

NELPG NEWS

No. 354
August 2026



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.

PRESIDENT: Mr. A.J. Scott, C.B.E.

VICE PRESIDENTS: Mr. K. Gould, Mr. G. Nissen, C.B.E., Mr. M.S. Burns, Mr. P.J. Robinson, Mr. I.L. Storey, Mr. J.R.P. Hunt, Mr. T.K. Newman

CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER: J. Graham, 75 Doxford Place, Hall Close Glade, Cramlington, Northumberland, NE23 6DX. Tel: 01670 737050. E-mail: JohnFGraham75@outlook.com

ASSISTANT CHIEF MECHANICAL ENGINEER: I.L. Storey, 13 Felton Close, Stobhill Farm, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2TG. Tel: 01670 519647. Mob: 07801 920897. E-mail: ianstorey44767@gmail.com

BOARD TRUSTEES

R. Bingham	5 Gardner Road, Heysham, Morecambe, LA3 1RX	Mob: 07751 689939	rowland.bingham@nelpg.org.uk
J. Carr	4 Maybury Close, Petts Wood Kent, BR5 1BL	Mob: 07941 039222	john@carruk.net
C. Foxton (Secretary)	2 Sundew Court, Darlington DL1 1AW	Mob: 07976 689762	colin.foxton@nelpg.org.uk
J.R.P. Hunt (Chairman)	24 The Orchard, Snainton Scarborough YO13 9AU	Mob: 07968 274895	johnny2cameras@aol.com
P. Hutchinson	Newlyn, Browns Terrace, Staithes, Saltburn-by-the-Sea, TS13 5BG	Mob: 07964 988551	paul.hutchinson62005@outlook.com
P. Jameson	1 Hambleton Cottage, Evendine Lane, Colwall, Malvern, WR13 6DP	Tel: 01684 541458	ohc4f600@gmail.com
R. Morgan	21 Lady Hamilton Gardens, York, YO24 4PQ	Mob: 07974 962935	rob60024@live.co.uk
R. Pearson	43 Redruth Drive, Darlington, DL3 0ZU	Mob: 07779 366796	richard.pearson@nelpg.org.uk
C. Williams	Hill Top House, North Rigton, Leeds, LS17 0DJ	Mob: 07835 967744	chris.j.williams@hotmail.co.uk

TREASURER: Richard Wheeler, 11 Coventry Road, Durham, DH1 5XD. Tel: 0191 3867637. Mob: 07790 476077. E-mail: richard.wheeler@nelpg.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Michael Chyriwsky, 35 Sandriggs, Darlington, DL3 0TY. Tel: 07963 505432. E-mail: michael.chyriwsky@nelpg.org.uk

ARCHIVIST: vacant

HEALTH & SAFETY OFFICER: Rowland Bingham, Mob: 07751 689939. E-mail: rowland.bingham@nelpg.org.uk

LEGACIES OFFICER: vacant

FINANCIAL STRATEGY COMMITTEE: Dave Pennock, Richard Wheeler, John Marsland, Andrew Scott, Graham Holt, William Nutbrown and Bryan Orange

LOCOMOTIVE COMMITTEE: Robson Hewitson, Paul Hutchinson, Richard Pearson, Dave Pennock, Ian Storey, Neal Woods and Paul Jameson

WEBSITE: www.nelpg.org

REGISTERED OFFICE: 11 Coventry Road, Durham, DH1 5XD

MAGAZINE EDITOR: John Hunt, 24 The Orchard, Snainton, Scarborough, YO13 9AU. Tel: 01723 850029. Mob: 07968 274895. E-mail: johnny2cameras@aol.com

MAGAZINE DESIGN & LAYOUT: Saskia van Schip. E-mail: svanschip@hotmail.com

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

COVER PICTURES

Front: Chris Lawson, suitably attired, stands proudly in front of 69023 at Grosmont on 9th May 2013. Behind the J72 is his beloved Old Gentleman's Saloon of Railway Children film fame. Back (top): 2392 departs Embsay with a train for Bolton Abbey on 2nd August. Back (bottom): the same train arriving at Bolton Abbey (all John Hunt).

EDITORIAL

by John Hunt

This is probably the most difficult Editorial that I am likely to write. In a year when we should be unashamedly celebrating our diamond jubilee, it is in danger of turning out to be our 'annus horribilis'.

In my role as Chairman, I harboured a strong belief that what better way to celebrate by having a four-engine gala on the NYMR, the first time our four locomotives will have been in steam at the same time, in the same place, but this is not to be. With plenty of time to prepare, I had fervently hoped that we could deliver, and through the pages of the NEWS I continued to hope that this could indeed happen. However, my optimism was eventually misplaced, with only the P3 likely to be available in October and, as Chairman, I humbly apologise for any disappointment that members may feel.

Of course, no one is to blame since I cannot fault the hard work put in by the Group's volunteers, but, sadly, it is the nature of our business that steam locomotives can be notoriously unpredictable. The Q6 is a such a classic case of 'a can of worms'; withdrawn to replace firebox roof stays, in the hope that the boiler certificate might be extended, examination showed that far more work than planned was necessary, to the extent that the most sensible option was to go for a full 10-yearly overhaul. Richard Pearson comprehensively explains the reasoning behind this.

Also, it was becoming clear that despite accelerated good progress on the J72, it was increasingly unlikely that the locomotive would be ready for any October event. The K1, too, was taking longer than expected, as Paul Hutchinson reports, not helped by the continued absence of vacuum braked stock on the Jacobite, and completion of the overhaul is not now expected until early in 2027. Again, a sensible decision.

With regard to the Group's tenure of the 1861 shed at Hopetown, latterly the future did not auger well, but following recent meetings with Darlington Borough Council it looks a little more encouraging with our occupation assured until at least 2030.

Last but by no means least, was the recent but extremely sad news of the passing of Chris Lawson. Whilst the medical prognosis was not good, when his wife Janice announced the news, it came as a great shock. I had been to see Chris just two weeks previously, and he was lucid and relaxed, though in pain. Like several of my colleagues, I had known Chris for over 60 years, and he was a good friend and mentor, and his presence will be very sadly missed by many. His contribution to the fortunes of the NELPG was immense and is catalogued in his obituary.

LOCOMOTIVE REPORT

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

P3 No. 2392

Following the last NELPG NEWS update the locomotive has returned to traffic following a period of maintenance which has seen a number of jobs carried out.

The main job was a repair to some minor cracking within the inner firebox. This has seen the crack ground out and non-destructive testing carried out to see the extent of the damage and the repair needed. Thankfully the damage was minor, and the cracking was only within the surface of the plate work. The welding was carried out satisfactorily and following a steam test and exam with the boiler inspector present the locomotive is now back pulling passengers. It re-entered traffic at Embsay on Saturday 1st August – Yorkshire Day!

While the P3 was sat idle the opportunity was taken to refresh some of the paintwork on the boiler barrel which had become tired. It was intended to do this some time ago, but the time was never right and finally this job can be ticked off the list.

Safety valves have seen some repairs carried out and the piston valve rings have been examined and some adjustments made to them the engine performing well.

The P3 is planned to run now at the Yorkshire Dales Railway throughout the summer till the end of August, before returning to the NYMR in early September where it will take part in the annual Steam Gala and normal running. It will return to the YDR for some Christmas running before the inevitable winter maintenance period begins again which will be carried out at Grosmont.



*No. 2392 tops the climb out of Embsay at Skibeden
on 2nd August (John Hunt)*

Q6 No. 63395

The Q6 was withdrawn for replacement of crown stays and renewal of tender tyres in October 2025, and the estimated costs were around £51,000 + VAT + transport.

The firebox roof stays were examined by our boiler insurance company back in October 2025 and at that time we were told that the engine would not be able to operate beyond June 2026 without replacement of the fixed rigid roof stays. We were given dispensation for the sling stays because they weren't in as poor condition, and they are impossible to change without removing tubes from the boiler, due to access issues.

So, the decision was made to start the roof stay replacement straight away with a view of getting the work done over the winter period and with a plan to have the engine back in traffic for the summer of 2026. But once the work started on the roof stays a number of other issues were discovered.

1. On the removal of roof stays and roof stay nuts, star cracking in the copper firebox platework was discovered in 62 of the 204 roof stay holes.
2. Following a thorough examination and a full NDT of the inner firebox, a fracture in the top radius of the copper tubeplate was also confirmed.

Revised estimates were sought from boiler contractor Leaky Finders amounting to £53,000 + VAT for the crown stays (with star cracking repair) and £32,000 + VAT for the tubeplate crack repair (including lifting the boiler and subsequently re-fitting it), giving a grand total of £83,000 + VAT. Lifting of the boiler was necessary as the amount of copper welding we required could only be done working downwards, so the boiler would need to come off and be rolled onto its back. So, the total spend to date is £67,000 + VAT.

Repair of the star cracking is a straightforward process, and between our contractor and insurance company we agreed a method for this repair. The fracture in the firebox copper tubeplate was originally ground out and passed NDT, but following further grinding out to prepare the tubeplate for welding a black line appeared in the copper, and welding could not proceed until this black/dirt line had been fully removed as this would have caused contamination in the weld. So, we were left with no choice other than to keep going until this black line had disappeared, and it was at this point that the fracture broke right the way through into the water space. After grinding, the fracture is 42 inches long.

We then agreed a method for welding up the fracture, but due to the size of the fracture we needed to gain access inside the boiler to get to the other side of the fracture, and it was at this point where we started to run into even more problems. The space inside the boiler is very tight and it proved impossible to reach the front for the firebox without the need to remove tubes from the boiler, so reluctantly we agreed and asked our contractor to remove 18 superheater elements and 6 flue tubes. This gave access to the front of the firebox, but space was still very tight and all we could do was to complete a visual inspection. The inspection revealed that the

fracture had been there for some time and it also showed that the sling stays were in worse condition than could be seen from the previous inspection.

So again, and after speaking to our contractor and our boiler insurance company, we concluded that for the work to take place safely, we would need to remove all of the flue tubes. The estimated cost of replacing these is £25,000 – £35,000. In addition, now that we know the poor state of the sling stays, they would also need to be changed using the access now available.

So, if we were to return the engine to traffic in the near future, we would need to complete the copper welding, replace the sling stays, complete installation of the rigid roof stays which are about 70% complete, re-end and then hydraulic test the superheater elements, fit a new set of flue tubes, refit the boiler and reassemble the engine. This large increase in the scope of work along with the increase in costs would see the engine return to service in Spring 2027 and allow the engine to continue in service until August 2028.

The Q6 boiler certificate expires in August 2028. This means that, even if the tubeplate fracture repair is successfully carried out, only around 18 months of income can be earned before the engine has to be withdrawn for its 10-yearly overhaul. 18 months is likely to be an optimistic figure, given the fact that it covers the winter period 2027–2028 and the fact that fire risk during dry summers is increasingly preventing steam operations.

At the 10-yearly overhaul, it will be necessary to replace the copper firebox tubeplate. This means that if the tubeplate welding repair is done now, the costs of it, the costs of the re-assembly of the engine, the costs of its transport back to the NYMR, the costs of subsequent dismantling back to the current state, the costs of the new flue tubes and the costs of re-ending and hydraulic testing of the superheater elements can only be recovered during that 18-month period.

The alternative is to withdraw the engine now for its 10-year boiler overhaul, and given that the engine is already partially dismantled, it should be possible to complete the overhaul and return the engine traffic with a new 10-year boiler ticket during 2028.

Having considered the options in detail, the NELPG Board at its meeting on 22nd July agreed unanimously that to attempt to return the engine to traffic for 18 months was likely to cost considerably more than the income which would be generated by the engine during its 18 months in traffic and thus a waste of Group funds. It was agreed that the money would be better spent on starting the full 10-yearly overhaul because in this way it would be invested in the engine for a full 10 years of service.

Mechanically the engine is believed to be in reasonable condition, having done very little work since its last axle box overhaul. Some re-white-metalling of motion parts is likely to be needed, along with work on the steam reverser.

The next step will be the removal all the tubes from the boiler to determine an accurate estimate of the work required and the estimated costs of doing the overhaul. Known work so far, in addition to the rigid roof stays that have already been planned for, include a new copper tubeplate, a full set of tubes, an estimate of 400 side stays, 200 rivets, a new smoke box and a new smoke box door. Once these estimated costs are known, a proposal for the expenditure for the 10-yearly overhaul will be put to members at a General Meeting in the usual way.

Meanwhile, the tender tyres have now been replaced (at greater cost than anticipated mainly due to the need to repair old fractures in the wheelsets which weren't discovered until the old tyres had been removed). The wheelsets work is now complete, and they are now back under the tender.



The Q6 tender is reunited with its wheelsets on 21st July (Ian Pearson)



Following rewheeling some paintwork was touched up and the coal space was cleaned ready for protective painting (Ian Pearson)

K1 No. 62005

Since the report in June's NEWS, work has continued on the frames and tender. The lubrication pipework is now essentially complete and the sands filler, delivery and steam pipework well advanced. The final slide bar fastening bolt has been manufactured and fitted and final painting of the loco frames and various related components/fittings has been further progressed. A new stainless steel safety mesh has been fitted to the roof vent, the cab wind deflector and window arm rest hinges have been refurbished (as have the arm rests) and the side window runner bars have been stripped and primed. Chris Beet of West Coast has also kindly donated his own time and the use of his shot blasting and paint spraying equipment to shot blast and prime the interior of the cab roof, front and sides.



Left: Steve Gibson and Les Harper fitting the LH intermediate forwards sands filler pipe.

Right: Chris Beet shot blasting the cab top interior.

Below: Wayne Denney fitting the new cab roof vent safety mesh (all Paul Hutchinson)



On the tender, the ground level watering pipes have been repositioned to allow easier use when watering at station platforms (which is usually the case at Mallaig) and the tank top, inner sides and coal space rear bulkhead have been needle-gunned, prepared and primed.

While we have, until now, been working towards completion of the K1 overhaul as quickly as possible, it is clear that the locomotive will not now be required for Jacobite services this year and as the NELPG 60th Anniversary gala has been put back to next year, the Board has agreed to postpone the hydraulic test of the boiler until early November with a view to completing the overhaul and having the loco ready for traffic in spring 2027. This will hopefully give the loco a full year in service at the end of its boiler 'ticket' and take some of the immediate pressure of the hard-pressed Carnforth regulars.

Despite the postponement of the boiler hydraulic test there is still plenty to do so if you are able to come and join us, please do. Working parties continue on the usual Wednesday – Saturday routine. If you would like to get involved, please let Paul know by text on 07964 988 551 or by e-mail at paul.hutchinson62005@outlook.com. The NELPG company van is available for travel from the Teesside/Darlington area or travelling expenses will be paid from elsewhere. Sleeping accommodation is available in the K1's support coach if required.

J72 No. 69023

It is gratifying to announce that the firebox assembly is now underway. The inner firebox is now positioned within the main boiler with some initial stays fitted.

With the remaining stays to hand, the work plan is to stay the upper box, fit the foundation ring and then stay the lower end firebox. The boiler will then be turned on its side to enable the dome to be fitted. NESL have also applied new ends to the smokebox dart bar.

In July our insurance examiners BTIS visited NSEL to inspect the inner firebox prior to assembly in the main boiler. A couple of points were raised, the recommended replacement of two rivets as they had markings on the rivet heads, and identity stamping the girder stays. These items were readily undertaken by NSEL prior to the fitting.

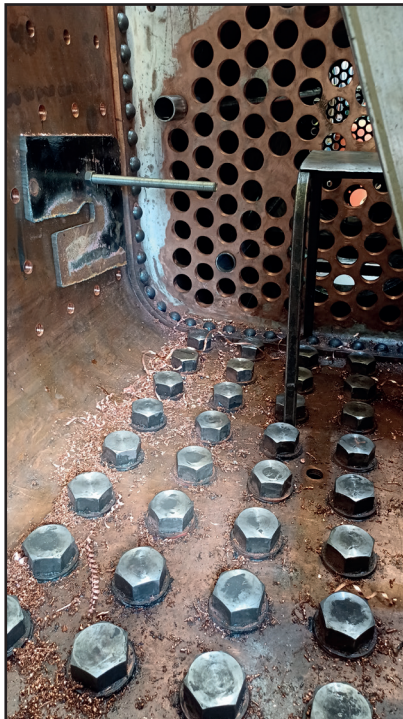


Pre stay hole drilling from Barney Casey during a previous offer of the new copper box to the outer firebox.



Left: the view towards the firebox tubeplate, showing the girder stays, with the dome hole at the top, and the longitudinal stays fitted to date and internal water feed/ steam pipework.

Right: some stays fitted and, in the foreground, girder stay bolt heads (Neal Woods)



Left: the upturned dome.

Right: the cracking in the flange that requires welding (Neal Woods)

Progress is evident by:

1. The inner box has now fitted within main box.
2. Initial stays fitted.
3. Some longitudinal stays now in position.
4. Internal water/steam feed pipes fitted and expanded within backplate bosses.
5. Crinoline bosses welded to outer shell.
6. Dome 2 No cracks ground out on flange following MPI. To be welded and retested.
7. BTIS visit and recommendations completed (two replaced rivets and girder stay ID stamping.)

Next steps:

1. Fitting of all stays and foundation ring.
2. 90-degree rotation of boiler to fit dome.
3. Mechanical / heat working of dome flange for snug fit to boiler. MPI test post-trial fit. (Risk of further cracks emerging and need for new dome, hopefully not.)
4. Firehole door – with Neal Woods to adjust to fit new door hole alignment. (Door hole now fully central; old was offset, hence adjustment need.)
5. Boiler tubes fitting.
6. Regulator to fit.
7. Longitudinal and palm stay fitting.
8. Main steam pipe – renewal in hand via Neal Woods looking at pipe suppliers and bending requirements.

The valve rods have been returned from Spiraweld and have been send to Daniela Works to assist with the machining of the new slide valves.

Work is still progressing with the checking of the pipe work for the locomotive.

The machining of the parts associated with the valve rod refurbishment has now commenced. New valve gland cups have been machined by James Percy his next task will be the white metal packings. Arthur and Co are currently machining the tail rod bushes to suit the new valve rods the best tack will be the valve gland followers which need opening out to suit the refurbished valve rods.

The frames are being touched up to remove any chips and scratches they have picked up during assembly.

A new piece of pipe is being sourced to renew the bottom section of the main steam pipe, and a new flange is being manufactured to complete this assembly.

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**

J94 No. 68030

Work continues on a number of fronts on this project.

With there being lots of dry weather, the work on the tank is progressing, with the underside being stripped and painted.

The coal bunker has been thickness tested and some of the lower pieces of plate work will require renewal. As part of the same scope of work, the inside of the bunker has been stripped of all rust, coal dust. Etc. and the upper sections, which are sound, will be painted.

The cab lockers have been emptied of various items left over from the locomotive's last operations such as red flags, rope, gauge glasses, etc. The lockers are heavily corroded and will require sections of new plate.

All of the life expired studs have been removed from the cylinder block.

The brake gear and eccentric rods have been dye-penetrant tested and the results have come back clear.

Work will continue over the coming months as time permits.



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 (Q6) on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 09.00 to 17.00
- Hopetown Darlington to work on the J72 and J94, 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 Darlington: Arthur Jenkins, ajenkins4468@gmail.com / 07960 093756 or Neal Woods, 07773 572659
- Carnforth: Paul Hutchinson, paul.hutchinson62005@outlook.com / text on 07964 988551

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Richard Wheeler

I have recently been attempting to revise the five-year forecast of the Group's likely income and expenditure. Some lines, such as the cost of printing and postage and of insurance and accountancy, can be forecast quite easily, just allowing for likely inflation in costs. The level of income from the Patron scheme has defied my previous expectations of a slow decline, for which thanks are due to those who have increased their contributions, and to those who have newly joined. This scheme really does provide a reliable flow of much needed income, so I make no apology for urging more members to join.

Less easy to forecast are locomotive repair and overhaul costs and hire income. We had expected both the K1 and the Q6 to return to traffic in the next few months, but this will not now happen, and considerably more will need to be spent on the Q6 over the next two years than previously anticipated. We must therefore hope that the P3 remains in service at Embsay and has no further breakdowns, and that the K1 earns significant income in 2027. The Legacy income received this year has significantly strengthened our cash position and our total balance at the end of July was £542,000. This has given the Board confidence to authorise a full overhaul of the Q6 subject to the approval of members, but we will then need to rebuild our funds to pay for the overhaul of the P3.

I cannot let this opportunity pass without paying my own tribute to Chris Lawson, who has been a close friend for 60 years since we first met at University in Newcastle. A true gentleman who dedicated so much time and effort to the Group and to the wider preservation movement. He will be sorely missed.



OBITUARY – CHRIS LAWSON

Sadly, Chris Lawson passed away on 25th July 2026 following a stoic battle against prostate cancer.

Chris was born on 16th March 1947 in Gosforth and educated initially at Rossall School in Lancashire, before graduating to the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Here he studied agriculture and went on to work for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, eventually becoming Head of Meat Hygiene and Director of the Food Standards Agency. He retired at the end of December 2006.

Chris was an early member of the Group which was formed on 28th October 1966. At that time, he was also a member of the Newcastle University Railway Society, along with Andrew Scott, Richard Wheeler, John Hunt and Graham Holt, and it was the NURS that was instrumental in raising awareness and much needed funds to purchase first the J27 65894 in December 1967, then the Q6 63395 in April 1968.

His contributions over six decades encompass several vital leadership and operational roles. He served on the NELPG Committee for many years including a long spell as Secretary from 2012 until his resignation in 2022, so, over the years, he stepped up to manage the Group's administrative, legal and operational continuity. He also got his hands dirty, initially helping to lay track into the original loco shed at Grosmont in the 1970s and regularly helping out on the NELPG locomotives at Deviation shed, Grosmont until ill health intervened earlier this year.

Chris was also the Group's Archivist, an important role collecting and safeguarding all sorts of material pertaining to the Group's 60-year history; the archive is jointly held in the National Railway Museum at York, and the NYMR Archive at Pickering, where Chris had a very positive professional relationship with archivist Carole Hardwick.

Chris was a regular contributor to NELPG NEWS and was a long-standing and influential member of the Group's Financial Strategy Committee.

This is only a brief summary of Chris's achievements but, significantly, he also owned the NER Old Gentleman's Saloon of the original Railway Children film fame, and when it was used on special occasions he would proudly dress up as the Old Gentleman!

Chris will be sadly missed by very many people, especially those involved in NER history, and those who had known him for over 60 years. He was a true gentleman and a pleasure to know and work with.

He is survived by his wife Janice and children Malcolm, Hugh and Henrietta. The funeral was held in York on 17th August.



LETTERS

I was saddened to hear of the passing of Chris Lawson last week.

Because I live abroad, my contact with the men, women and machines of the NELPG has been limited but I was fortunate to meet Chris on a few occasions and also exchanged messages for his Archive Corner in the News. He was always so friendly and welcoming – a true gentleman.

It has to be said that he represented the society so well for so many years and we all owe so much to him and the stalwarts who had the vision in the first place and to the current Trustees, Board Members and the engineering staff - without their combined efforts it would all be just a memory.

Thanks, Chris – it was good to have known you.

Alan Grange

Member L67

Sierra Madre

CA 91025

Dear Dave,

I was extremely shocked yesterday evening to learn about the passing of Chris Lawson. I have been a member of the NELPG for over 30 years now, and a Patron since the scheme's inception, and I'm only too aware through the News of the massive contribution Chris has made to the Group throughout its lifetime. I live in the North West, and infrequently travel over to the North East, so I'm not really known to most Group members. I have corresponded with Chris occasionally in his more recent role of Archivist, but I only met him in person at that memorable NELPG day last year at Kirkby Stephen East. I found him to be a true gentleman.

My wife Elaine and I had the pleasure of riding with him in his beautifully restored Old Gentleman's Saloon, and I was actually stunned to see us both feature on the photograph you used in yesterday's announcement! Elaine is in blue, third from the right, and I'm to her left as you look at the image.

I've been on a few patron events over the years, but I'm unable to 'step up to the plate' with an offer of practical assistance, as my existing voluntary role keeps me very busy in retirement; I volunteer for The Stephenson Locomotive Society as their General Secretary, a role which I have held for the past 8 years now, and which sometimes makes me feel I'm back at the office chained to a desk again! But I'm sure many of you have similar experiences!

I do wish the Group the very best of luck in filling the hole left by Chris' passing; he will be very sadly missed.

Kind regards

Ted Buckley

Ribble Valley, Lancashire

Good morning, John,

I have just heard the sad news about Chris Lawson. My sincere condolences to you and everyone who knew him. I was fortunate to meet Chris in 2018 when we did the big article on the J27 to mark its return from overhaul - scary to think it's now most of the way through its 10-year ticket. Chris was a huge help and I will forever be indebted to him.

Would it be possible to have a short obituary from him please? We'd like to honour his legacy in the next edition, if possible.

Thank you very much.

All the very best,

Thomas Bright

Deputy Editor,
Steam Railway Magazine



ARCHIVE CORNER

Following the sad loss of Chris, we will be looking for a new Archivist, so if any member would like to take on this important role, please let the Chairman know. In the meantime, matters concerning the Archive should be directed to John Hunt.



NELPG DIAMOND JUBILEE

Members' Diamond Jubilee dining special
Saturday 17th October depart Grosmont 12.35, with P3 2392

Weekend of Saturday 24th & Sunday 25th October
It is planned that P3 2392 will be in service on both days

A Marriage of Convenience Saturday 24th October

An illustrated lecture by John Hunt to kick off NELPG's Diamond Jubilee year. In the mid-1960s the NELPG had two main line steam locomotives but nowhere to run them, and

the NYMR had a railway with no suitable locomotives to run trains. Hence a ‘marriage of convenience’ that endures to this day. The show depicts significant events in the NELPG’s history and the close ties and events on the NYMR, with plenty of historical pictures, especially of the people involved, so lots of local interest.

The show is being held in the Kirk Theatre in Pickering, starting at 19.30, with an interval, and finishing by 22.00. Tickets are £15 and to book, please call the box office on 01751 474833. Any profit will go towards the ongoing maintenance of the NELPG’s locomotives.

Diamond Jubilee meeting Wednesday 28th October

The Group’s inaugural meeting was held in the large, upstairs room in the Bridge Hotel, Newcastle on 28th October 1966. We will gather there again on 28th October 2026 from 14.00 onwards to delve into rampant nostalgia with friends old and new, no doubt washed down by some amber nectar! Entrance is FREE but you have to buy your own refreshments! The Bridge Hotel is located between the Castle Keep and Stephenson’s High Level Bridge over the River Tyne.

Sales Jottings

Work continues on putting together NELPG’s sales strategy covering what we sell, how we sell and the financial rules covering how much stock we can afford to hold and how much we can afford to invest in stocks so we build up a worthwhile contribution from NELPG Sales towards the upkeep of our locomotives in the future.

The first decision to report is that from 2027 all members staffing sales stands should wear an item of clothing that tells the world they are NELPG staff. Initially we thought of Tee or Polo shirts, but these are temperature sensitive (too hot and they look sweaty, too cold and sweaters or jackets go over them).

Would some sort of tabard (think hi-vis with two pockets) be more acceptable and less likely to be discarded? Please let me know what you think at john.carr@nelpg.org.uk / 07941 039222.

Second, an apology. As Peter spotted, the wrong mug illustration crept into my piece in NELPG News 353. It should have been the Q6 mug design that was illustrated (see below).



But never let an error stand in the way of an opportunity! We would like to know whether members (and the general public) would purchase sets of four mugs – one for each locomotive – or prefer to buy individually? Please e-mail me at john.carr@nelpg.org.uk.

Now, the sale of locomotive parts: we anticipate having ample supplies of boiler tubes from which to make desk tidies (probably from all four locos) and perhaps some other small parts that would make suitable ornaments or souvenirs. Rob Nolan is identifying sources. If any member fancies producing desk tidies with wooden or plastic mounts, please get in touch with me at john.carr@nelpg.org.uk / 07941 039222. This could be a task to while away those long winter evenings!

Another task for those handy with wood and perspex is to produce display cases for small items such as badges, keyrings and fridge magnets. This is both to keep the stand tidy and also to for ease of transport, keeping small items in separate compartments rather than unpacking them before each sales session then packing them up again when the event is over. I envisage that each unit (we would also use them at Deviation Shed and other sites) might be around 2 feet by 1 foot. For units in sheds and workshops we might also consider larger units to keep items such as booklets, tea-towels etc. clean. Again, this is an idea I am ‘putting out there’ hoping that members not currently actively volunteering will want to apply their design and construction skills to helping NELPG. Please contact me at john.carr@nelpg.org.uk / 07941 039222.

Northern Steam Engineering Ltd. have approached Dave Pennock with a rather attractive design for an NELPG keyring, below. We are putting two suggestions to NSEL with an invitation to quote. First that words such as ‘since 1966’ might be added to the keyrings.



Second, we might produce replica works plates for each of our locomotives. Would sets of four be of interest as NELPG souvenirs? Again, please let me know at: john.carr@nelpg.org.uk / 07941 039222.

We have decided not to hold stocks of NELPG clothing items. Instead, we have decided to advertise clothing three or four times each year so that members can order the items they want. This is because experience in the past and for other heritage organisations shows clothing items are relatively slow to turn over. We shall of course continue to produce clothing such as the 'works plate' design shown here, usually in a range of colours.



Thanks for reading and for helping with our NELPG market research. I hope we can welcome a good number of new helpers to the NELPG Sales Team.

Limited Edition Bottled Beer

In collaboration with the North Riding Brewery, based in Snainton, near Scarborough, a Diamond Jubilee limited edition of four bottled beers will be made available this autumn. This will comprise P3 Porter, Q6 Quencher, K1 Stout and J72 Pale Ale. Each bottle will have a picture of the respective locomotive, together with the Diamond Jubilee logo, and details of the actual beer. Presented in a cardboard gift pack, each set of four will sell at £20. As it's impractical to retail these by post, they will only be available from the Goathland beer festival during the NYMR steam gala between 24th and 27th September, on our members' luncheon special on 17th October and at the 60th anniversary meeting in the Bridge Hotel, Newcastle. To help with ascertaining the likely demand, please e-mail the Chairman as soon as possible if you require a gift pack.



STILL WANTED – MINUTES SECRETARY

This role can be undertaken anywhere in the country, or even the world. All meetings are held using Microsoft Teams which automatically produces a transcript and a recording of what was said to aid production of the actual minutes.

The main duties are to produce agendas, set up the meeting under Teams and then produce and distribute the minutes. A working knowledge of the naming of common locomotive

parts would be useful, mainly because Microsoft Teams lacks such knowledge and can give interesting interpretations of what has been said as a result!

You will feel that you are at the heart of NELPG and making a real contribution to the Group's continuing success. For more detail, have a chat with retiring Minutes Secretary Paul Jameson on 01684 541458.



BOARD CHANGES

Resigning from the NELPG Board is long standing servant, Ian Storey, though he will remain as Assistant CME. In doing so, we must express our deep gratitude to Ian for his long service and wise counsel during his tenure on the Board.

Although we lose Ian, we have gained two new, younger members of the Board, Rob Morgan and Chris Williams. Both have been assisting Paul Hutchinson with the overhaul of the K1 at Carnforth, and both have experience working for the NYMR. Hopefully, they have answered the oft repeated plea through the pages of the NEWS for younger volunteers to assist the Board in its deliberations and succession planning, so welcome on board.



PATRON UPDATE AND FINANCIAL STRATEGY REPORT

by Dave Pennock

Financial Strategy Committee (FSC)

The monitoring of cash flows and looking ahead continues to be the main task of the Financial Strategy Committee (FSC). On the upside has been the receipt of substantive legacies as noted in the June News but the hoped-for upturn in locomotive earnings in 2026 has been affected by the unwelcome Q6 and J27 firebox repairs and that at the 22nd July Board meeting the K1 completion was noted and accepted for a return to traffic in Spring 2027. At the time of writing the J27 is once again operational and can bring in hire income. For the Q6 and K1 we will have to wait somewhat longer.

Our current cash holdings and future financial outlook can withstand this low level of hire earnings but the locomotive overhaul pot is necessarily diminished. In the background is the potential boiler certification extension for the J27 which if granted will secure hire income in

2027 and 2028. Richard Wheeler usefully monitors and maximises the interest we can earn on our cash moving funds as required between deposit accounts.

It is so sad, as this issue closed for press, to hear of Chris Lawson's death on 25th July. Earlier in July because of his failing health Chris formally stood down from the FSC and it is opportune to wholeheartedly record a thank you to Chris for his input into the work of the FSC since its inception over 15 years ago.

Chris helped the FSC on many fronts from his past business experience and he has enabled Patron visits to, for example Fylingdales and the Stainmore Railway. Recently at Stainmore, Chris made available his NER Gentleman's Saloon to give us all a pure 'North Eastern' ride hauled by the P3 / J27. Chris in his inimitable way always proofread the FSC copy for NELPG News and through his eagle eyes often caught typos and improved my grammatical form within the narrative. Equally we will miss the regular hosting by Chris of the FSC meetings and the chocolate biscuits on that were always on offer.

There remains a strong need within our charity to monitor what the business end of NELPG looks like and, as the FSC, we need new participants to join the committee to be sustainable. Our next meeting is planned for early September in York. If this would be of interest, please contact Dave Pennock email dave.pennock@nelpg.org.uk or telephone 07969 691155.

Patron Visits

In the June NEWS it was hoped to arrange a second 2026 Patron event in October 2026 in and around our locomotives in the NYMR. Because of the uncertainty of our locomotive availabilities and the difficulty of nailing a specific date the next Parton visit will now be sought in Spring 2027.

Gift Aid

The 2025 Gift Aid claim with HMRC was submitted and settled in June 2026. The total benefit to NELPG amounted to £9,829 of which £6,668 arose from Patron member incomes and £3,161 from membership fees and other donations. The claim of Gift Aid allows NELPG, as charity, to reclaim 25% as a taxable benefit from eligible membership fees, Patron income, and general donations. In 2025 for example we were able to claim 25% of the donations given during the Rail 200 exhibition at Hoptown.

Railwayana Sales – Fundraising

As a reminder, railwayana can be offered to NELPG for the Group to function as an agent for its sale and the cash raised, if donated, is eligible for Gift Aid. If you could usefully declutter and have railwayana, perhaps stored on your loft or garage which could be sold to raise funds for NELPG we would be pleased to hear from you. Colin Foxton is the contact point for donating railwayana and he can be contacted via email at colin.foxton@nelpg.org.uk or by telephone 07976 689762.

As a target for 2026 please can you contact Colin by 30th September so we can organise a submission to an auction house during the Autumn period.



NORTH EASTERN LOCOMOTIVE PRESERVATION GROUP

DIAMOND JUBILEE LUNCHEON

Saturday 17th October 2026

AT THE TABLE

A Selection of Artisan Bread & Butter

STARTERS

Chef's Homemade Carrot & Coriander Soup (v)

Game Terrine

Served with Port-soaked Blackberries, Soda Bread

Baked Field Mushroom (v)

With Garlic, Walnuts & Blue Cheese Rarebit

MAINS

Roast Topside of Beef

Yorkshire Pudding & Rich Red Wine Gravy

Baked Cod Loin

Wrapped in Parma Ham served with Ratatouille

Vegetable & Lentil Cottage Pie (v)

Topped with Sweet Potato & Cheese

Served with Seasonal Vegetables & Potatoes

DESSERTS

Tiramisu Cheesecake

Amaretto Biscuit

Apple Strudel

Served with Custard

Selection of Cheese & Biscuits

Served with Celery, Grapes & Chutney

TO FINISH

Tea or Coffee served with Handmade Chocolates

NELPG DIAMOND JUBILEE LUNCHEON TRAIN

SATURDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2026

The annual members' luncheon train is planned for Saturday 17th October, departing Grosmont at 12.35 and returning there by 15.25. All being well it will be hauled by P3 2392.

Cost this year is £55 per person and bookings are being taken by Colin Foxton using the form enclosed with this edition of the NEWS.

The carriage layout will be different than in previous years, as carriage Opal is being withdrawn and Car 79 is entering service in its place. However, there will still be a brake carriage, with 28 seats, for those wanting to travel without eating.



The diner locomotive will hopefully be 2392, seen here running round its train at Bolton Abbey on 2nd August (John Hunt)

NEW REVAMPED 50TH ANNIVERSARY NYMR DVD ON AID OF THE NELPG

A new revamped version has just been released which include more recent footage on the NYMR. It's a Special 4-pack DVD which goes back to the beginnings from 1969, to the Royal Opening in 1973, followed by the incredible progress to the present day.

EXPERIENCE THE HISTORIC North Yorkshire Moors Railway Re-live the first 50 Golden Years

from Pickering to Grosmont, 4 disc Special Pack Galas, Events , 60+ locomotives, all the Best Action makes a fantastic gift for any enthusiast !

- Discs 1 & 2 are action packed, great lineside shots, atmospheric shed scenes, recreating how it was in the heydays, with many footplate rides on various locomotives. Over 60 locos on view, including the NELPG fleet, together with interviews with many staff members
- Disc 3 – Locomotives in detail from 2009 to 2022, all in great action along the line
- Disc 4 – Events, Vintage Vehicle & Wartime Weekends – all the best highlights

The 4-disc DVD is £25, including postage & packing

As an alternative, why not try the two Memory Stick Package, which is £27 including postage & packing.

Please HELP the NELPG and get a copy today; orders to Ian Wolstencroft. 55 Kirklands Road, Hull, HU5 5AX. If you pay by cheque, please make cheques payable to Ian Wolstencroft. Copies will be sent asap and proceeds to the NELPG will amount to £10 per copy, so an excellent way to support the NELPG!



63395 passes Kidstye in Newtondale on it's penultimate day in service (Paul Jameson)



Neal Woods and boilermiths Andy Harper and son Jack Harper next to the J72's boiler on the occasion of Dave's visit to NSEL on 23rd June (Dave Pennock)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NELPG Social Meetings

None.

Other NELPG events

August

19 – NELPG Board meeting – Teams (7.30pm).

Board and Locomotive Sub-Committee meetings are subject to short notice change, so members wishing to participate in any meeting should contact the Group's Secretary (colin.foxton@nelpg.org.uk), to confirm the date and link details.

Hopetown – Heritage (1861)

A combination of open weekends, live steam rides. The first full weekend of every month access is open through the museum to the A1 trust building & 1861 building with NELPG and DRPS to see what each Group is currently working on. 1861 will also be open during the Steam ride days. <https://www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk/plan-your-visit/heritage/>

Steam rides on Hopetown Heritage Railway

Various dates through August, September and October, featuring, LSWR No. 1520 carriage, hauled by Andrew Barclay Works No. 2134, Locomotion No. 1 and Tornado. <https://www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk/plan-your-visit/heritage/steam-rides/>

Hopetown, Darlington

Free entry (a ticket is required) Prebooking online advised. Some exhibitions, events and activities carry a separate charge. McNay Street, Darlington, DL3 6SW. Skerne Bridge Car Park, Darlington, DL1 1LG. Opening times Term time Tuesday to Sunday 10am-4pm, School holidays Monday to Sunday 10am-4pm. Last entry 3pm. www.hopetowndarlington.co.uk

NYMR

September

12th – 20th Sept 2026: Heritage Open Days. <https://www.nymr.co.uk/tickets-experiences/whats-on/heritage-open-days/>

24th – 27th Sept 2026: Annual Steam Gala. Featuring: No. 60007 Sir Nigel Gresley, No. 563 T3 Class, No. 4079 Pendennis Castle, Up to 8 home-fleet steam locomotives, Goathland Station Beer Festival, Multi-day Hop-on Hop-off tickets. <https://www.nymr.co.uk/tickets-experiences/whats-on/annual-steam-gala/>

NRM York

Open 7 days a week, 10.00–17.00, except 24 – 26 December. Note: Station Hall and Great Hall each have separate entrances. Check website for details during reconstruction of the Great

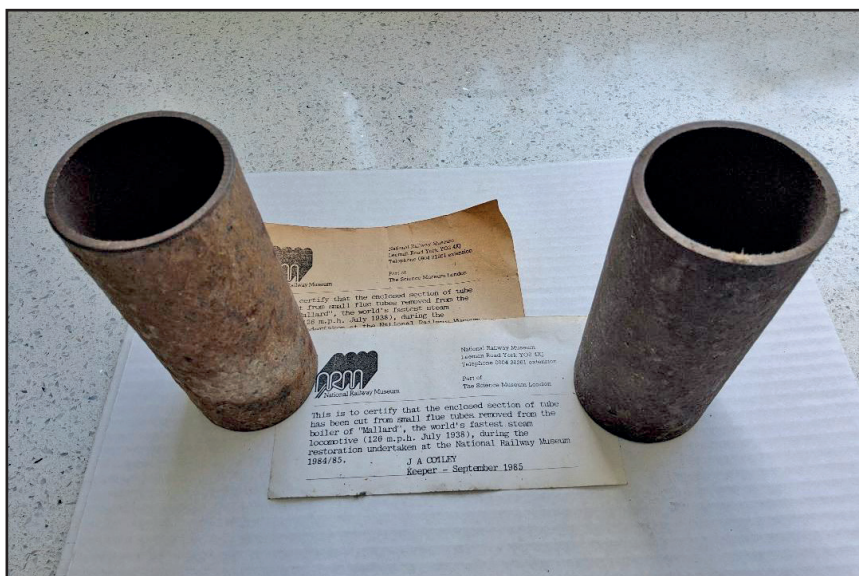
Hall. Prebooking tickets online recommended but not essential. <https://www.railwaymuseum.org.uk/>

NRM Locomotion

Open 7 days a week, 10.00–17.00 (winter 16.00), except 24 – 26 December. Prebooked tickets not required. Go to www.locomotion.org.uk

Stainmore Railway

Open to the public on Sundays from 10am to 4pm. <https://www.kirkbystepheneast.co.uk/>



Offers are invited for these two sections of boiler tubes from Mallard in the attached illustration. Judy Sarney gave these to be sold to raise funds for the Group. They are unrestored, in the state in which they were removed from the boiler, and as you can see, they have certificates of authenticity from John Cooley, the then Keeper of the NRM. Offers to our Treasurer, Richard Wheeler.

COPY DATE NELPG NEWS

The copy date for the October 2026 issue of NELPG NEWS is
Friday 18th September 2026.

