

# NBL Preservation Group

Honorary President Sir Hugh Reid

## February 2011 Newsletter



### A NEW CHAPTER

With the continued expansion of our preservation activities it has become necessary to formalise the status of our Group and I am delighted to announce that we have now achieved incorporation as a Private Limited Company. Our official new title is now the 'NBL Preservation Group Limited'. We are registered in England & Wales as a Company Limited by Guarantee and our Company Registration Number is 7508287.

Having said that, I would like to assure all Members and Supporters that our objectives remain exactly as stated on our website and that we remain a Not for Profit Organisation. Our new status is simply to provide financial protection for our Members and Officers should some unforeseen eventuality occur. As before, all funding and donations received will go directly towards the acquisition and upkeep of our locomotives and of course, to cover the costs of running the Group.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our Members & Friends for their wonderful support over the years and we look forward to every success in the future.

(Photo Malcolm Peakman)

**BEECHES VISIT**

Adrian Shooter, Chairman of Chiltern Railways has kindly invited NBLPG Members & Friends to an operating day on his Beeches Light Railway which is situated between Oxford and Banbury. This is a 2'0" gauge private line famous for being the current home of ex Darjeeling & Himalayas, Sharp Stewart 'B' Class 0-4-0ST No. 19.

This magnificent little loco started life in Glasgow in 1889 as Sharp Stewart Works No. 3518 and spent the next 70 years slogging it out on the steep gradients of the DHR. Although allocated All India running number 778, it was withdrawn from service in 1960 without actually being renumbered in the new series. After two years in store it was fortunately purchased for preservation by an American businessman and it spent the next 40 years in the USA.

Mr. Shooter acquired the engine in 2002 and had it rebuilt and restored to operating condition at Tyseley Locomotive Works near Birmingham. Although normally based at the Beeches Light Railway, it has also visited the Ffestiniog and Leighton Buzzard Railways in recent years. No. 19 will be in steam and working trains for our visit which has been arranged for Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2011. (The early May Bank Holiday Weekend)

Operating entirely within the grounds of Mr. Shooters' home, construction of the Beeches Light Railway commenced in 2002 and it features a replica DHR station and maximum gradient of 1 in 20. There are a number of authentic cameo scenes representing the DHR and two Darjeeling pattern passenger coaches have been built for the line by Boston Lodge Works.

If you would like to join us on this rare opportunity to visit the line and be steam hauled by a 122 years old veteran Sharp Stewart locomotive, please let me know if possible by the first week in March. Numbers will be limited and an entrance fee of £25 per head will be due. This bargain price includes a trip on the train and a Barbeque on the day. NBLPG Membership is not essential, I hope very much that you can join us.

**(Photo Tony Streeter)**

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**BLEAK FUTURE FOR SA STEAM** - Extract from the Cape Town Sunday Argus – 30 January 2011:



“South Africa’s rail tourism is in a shambles,” writes Leila Samodien, “and some of its most historic steam locomotives are in danger of ending up as scrap metal. The Transnet Foundation is believed to own about 200 old steam locos (many of NBL origin), but most are deteriorating at sidings across the country. “Rail tourism took a knock last year when the Outeniqua Choo-Tjoe, which ran between George and Mossel Bay, shut down. Soon afterwards, the Apple Express in Port Elizabeth also closed because of a lack of funding.

“Now, steam locomotives such as the Red Devil could be scrapped as part of Transnet’s strategy to dispose of some of its assets. ‘Transnet has listed all its heritage assets and is making preparations to get rid of them,’ says Chris Janisch, chairman of the Heritage Railway Association of Southern Africa. While some might be bought by enthusiasts, the locos were likely to be sold at market value, which meant that scrappers would get the bulk of them. Those that Transnet held onto faced an uncertain future, he said. The photo above shows serviceable Transnet steam locos led by NBL 19D 4-8-2 No. 3324 stored at Voorbaai shed in February 2011 with little prospect of further work. **(Photo KL)**

“Transnet Foundation spokeswoman Thandi Mlangeni said the SA Heritage Resource Agency (SAHRA) was identifying Transnet’s heritage locomotives before ‘disposal and preservation of heritage assets’ went ahead. She added that Transnet’s main-lines were predominantly used for its’ core business, freight rail. Any other requests were secondary. Rail enthusiasts and steam clubs in Cape Town, Germiston, Durban, Pretoria and Creighton in KwaZulu-Natal say they can do little more than watch over some of the foundation’s locomotives as they fall into disrepair. “Ian Pretorius, director of the private vintage steam train operator Atlantic Rail, which houses the Red Devil at Cape Town station, said that despite their efforts, the engine had been stripped of copper pipes and Atlantic Rail had to remove some parts to prevent further theft.

“Pretorius said most of the steam trains still in operation were privately owned, and were run at a huge cost because of high coal prices, as well as pilot and rail fees. ‘If these assets are left to rust, and then go out on tender, the scrap merchants will win and our railway heritage will be lost and turned into cars or tin cans. This is the reality of the situation that faces us all in railway preservation in South Africa.’”

## DUNROBIN COMING HOME

Another famous Glasgow-built steam locomotive currently in the news is the former Duke of Sutherland's private engine 'Dunrobin'. This historic engine was built at Atlas Works in 1895 and carries Sharp Stewart Works Number 4085. The following information comes from the Beamish Museum website : [www.beamish.org.uk/beamish-buys-dunrobin](http://www.beamish.org.uk/beamish-buys-dunrobin)

**BEAMISH Museum is excited to announce the purchase of Sharp Stewart 0-4-4T Steam Loco, 'Dunrobin' and its private saloon, No. 58A from the Canadian Heritage Museum at Fort Steele.**



Built by Sharp Stewart in 1895 for the Duke of Sutherland it was used to pull his private train at Dunrobin Castle in Scotland up until around 1920. After being placed on display in 1950 the loco and carriage were then exported to Canada in 1965 by a businessman and later ended up at Fort Steele (a Canadian Beamish), remaining in operation until 2005.

Deemed surplus to requirements, negotiations between Beamish and the Friends of Fort Steele have been underway for over 12 months and a firm offer was accepted in December 2010. The boiler needs to be stripped of asbestos before coming to Beamish, most likely in spring 2011. It is planned to overhaul it and use it at the Museum's Rowley Station.

Dunrobin has carried at least four kings (Edward VII, George V, George VI, King Alfonso of Spain and the Kaiser Wilhelm II) and numerous other historic dignitaries (including Winston Churchill) in its cab. Museum director Richard Evans said, 'We are absolutely thrilled to have 'Dunrobin' come to Britain, the locomotive has rich connections to British history and will be a cherished addition to the Museum.'

To find out more about the purchase of Dunrobin and all the latest Beamish transport news, please visit the Beamish Transport Museum Blogspot : [www.beamishtransport.blogspot.com](http://www.beamishtransport.blogspot.com)

**NB NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Author's Request :**

(above photos courtesy [www.colour-rail.com](http://www.colour-rail.com))

George O'Hara, a consultant engineer who has published several books on the railways of Scotland and on post war River Clyde Shipbuilding, is trying to locate black and white photographs of NBL built diesel locomotives, either in static "ex-works" condition in Glasgow, or also in transit (but still in Scotland), to the Western, and Eastern Regions of British Railways, circa 1957-1962.

This is to provide additional material for a sequel to his most recent book "BR Diesel Traction in Scotland", which is a profusely illustrated photographic album, which depicts among the 697 illustrations in the book, about eighty photographs of NBL Class 21 & 29 DE Bo-Bo, and 0-4-0 DH Shunting locomotives in operation on the former Scottish Region of British Railways.

If you are able to help with this request, please contact George direct at : [geocohara@googlemail.com](mailto:geocohara@googlemail.com)

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**Progress at the Mizens :**

In readiness for the arrival of our Dubs Tank loco, Mike Smith's team have made good progress at the Mizens Railway near Woking, clearing the ground for 3'6" track to be laid. A locomotive shed for the Dubs will eventually be built in front of the trees in the distance. The wooden replica Sharp Stewart 2-2-2 locomotive has been removed from the site and now awaits its' final demise.

Work parties are due to take place on Sundays during March and volunteers are urgently needed. Please contact Ken as soon as possible please if you are able to help with this. Many hands will make light work !



**Thank you all once again for your continued support, More News Next Month, Best Regards, Ken**

**MEMBERSHIP & INFORMATION**

If you would like to comment on our preservation activities or would like further information on any of our projects, please contact Ken or our Webmaster Steve Knapman by letter or by e:mail. Photos and articles for our website should be sent to : [steve.k@rubihorn.demon.co.uk](mailto:steve.k@rubihorn.demon.co.uk)

New Members and Supporters are always welcome and funds are urgently needed for all our projects. Please join us and help to preserve North British locomotives from around the World. Our Website Address is : [www.nbloco.net](http://www.nbloco.net)

Remember, **there is no annual Membership Fee**, just a one-off joining fee of £10 which will give you regular news updates and the option to participate in our locomotive preservation projects.

If you would like to join us or make a donation, please complete the form below and send it to : Ken Livermore, Hon. Secretary, NBL Preservation Group, 4 Porchfield Close, Earley, Reading, Berks, RG6 5YZ. e:mail : [ken.livermore@btinternet.com](mailto:ken.livermore@btinternet.com)

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**NORTH BRITISH LOCOMOTIVE PRESERVATION GROUP  
HON. PRESIDENT SIR HUGH REID**

**MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM**

NAME :

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ADDRESS :

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TELEPHONE NUMBER :

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E:MAIL ADDRESS :

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ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP JOINING FEE (OPTIONAL) : £10

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DONATION TO DUBS TANK No. 133 SHIPPING FUND : £

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DONATION TO CLASS 11 No. 929 RESTORATION FUND : £

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DONATION TO NGR CLASS 1B No. 1443 LOCO FUND : £

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INTEREST FREE LOAN TO ANY OF THE ABOVE PROJECTS : £

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TOTAL ENCLOSED : £

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**All donations, loans and subscriptions will be acknowledged, thank you for your interest and support. Please make cheques or orders payable to 'NBL Preservation Group'**