of £7,225 on the units which were sold during the year and an increase in value of the remaining units of £6,546. At the time of writing (25th January), those units are showing a further gain of £5,190. Sadly, our projected expenditure over the next six months will greatly reduce our cash balances, and hence the amount of interest generated. Our policy is to have no more than 25% of our balances in the CCLA Equity Fund, 25% in the CCLA Deposit Fund, and the balance in accounts fully covered by the FSCS deposit Guarantee.

The Patron Fund continues to provide a strong, reliable source of income for the Group. Over the last five years, including Gift Aid, the income from this source has totalled £150,000. I cannot over emphasise the importance of this income stream in enabling the Trustees to plan future expenditure with a degree of confidence. Modest contributions from a large number of members have a really significant impact. Most members will hardly notice the difference if £5 or £10 per month quietly leaves their account, so if you haven't yet joined yet, please consider doing so.

Finally, thank you to all those members who have already renewed their membership subscriptions, and a reminder to those who have yet to do so to remember that rates have increased this year. A few of those members who pay by standing order have not increased their payments and will be getting a gentle reminder from the Membership Secretary.



PATRON UPDATE AND FINANCIAL STRATEGY REPORT

by **Dave Pennock**

Financial Strategy Committee (FSC) Update

In addressing our medium-term funding needs for the future 10-year overhauls of the Q6/T2 and P3/J27, the Locomotive Committee in January was asked to prepare what will be the scope of works and scale of costs that would need to be budgeted for. The overhauls become due in the 2027/2028 period, and, in addition to funding, the practicalities and skilled resources availability required will also need to be factored in.

The outcome of this review will enable the Board to consider the future priorities for our operations and, in turn, task the Financial Strategy Committee with addressing the availability of funds and the fundraising activities that will be required. Ideally a sense of direction should emerge as we progress through 2025.

Legacy giving

Legacy giving has benefitted NELPG in recent years. A specific legacy was instrumental in enabling the J72 restoration to proceed, while other legacies have added value to the Q6 cylinder appeal and indirectly supported the K1 overhaul. Such gifts in Wills have made a real difference to what we can achieve.

Gifts in Wills come in all sorts of sizes, from a few pounds to tens of pounds, even thousands of pounds. In each case the individual often had a strong connection to NELPG and what we have achieved. Comfort and satisfaction can be had from making provision in a Will, knowing that it will help North Eastern steam to continue to thrive for future generations.

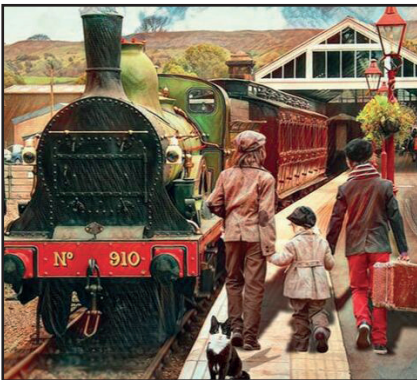
Gifts via declarations in a Will can be made to the NELPG, either by amending an existing Will via a codicil instruction or declaring a gift directly within a Will when either remaking an existing Will or making a new Will. March 2025 is a designated 'Free Wills Month' whereby people over 55 can get a simple will written or updated for free. Go to freewillsmoth.org.uk for more details.

Remembering a Charity is often promoted within this initiative, and details of seeking a free Will are also advertised on line by legal companies and major charities. If your estate is likely to be complex, then the offer may not be for you, but, otherwise, a solicitor will help to draw up a Will that accurately reflects the wishes of an individual or couple. In taking up the offer, you are under no obligation to leave a gift to any one particular charity. The key underlying message is the importance of making a Will - having a Will is seen as far better than not having a Will at all.

Should you have any queries or wish to in confidence advise NELPG of your intentions, please contact me as the nominated Legacy Officer for NELPG at dave.pennock@nelpg.org.uk or call 07969 691155.

2025 Patron and Working Member Members Visits

The plan for Patron events in 2025 will focus on the return to steam of the Q6 and a visit to the Stainmore Railway at Kirkby Stephen East. The Q6 is moving towards completion in Spring 2025 and a formal relaunch on the NYMR is to take place thereafter. An update on a Q6 launch will be advised in the April 2025 News when more is known.



Left: an artists impression of Kirkby Stephen East.

Right: a contemporary view inside the station with the real NER 910 (Dave Pennock)

For the proposed Stainmore visit we await the detail of their running dates in 2025 and of their Rail 200 celebrations to commemorate the bicentenary of the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway (S&DR) at the end of August. We are looking to plan a weekend date in either June or July and for it to provide the opportunity to ride in the Old Gentleman's Saloon, NER 1661, owned by NELPG member Chris Lawson, which will be visiting for the summer from its normal home on the KWVR. The Saloon, built at Hopetown in 1871, is believed to be the sole surviving operational passenger vehicle that can trace its' origins to the S&DR, and was originally built to work on the western extension of the S&DR over Stainmore via Kirkby Stephen East, so its' visit to the Stainmore Railway this year is highly appropriate.

Should you wish to register interest in this visit please email Dave Pennock at dave.pennock@nelpg.org as space will be limited.



*Chris Lawson's NER
Old Gentleman's saloon
(Dave Pennock)*

Q6 'Chip in for a Cylinder' appeal



63395 begins the 1 in 49 climb to Goathland at Esk Valley on 30th March 2023 (John Hunt)

The Q6 'Chip in for a Cylinder' appeal remains open and has £70,000 allocated from direct giving, legacy allocation, and grants. The final figures for the completion of the project are not yet fully known so, if you can, please continue to give. Should the appeal funds exceed the amount directly incurred for the cylinder block renewal, then any excess will be ring fenced and held specifically for any other work required to return the Q6 to traffic and keep her in steam.

Ways to donate to the Q6

'Chip in for a Cylinder' appeal

- By making a direct BACS transfer to the NELPG bank account at Barclays Bank, Sort Code 20-62-09, Account number 40104442. Please use the reference 'Q6 Cylinder Appeal'.
- Via the Charities Aid Foundation web site at <https://www.cafonline.org/my-personal-giving/start-giving/donate-now>, pressing the Donate to a Charity button, and then entering North Eastern Locomotive Preservation Group in the search box. Press the Donate to this Charity button and follow the payment options provided. You can add special instructions for the donation e.g. Q6 Appeal and opt in for Gift Aid to be claimed as part of the donation.
- Postal donations, via cheque, can be made to NELPG Ltd, 11 Coventry Road, Durham DH1 5XD.
- Donate using our refreshed web page at nelpg.org and press the orange Q6 Cylinder Appeal button taking you to <https://nelpg.org/q6-cylinder-appeal/>



MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

by **Michael Chyriwsky**

Happy New Year everyone! Thank you to all those who have sent me their renewal payments and Q6 donations. It was also lovely to see some members asking to become patrons. If you requested a replacement membership card, then it should be in the envelope along with this NEWS, so be careful how you dispose of the envelope! Speaking of which, when an envelope arrives and the stamp has not been franked by the post office, can we re-use the envelope? An interesting question now that postage is so expensive. Pop along to Hopetown Museum if you haven't done so. The scones in the café are excellent and, if you choose the first Saturday of the month, the NELPG workshop will be open too.

New members welcomed to the Group since the last NELPG NEWS are:

- Mr P. Akester from Thornton-le-Dale
- Mr C. Blackwell from Hull
- Mr M. Howe from Melbourn
- Mr J. Wetherell from Darlington

Anne Hawkins has been appointed as an Honorary Member. She is a great granddaughter of Vincent Raven and wrote to enquire about the Q6. She is glad that we still have it and she will send a donation. She is in her 80s and lives in South Wales and doesn't think she will get to Grosmont but she did in 1986! She is signed up to get the NELPG News electronically.

NOTICE OF 2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

by Paul Jameson (trustee)

Notice is hereby given that the 2025 Annual General Meeting of NELPG Ltd will be held at the Railway Athletic (RA) Club, Brinkburn Road, Darlington DL3 9LF on Friday 23 May 2025 at 7.30pm.

The ballot process will be used to allow members who cannot be present to exercise their vote.

Members will recall appeals for nominations for Trustees in earlier editions of News. Any member, other than a junior member, may apply for Board membership. Any such nomination should reach the Secretary at the Company's Registered Office, 67 The Mount, York YO24 1AX, on or before Friday 14 March 2025.

All potential nominees should ensure they have sought information about Board membership and read the Procedure for Appointment as NELPG Trustee/Director, before their nomination is submitted (email membership@nelpg.org.uk for details).

Each nomination should be completed in accordance with paragraphs 1–7 of the procedure.

Two Directors/Trustees, Rowland Bingham and Richard Pearson, are due to retire by rotation and each has indicated that he will seek re-appointment.

Any motions for consideration at the AGM need to be submitted to the Secretary at the Company's Registered Office, 67 The Mount, York YO24 1AX, also by Friday 14 March 2025, and must be proposed and seconded by fully paid up NELPG members.

The April issue of NELPG News, which will be circulated in the week beginning 7 April, will contain the Trustees Annual Report, post holders' reports, the accounts, details of all nominations to the Board and any motions to be put to the AGM, along with a ballot paper and voting instructions for members.

COPY DATE NELPG NEWS

The copy date for the April 2025 issue of NELPG NEWS is
Friday 21st March 2025.

S&DR 200

The Group has, for probably three or four years, expressed its wish to see its four locomotives at Darlington as part of the 200th anniversary of the S&DR. There cannot be many, if any, organisations that supplied three steam locomotives in 1975 and 50 years later can provide the same three locomotives again – just think of the kudos and positive publicity this will generate!



The display of locomotives is planned for the period 20th September to 5th October on the Hoptown site. There is the probability of locomotives being in steam, especially over the actual anniversary weekend of 27th September, with possible train rides. For further information about other events and celebrations during the next six months visit the S&D 200 website sdr200.co.uk.



The scene at Shildon on the morning of the 31st August 1975 S&D 150 cavalcade (John Hunt)

Another positive development, is that the Group is now represented on the Track Laying and Train Operations groups, both with monthly meetings. Insofar as the former is concerned the DRPS has helped lay track at its end of the 1861 shed, and the NELPG is expected to assist in doing the same at its end of the shed. At the next meeting of these groups, on 6th February, we should be in a good position to know what we have to do, when, and what with!



Therefore, expect a plea via Facebook, email and the NEWS for volunteers to help to lay track. Similarly, the meeting to discuss Train Operations should give some information as to what is planned and how it will be resourced; those members with operational experience on working steam locomotives and with PTS certificates are likely to be interested. In both respects watch this space!

ARCHIVE CORNER

by Chris Lawson

Contributions

With the Christmas and New Year break, and a major visit by all the family, including the Australian branch, since the last issue of News, it has been a fairly quiet period for the Archive. My apologies to those whose have had to wait for an acknowledgement of their contributions. Fortunately, though, they have been significantly reduced since my last report, focussed entirely on photographic items, and, by the time you read this, I will hopefully have got caught up.

Of the regular contributors, Richard Stevens has provided 13 more colour digital images of the K1, including at Ulleskelf en route from Carnforth to York on 1st February 2021, and on the Whitby – Battersby line during post Covid re-familiarization and crew training from 29th March to 1st April 2021, whilst Michael Denholm has sent a colour digital image of 63395, with 65894 behind, and an unidentified WD, on Sunderland shed just after the end of North East steam in September 1967, a B&W digital image of 63395 on Sunderland shed after cleaning by the Master Neverers Association (MNA) in September 1967, colour digital images of 63395 at South Pelaw with coal hoppers for Consett on 20th September 1966 and at Stella Gill with coal hoppers for Consett the next day, and a B&W digital image of 65894 at York with a PW Engineers' train on 4th May 1964.



62005 west of Danby with the 10.00 Grosmont – Battersby post Covid crew familiarisation service on 1st April 2021 (Richard Stevens)



65894 heads a P-Way train through York on 4th May 1954 (photographer unknown, via Michael Denholm)

Of a similar period of time, Paul Spencer has contributed a B&W print image of 65894 approaching York Station with a mixed freight on 19th August 1963. Coming right up to date, Ed Bolam has sent 37 colour digital images recording work on the repainting of the J72 in the 1861 shed, with more to follow as the work progresses, to provide a full archive record.

Looking ahead, I have been asked by the Executor of Hilary Proud's estate, who died just before Christmas, to go through the railway material left by her late husband and NELPG founder member Peter. It sounds as if there is a lot of material to go through and sort out items with a monetary value for sale, and those of no financial value but of importance from an archive perspective, not only for NELPG but others such as the NYMR. I am particularly grateful therefore to Kevin Gould for offering to help with an initial sort out. I will report on progress in a future issue.

As ever, my thanks to them all for their contributions, they are really appreciated. But please do not forget the archive, particularly if you are having a clear out at home. And do not ignore items related to today – they form part of our history and the archive of the future. If you have any items, no matter how large or small, related to the Group that you are prepared to contribute to the archive, then, as usual, please get in touch – telephone 01904 655003, email chris.lawson@nelpg.org.uk, or drop me a line at 67 The Mount, York, YO24 1AX. I look forward to hearing from you.

40 years ago – February 1985 (from NELPG News No. 105)

Locomotives – The T2 remained on display in Deviation shed but given another polishing by young volunteers from a Hartlepool school under the direction of Peter Wolf. The last of the Q7 flue tubes had been removed, the firebox tubeplate re-threaded to take the new flue tube ends, and half the smokebox saddle bolts had been removed leaving two dozen to be extracted before the boiler could be lifted.

Efforts continued to resolve the problems with the overheating of the right-hand big end on the P3. Relieving the high points and reassembly during late December allowed a further steam test on 30 December. The big end was still not 100%, but with a slight slackening it cooled off dramatically, and, with one last trip to Goathland in the gathering darkness, sparks flying from the chimney and whistle blowing, much to the amazement of the residents of Esk Valley Cottages, a check on arrival at Goathland found all bearings remained cool. It was therefore returned to Deviation shed. However, slackness in certain bushes was getting worse and it was decided to completely strip down the valve gear and have it rebushed where necessary by outside contractors. Once that had been completed, the locomotive would be tested on trains to determine its maximum load for NYMR services.

After the J72 successfully completed its Santa Special duties from Grosmont, in spite of some very poor quality coal, it was prepared for winter storage.

The main news 40 years ago was that the MSC scheme on the K1 at ICI Wilton had finally started. Following union agreement, the scheme and the vacancies to be filled were widely advertised in the local press, interviews carried out by Bill Dobson from NELPG and specialists from ICI on 3rd and 4th January, medicals the following week, and the scheme formally started on 14th January. The 22-week programme, with an average workforce of 10 people, was scheduled to be completed by mid June. ICI had appointed Ken Thompson full time to the project to co-ordinate and look after its interests. The scheme was to carry out mechanical work on the K1 which, if left to our volunteers would be unlikely to be completed for some 7 years because of the ongoing overhauls on the P3 and Q7. It was valued at £30,000, largely for wages, with NELPG meeting material costs of £15,000 plus £2,000 for reboring the pistons and manufacture of new piston heads.

A considerable amount of mechanical work had been carried out by the MSC team by the end of their third week, while NELPG volunteers concentrated on the boiler, axle boxes, piston valves and pistons. The last of the 276 roof stays were removed during December, and a bulk order placed for their replacements following a quotation some 60% below the norm for manual production on a lathe, by using computerised, numerically controlled machines. Half the 117 side stays to be renewed had been removed with advice from Joe Glass, the last north east boilermaster in active service, and new axle box liners ordered, while all side rod and big end brasses were away being remetalled. The reverser in the cab had been rebushed and the reverser vacuum lock liner pads and rubber diaphragm were being renewed.

An impressive list, but there was still more to do to ensure work did not fall behind schedule, and working parties had been organised for Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings and all day Sundays, with Nigel Bill, Mike Oliver and Peter Robinson as organisers.

At Carnforth, the oilways in both valve bores of 44767 George Stephenson had been cleaned out, the engine washed out and given a steam test prior to a BR exam on 22nd February. It then worked light engine to Manchester before double heading with 5690 Leander on a 14-coach special to Carlisle via Blackburn and Hellifield. It was planned to stay at Upperby Depot for

five weeks to allow replacement of all the superheater elements and attention given to reduce the play in the connecting rods and die blocks. Once completed, it was expected to go to Scotland for another season of running between Fort William and Mallaig with 5407.

Other news – The ICI publicity department had brought the MSC scheme to the notice of local media, resulting in coverage by Radio Cleveland and BBC Look North. These involved interviews with key individuals and resulted in a five-minute spot on Look North on 29th January including some of Ted Parkers video of the K1 in action on the NYMR ... There had been a significant response to consolidation of Social Meetings at the Ladle Hotel with meeting attendances up to January averaging just under 60 and at times filling the room to capacity. A total of £280 had been raised from raffles and door collections after deduction of expenses.

And finally... A revised copy of the Group's constitution was enclosed with this issue, circulation to all members being justified by a statement that 'Each member, by right, ought to have sight of the constitution for reference and guidance on how the Group's affairs should be conducted.'



Another reminder of S&DR 175. Prior to the big event at Shildon, some locomotives were displayed in the bay platforms at the north end Darlington station. The K1 is on the left, between 43106 and 4498 Sir Nigel Gresley. On the right are 92220 Evening Star and the Midland compound 1000. On the horizon the power station and DMU depot are now long gone and on the right, beyond the 08 shunter, was the site of Darlington steam shed (John Hunt)

NELPG SOCIAL EVENTS

A number of social events have taken place over the winter period so here are three pictures that put some names to faces.

Richard Barber (right) waits while Arthur Jenkins (left) introduces him to the audience at the general meeting inside the 1861 shed on 13th December. Behind them is the J72 whilst on the right, are a couple of replica chaldron wagons (John Hunt)



The December meeting of the Financial Strategy Committee in York was followed by a Christmas meal. From left to right: Dave Pennock, William Nutbrown, Chris Lawson, Richard Wheeler, Andrew Scott, John Marsland and Colin Foxton (John Hunt)

The traditional Teesside beer and curry night, organised by Paul Hutchinson, was held in Saltburn on 3rd January. Here the assembled multitude await their food. From left to right: Dave McEwan, Richard Pearson, Ian Pearson, Chris Davison (shy!), Chris Hemwood, Mike Bloomfield, John Hunt, David Humphreys, John Paul Venus, Paul Hutchinson, Martin Lloyd and Jonathon Bradley.



FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NELPG Events

February 2025

- 12 – Locomotive Committee meeting – Skype (8pm).
- 14 – Social meeting: *Steam from Kings Cross to York* by Chris Nettleton. 1861 Shed, Darlington. 7pm. £2 charge to cover tea or coffee and biscuits.
- 19 – NELPG Board meeting – Skype (8pm).

March 2025

- 1 – Open Day at 1861 Shed, Darlington (10am–3pm).
- 12 – Locomotive Committee meeting – Skype (8pm)
- 14 – Social meeting: *Shildon 1975* by Ken Hodgson. 1861 Shed, Darlington. 7pm. £2 charge to cover tea or coffee and biscuits.
- 19 – NELPG Board meeting – Skype (8pm).

April 2025

- 5 – Open Day at 1861 Shed, Darlington (10am–3pm).
- 9 – Locomotive Committee meeting – Skype (8pm).
- 11 – Social meeting: *Tyneside Electrics* by David Fraser. 1861 Shed, Darlington. 7pm. £2 charge to cover tea or coffee and biscuits.
- 16 – NELPG Board meeting – Skype (8pm).

Board and Locomotive Committee meetings are subject to short notice change, so members wishing to participate in any meeting should contact the Company Secretary (colin.foxton@nelpg.org.uk) for Board meetings, and Paul Jameson (ohc4f600@gmail.com) for Locomotive Committee meetings, to confirm the date and link details.

NYMR (details at www.nymr.co.uk)

- 15–23 February – half term running, including NER Autocar between Grosmont and Goathland. No services between Goathland and Pickering due to signalling work. Services only between Whitby, Grosmont and Goathland.
- 22 March – special week of operations with A4 No. 60007 Sir Nigel Gresley.
- 31 March – start of 2025 normal service train operational season.

Other events

February

- 12 – *The Railway Mission* by David Clark. (12 noon). NYMR YAG, St Lawrence Church Hall, 14-16 Lawrence Street, York YO10 3WP. Admission £4.
- 18 – *BR in Transition 1957–1975 (Part 2)* by John Clayson. (2pm). SLS Teesside, Langdon Square Community Centre, Coulby Newham, Middlesbrough, TS8 0TF.
- 20 – *Steam and Diesel in the Northern Fells* by Ian Pilkington. (7pm). RCTS Darlington, Darlington Cricket Club, South Terrace, Darlington, DL1 5JD. Donation £3.

- 27 – *Robert Stephenson – Promoting his Legacy* by Philip Benham. (7pm for 7.30). NERA Zoom meeting – pre-registration required via NERA website (ner.org.uk).
- 28 – *Railway Roundabout* by John Hunt. (7pm). NYMR Teesside Area Group, Newport Settlement Hub, Union Street, Middlesbrough TS1 5NQ.
- 28 – *Rails across the North Riding – The Esk Valley Line* by Richard Barber. (2pm). Northallerton Railway Group, Yeoman Suite, The Village Inn, Water End, Brompton, DL6 2RL.

March

- 1 – NYMR York Area Group Model Railway Show – St Lawrence Church Hall, 14-16 Lawrence Street, York YO10 3WP. (10am – 3.30pm). Admission £4.
- 3 – *The Golden Years – The North West: Steam in NW England in the 50s & 60s* by Martin Green. (2pm). Hartlepool Railway Enthusiasts Group – Central Hub, Hartlepool Library.
- 7 – *Missed Locos and Lost Locations* by Ted Parker, followed by Centre AGM. (2pm). SLS Teesside, Langdon Square Community Centre, Coulby Newham, Middlesbrough, TS8 0TF.
- 14 – *Steam in and Around Darlington with a quick look at Newcastle and Gateshead* by Chris Nettleton. (6.30 for a 7pm start). SLS Newcastle, Newcastle Arts Centre, 67 Westgate Road, NE1 1SG.
- 12 – *Neville Hill Depot – Diary of an Escapee* by Peter Holden. (12 noon). NYMR YAG, St Lawrence Church Hall, 14-16 Lawrence Street, York YO10 3WP. Admission £4.
- 18 – *Progress in Design and Manufacture: The Steam Locomotive 1825-1830* by Dr Michael Bailey (SLS President). (2pm). SLS Teesside – Langdon Square Community Centre, Coulby Newham, Middlesbrough, TS8 0TF.
- 20 – *The Waverley Route* by Dennis Lovatt. (7pm). RCTS Darlington, Darlington Cricket Club, South Terrace, Darlington, DL1 5JD.
- 28 – *Australia Railways* by Dave Birtle. (7pm). NYMR Teesside Area Group, Newport Community Hub, Union Street, Middlesbrough, TS15NQ.
- 28 – *Scanned Images Part 2* by David Warren. 2pm. Northallerton Railway Group, Yeoman Suite, The Village Inn, Water End, Brompton, DL6 2RL.

April

- 4 – *Darlington to Saltburn and Beyond* by Colin Hatton. (7pm). SLS Teesside, Newport Community Hub, Union Street, Middlesbrough, TS1 5NQ.
- 9 – *The Stainmore Railway* by John Midcalf (12 noon). NYMR YAG, St Lawrence Church Hall, 14-16 Lawrence Street, York YO10 3WP. Admission £4.
- 11 – *Train Watching to Train Spotting 1948-1961* by Dave Dunn. (6.30 for a 7pm start). SLS Newcastle, Newcastle Arts Centre, 67 Westgate Road, NE1 1SG.
- 12 – *History of the Tyne and Wear Metro System* by Phil Kirkland; *Remembering the 150 Anniversary Celebrations of the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway* by Roger Bastin; *Engineering the Change from Waggonways to Main Line Railway: 1780s to 1850s* by Hugh Fenwick. From 10am. NERA AGM, Bar Convent, Blossom Street, York.
- 15 – *60s Steam in Retrospect* by Trevor Ermel. (2pm). SLS Teesside – Langdon Square Community Centre, Coulby Newham, Middlesbrough, TS8 0TF.
- 17 – *An Evening with my Father's Slides* by David Cross. (7pm). RCTS Darlington, Darlington Cricket Club, South Terrace, Darlington, DL1 5JD.

25 – BR in Transition 1957–1975 by John Clayson. (2pm). Northallerton Railway Group, Yeoman Suite, The Village Inn, Water End, Brompton, DL6 2RL.

NRM York

Open 7 days a week from 10.00 to 17.00. Entrance from Leeman Road near the main visitor car park. Prebooking tickets online recommended but not essential. Search Engine is now open Wednesday to Saturday, 10.00 to 16.30. Station Hall closed for refurbishment. Details at www.railwaymuseum.org.uk.

NRM Locomotion

Open 7 days a week from 10.00 to 17.00 (summer), 10.00 to 16.00 (winter). Prebooked tickets not required. Details at www.locomotion.org.uk.

Hopetown, Darlington

Free entry to site, including North Road Museum, Darlington Locomotive Works and The Stores, but free tickets required. Prebooking online advised. Term time open Tuesday to Sunday 10.00 to 17.00; school holidays open Monday to Sunday 10.00 to 17.00. Last entry 16.00. Details at www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk.

A1 Trust

Open days at Darlington Locomotive Works, Bonami Road, on the first and third Saturdays of each month from 10am to 3pm. Details at www.a1steam.com.



Another view inside the Thornaby roundhouse just before the Q6, K1 and P3 departed for the NYMR at the end of December 1975 (John Hunt)

Your locomotives need YOU!

by John Carr

We need more bodies on the line!! (Not literally!)

Seriously, could YOU spare a few days, or even a few hours, each year to help with:

- Welcoming visitors to OUR bases at Deviation Shed, Grosmont or the 1861 Shed at Hopetown, Darlington?
- Welcoming passengers on board trains hauled by OUR locomotives on the NYMR or elsewhere?
- Selling NELPG merchandise at our bases, or on trains hauled by OUR locomotives, or at shows or exhibitions where there is an NELPG stand? Most likely this would be combined with the welcoming activities above.
- Supporting tasks like stock control, ordering goods or spreading the administrative load that YOUR NELPG officers carry out.

If you could, or think you might, please contact me at john.carr@nelpg.org.uk or 07941 039222. Leave a voice message if I'm not able to take your call. Let me know where and when you could donate those precious hours.

I hope I can rely on sufficient responses to suggest rosters for the coming season in the next News. Currently our engineering volunteers are working flat out to try to get all four of YOUR locomotives ready for traffic by the summer season as you'll read elsewhere. OUR financial resources need to be built up again, we need new ideas for raising money, we need hires for OUR locos and we need more bodies. Please do what YOU can to help. After all, we've done it before. If we hadn't NELPG locos wouldn't have achieved way more miles in traffic than can be claimed by any other purely voluntary preservation group.



Your locomotives need YOU!

Contact: john.carr@nelpg.org.uk

