

# NBL Preservation Group

Honorary President Professor Dugald Cameron OBE

## April 2015 Newsletter



### 8F PROGRESS

(Photo courtesy 45170 Appeal)

The cosmetic restoration of ex Turkish Railways NBL 8F 2-8-0 No. 45170 is well underway inside the Museum of Scottish Railways at Bo'ness and the loco is now looking a bit more loved. The 45170 Appeal have recently reported that their purchase and restoration fund has reached more than £37,000 and they have raised just over a third of the purchase cost. An interesting find under the cab floor during the restoration work was the original NBL boiler test plate – the loco was of course built in Springburn for the Ministry of Supply in 1941.

Abellio, the new ScotRail operators, have recently announced exciting plans to revitalise rail tourism and create a renewed attraction to rail travel by introducing steam trains on a number of routes across Scotland when it takes over the franchise in April this year. It will be the first time that that a major network operator has run steam trains in Scotland for almost 20 years and means that once restored, No. 45170 will have the opportunity to find regular employment on the National Network.

Abellio Group chief executive Jeff Hoogesteger said: “We are aware that the opportunity to experience rail travel by steam train is popular with people in Scotland and with tourists. With effective marketing we believe the steam train experience will increase visitor opportunities.’ If you would like further information about the restoration of this fine loco or details of how to make a donation, please visit the SRPS website [www.srpssteam.com](http://www.srpssteam.com) or go to <https://mydonate.bt.com/events/stanier8f/190986>

The main focus of our work parties this month has been laying out the sleepers to get them ready for the insertion of the rails. Our first picture shows the starting point with the sleepers laid out 'as delivered'.



Despite being a little short of manpower due to the Easter Holidays, our small team managed to get most of the sleepers lined up and the area for the rail joints levelled and ballasted.



Moving heavy concrete sleepers by hand was no easy task but by the middle of April a fairly straight line was beginning to emerge. We will bring in some lifting gear next month to manoeuvre the rails into place.



In other news, our Membership continues to grow and currently stands at 221. This has been helped by some positive publicity recently including an article in the 'Guildford Voice' which is delivered free to 10,000 households within a 5 mile radius of our site at the Mizens Railway. The number of hits on our website has risen to almost 21,000 and we now have 870 friends on Facebook !



Weighing in at more than 235 tons, the SAR Class 25 4-8-4 Condensers were the largest and most technically advanced steam locomotives ever to have been built in the UK. They were South Africa's final main line steam locomotives and were introduced to combat the difficulties experienced in obtaining adequate water supplies in arid regions such as the Karoo Desert between Touws River and De Aar.

The design work on the locomotive's condensing apparatus and the condensing tender was carried out by Henschel & Son who built one locomotive complete with tender in 1953. NBL then constructed a further 89 members of the Class as well as the first eleven of the '25NC' non-condensing versions. The condensing system proved to be extremely efficient and reduced water consumption by as much as 90% by using the same water up to eight times over, giving the Class 25 locomotives a range of more than 600 miles between water refills. The hot recycled feedwater also resulted in significantly reduced coal consumption.

As the exhaust steam was fed back to giant turbines in the tender, there was no exhaust beat like a conventional locomotive, instead the Class 25's emitted a loud whine in service, rather like a jet aircraft. With the gradual spread of electrification however, the water problems rescinded and most of the Class were rebuilt as 25NC's from the 1970's onwards. The last working condenser No 3511 at is seen below at Orange River on its final run on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1992. Nos. 3451 & 3511 survive in preservation.



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## DELHI DELIGHTS

(photos from Keith Fender & Adrian Shooter)



Amongst the list of more than 50 locomotive exhibits at India's New Delhi Railway Museum are no less than seven NBL & Constituent engines ranging from an 1870's built Sharp Stewart 0-6-0 through to early modern traction as represented by B-B Diesel Hydraulic No. 6002 (NBL 27507) as seen above.

Originally class 'DY', No. 6002 was among the first metre gauge main-line diesels in India, and is the last survivor of the batch of North British diesel locos supplied to the India Stores Department on Order L54 in 1955. They were originally used by Western Railway for goods haulage on lines where water supply for steam locos was problematic and some of the class worked into the late 1990s. Their original Paxman engines were replaced with Maybach type from 1975 onwards.

**Below :** Providing a graphic contrast in scale and gauge are 2ft gauge DHR 777 (Sharp Stewart 3517 of 1889) and 5ft 6ins gauge Great Indian Peninsular Railway 4-4-2 No EM 922 (NBL 17780 of 1907).



The National Railway Museum of India opened on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1977 and is located in Chanakyapuri, New Delhi. It is situated in more than 10 acres of land with both indoor and outdoor exhibits. A miniature train offers rides around that site on regular opening days. It is well worth a visit for any enthusiast and further details can be found on the website [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_Rail\\_Museum,\\_New\\_Delhi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Rail_Museum,_New_Delhi)



Thursday December 18<sup>th</sup> saw 27941 dismantled using a Hiab crane fitted lorry. Having undone every obvious nut and bolt plus many other bits and pieces, what should have been a relatively easy job turned out to be more difficult than envisaged. Yes, I forgot the air pipe that runs up through the rear fuel tank bearer that used to go to the whistle, but more problematic by virtue of the close fit between the bonnet frame and the length of formed angle iron that used as the mounting flange on the front plate of the cab, one bolt that had to have its head ground off on the right hand side, was sufficient to prevent the whole bonnet structure parting company without a fight.

After numerous attempts at lifting, slewing and packing, eventually finesse went out of the “window” and with the crane on the right hand side of the loco the bonnet was lifted by the left hand side and began to turn towards the lorry until the bonnet top sheet parted from the remnant of the bolt, whereupon the top vent panel and three doors also parted company at the same time.

Apart from a bit of minor persuasion, the engine lifted out without any difficulty, and was laid on its side to allow the sump to be removed and in due course the crankshaft. The final part of the lift was to remove the buffers, which will be replaced in due course with a set that are in better condition.

The next stage of the project, is to recover the cylinder block from the engine removed from the loco, followed by the crankshaft, pistons and connecting rods from the “A” type engine which will then be used to rebuild the loco engine along with a new set of cylinder liners.

In closing, it has to be added that the NBL manuals are not one of the world’s best publications, useful as a guide, but akin to another old saying, namely the bikini, very interesting, but does not reveal all the detail!

**We are very grateful to John for these accounts of his efforts to rebuild NBL Shunter 27941 and look forward to further instalments from him as the restoration progresses. Ed.**

(6)

## NZ RELOCATION

(photos courtesy Darryl Houston / Main Line Steam)



The New Zealand based Mainline Steam Heritage Trust are having to vacate their principal depot at Parnell as KiwiRail want to redevelop the site. Their stock list includes several North British steam locomotives including NZR 4-8-2's Nos. 1211 & 1275 and ex SAR 25NC 4-8-4 No. 3508. A short term home for some of the locos and equipment has been found Glenbrook Vintage Railway until a more permanent new base can be secured. Darryl Houston's superb photo shows NBL Ja No. 1275 preparing to leave the depot for the last time on 9<sup>th</sup> April.

Mainline Steam are devoted to the restoration and operation of historic mainline steam locomotives and several are fully certified for main line running. Regular day excursions and multi-day tours are operated over rail lines throughout New Zealand. These excursions provide travellers with the unique opportunity to relive the days when steam was king while experiencing the magnificent New Zealand countryside. Excursions are operated from Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch and these are well advertised in local newspapers and on their website.

The photo below shows a general view of the depot with NZR Semi-Streamlined J Class 4-8-2 No. 1211 (NBL 24534) in the foreground. An online fund has been set up to help with the cost of the relocation and further details can be found on the MLSHT website : <http://mainlinesteam.co.nz/news.html>



**UK STEAM BAN IN FORCE****(Photo : Nick Newport)**

Following a serious incident on March 7<sup>th</sup> when a steam special passed a signal at danger, Network Rail has served West Coast Railways with a suspension notice effective from midnight on April 3. This is a serious blow to the UK main line steam market as WCRC operate more than 90% of the steam locos currently running on Network Rail.

It is believed that a 100mph collision between a First Great Western High Speed Train and the steam excursion operated by WCR was missed by barely a minute. The SPAD ranked as the most serious this year and has resulted in this unprecedented suspension. Operators have been banned from certain routes, but this is the first total network ban since privatisation, indicating the gravity with which Network Rail is treating the incident, West Coast Railways has been given until May 15 to take the required steps to remedy the “Event of Default” which has occurred because of a breach in Safety Obligations, or the likelihood that one will occur. Further details can be found on : <http://www.networkrailmediacentre.co.uk/news/statement-west-coast-railways-suspension-notice>

One of the last steam specials to run before the ban came into force, was the ‘Steam Dreams’ tour from Oxford to Kingswear. NBL B1 Class 4-6-0 No. 61306 ‘Mayflower’ is seen leaving Aldermaston on this train on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> April.

I’m sure we all hope that the issues between West Coast and Network Rail can be resolved soon so steam passengers travel arrangements can be confirmed and sights like this can be enjoyed again soon.

**Thank you all once again for your continued support  
More news to follow next month, Best Regards, Ken**

**Newsletter published by the NBL Preservation Group Ltd, Company Registration Number 7508287  
A Not for Profit Organisation**

**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](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. All donations and membership fees will be acknowledged in writing. For further details, please email our Hon. Secretary : [ken.livermore@btinternet.com](mailto:ken.livermore@btinternet.com)

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.**

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

**MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM**

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ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP JOINING FEE (Optional) : £10

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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.**