

NBL Preservation Group

September 2013 Newsletter



NZ LOCO IN NEW DANGER

(Photo JM Creber)

In late August the New Zealand based 'Taranaki Daily News' reported that the Society restoring North British NZR 4-6-2 No. Ab745 were shutting up shop and that the loco was being offered free to a good home. This is a bitter blow as the locomotive in question, NBL 22880 has a chequered history and its survival to date has been little short of miraculous.

One of 85 Ab Class Pacific's supplied to New Zealand Railways by North British between 1922 and 1925, No. Ab745 led a relatively normal life with its sister engines hauling passenger such trains as the Taranaki Flyer between Wanganui and New Plymouth. All this changed however in July 1956 when the loco was involved in a wash-away derailment just south of Hawera while hauling a full load of freight and plummeted 50 feet down an embankment !

Fortunately both the crew survived but the locomotive was regarded as being too expensive to recover and it remained in situ, built into the embankment at Hawera for more than 40 years. The engine lay undisturbed until November 2001 when salvage work began after 46 years underground. The raised wreck minus tender was taken to Waitara for evaluation. In 2007, The Taranaki Flyer Society was formed and AB745 was transported to a new home at the old railway goods shed at Stratford, where it was being restored.

The blow to restoration hopes came when Stratford District Council decided to sell the building and told the society they had to be out by Christmas. Some further notes featuring the Ab Class Pacifics and more photos of No. 745 follow on page 2 of this Newsletter. The full Taranaki Daily News story can be found on :

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/taranaki-daily-news/news/9094474/Steam-locomotive-free-to-a-good-home>



The design of the NZR Ab Class Pacifics can be traced back to the A Class which was introduced in 1906. A total of 141 Ab's were built by three different builders between 1915 and 1927 making them the largest class of steam locomotives ever to operate in New Zealand. An additional ten were rebuilt from the tank version of the Ab's – the Wab Class, between 1947 and 1957. The North British total of 85 locomotives included two built to replace engines lost on the ss Wiltshire when it was wrecked off the New Zealand coast in 1922. Ab 718 (NBL 22848) is seen above leading a Classmate on the Fairlie Branch farewell tour in March 1968.

One of the most stylish and elegant of the NZR steam classes, the Ab's were popular with their crews and no less than seven (including No. 745) have been preserved. The two NB locos lost on the Wiltshire, Nos 22878/ 79 are also believed to still exist in their watery grave. After No. 745 was derailed, the loco was purchased from NZR for just \$1 by Mr. Tony Batchelor on the basis that it would eventually be salvaged. In 2001 he was project manager in charge of the rescue and the loco was successfully retrieved from the site of the washout. Tony has kindly allowed us to use these photos of the operation.



Full details of the Ab Class can be found on : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NZR_AB_class and further information about the group who have been restoring the loco, the Taranaki Flyer Society can be found on : <http://thetaranakiflyersocietyinc.weebly.com/ab745-photos.html> It is hoped that another organisation will now take on the challenge and new home can be found in time to save this fine loco from scrap. Although our funds are committed to existing projects, NBLPG will be happy to help in any way we can.



Mizens Volunteers Glenn Sizmur and Liam Grant were the first to try out our new cab floor when it was fitted on 20th August. A set of steps have also been made and fitted so the cab is now ready to receive visitors ! Why not come along and have your photo taken on the ‘footplate’ of a LNER ‘Footballer’ – all we ask for is a £1 donation towards the cost of sandblasting and repainting our tender. As you can see, there are many years of rust and grime waiting to be removed !

The first two photos below show the new access steps and the current display of replica plates in the cab. (made by Mr. John Cowlshaw) The cab floor itself isn't a very exciting item to photograph so the third photo shows the current drivers eye view over the tender door illustrating part of the floor in the bottom corner. As you can see, we've extended the timber floor right up to the coal space on the tender (instead of fitting the usual fall plate) - this is to make sure that none of our visitors run into problems with the gap between the cab and the tender !



Don't forget that anyone buying a Share in No. 61662 or making a donation of £10 or more by the end of September will be entered into a draw to win the latest Hornby model of the loco. The name of the winner will be drawn at our next Committee Meeting on Thursday 3rd October so please keep the funds coming in, we can't continue to make good progress without your support.

Our 61662 Facebook page is proving very popular and is being updated with new photos and information almost every week. It can be accessed at : <https://www.facebook.com/Engine61662ManchesterUnited> - or by clicking on the Facebook link on our website : www.engine61662appeal.co.uk



In 1882, the London & South Western Railway ordered a total of 71 4-4-2 tank locomotives from several British suppliers. Dubs & Co built 20 of the new locos, Neilson built 11 and the balance came from Beyer Peacock and Robert Stephenson. Originally designed for suburban duties, they were soon displaced to the branch lines by the arrival of the M7 Class 0-4-4T's and most were withdrawn by the end of World War 1.

However, two of the remaining 'Adams Radials' as they came to be known, found long term employment on the tightly curved Lyme Regis branch running through picturesque scenery on the Devon and Dorset border. They outlived most of their Classmates by more than 40 years and even more surprisingly, when a spare loco was needed in 1946, the last remaining Radial, which had been found dumped on the East Kent Railway, was purchased and overhauled for use on the branch ! This was none other than LSWR No. 488 which had been sold out of service to the Ministry of Munitions in 1917 and later sold on to the EKR.

A Neilson loco dating from 1885, No. 488 obviously had a charmed life as, after withdrawal in 1961, it was bought for the fledgling Bluebell Railway where it is still preserved today. Whilst running as BR No. 30583, the loco is delightfully captured above approaching the branch terminus at Lyme Regis in June 1959.



The last Dubs Radial in service was No. 30584 (LSWR No. 520) which is seen above in the Lyme Regis bay platform at Axminster in May 1960 and later the same day running into the only intermediate branch station on the line at Combyne. For further info please see : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LSWR_415_class



Although regular working steam on Transnet ended more than 20 years ago, several hundred steam locomotives remain stored out of use. The majority of these engines are of British, and in particular North British manufacture and the future for many of them is in doubt. Steam in Action was started some years ago in order to draw attention to the many difficulties steam preservation and steam tourism organisations have to deal with in South Africa and to co-ordinate approaches to Transnet. We would like to highlight their efforts and draw attention to the imminent crisis facing steam in the country. Membership of SIA is free and if you are concerned about the fate of steam in South Africa we strenuously suggest that you join them. Our photo shows one of the luckier SAR locomotives, our old friend North British Class 11 2-8-2 No. 929 which is currently being carefully restored by the experienced Sandstone team at Bloemfontein. Many other engines will not be so lucky. The following information has been taken from the SIA website.

Our intervention has resulted in a large number of locomotives being saved from the scrap heap. It has certainly been a much greater success than initially expected and it shows there are many people out there who are dedicated to ensuring that South Africa's magnificent rail and steam heritage survives into the future. We have therefore decided to raise our profile once again and to put pressure on the authorities to take their moral responsibilities, with regard to South Africa's Railway and related heritage much more seriously.

In order to be effective we need to be seen to be broadly based and in that regard we invite you to join Steam in Action so that you can monitor some of the work that we are doing and hopefully intervene on our behalf if you read about something that really concerns you. Membership is free and it's easy to join via our website link : <http://www.steam-in-action.com> Please take a moment to read our manifesto.

Our web site is being updated weekly and activities on the ground are being reported on to the best of our ability. You can contact us anytime on : info@steam-in-action.com

**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 our Secretary Ken Livermore 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

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

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**. For further details, please e:mail : ken.livermore@btinternet.com

**NORTH BRITISH LOCOMOTIVE PRESERVATION GROUP
A NOT FOR PROFIT ORGANISATION**

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

NAME :

ADDRESS :

TELEPHONE NUMBER :

E:MAIL ADDRESS :

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP JOINING FEE (Optional) : £10

DONATION TO DUBS TANK No. 196 RESTORATION FUND : £

DONATION TO HENDRIE CLASS 1 4-8-0 SHIPPING FUND : £

DONATION TO LNER TENDER RESTORATION FUND : £

SHARES IN ENGINE 61662 (AT £25 PER SHARE) : £

TOTAL ENCLOSED : £

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

****Please make Cheques for Shares in Engine 61662 payable to ‘Engine 61662 Appeal’ thank you.**