

NBL Preservation Group

Honorary President Professor Dugald Cameron OBE

January 2020 Newsletter



PACIFIC PROGRESS

(photo courtesy www.colourrail.com)

We haven't seen much snow in Surrey in recent years but you can almost feel the chill in this fine view of Merchant Navy No 35005 'Canadian Pacific' approaching Pirbright Junction in the winter of 1963.

As mentioned previously in these pages, 'Can Pac' was one of 10 Merchant Navy Pacifics to be fitted with North British boilers from new and the loco still carries it in preservation today. At the present time No 35005 is undergoing a thorough overhaul with the NBL boiler at Ropley on the Mid Hants Railway and the frames etc at Eastleigh Works in Hampshire.

Mid Hants volunteer John Barrowdale was at Ropley on 15th January and reports that CP's new inner firebox was having some weld grinding attention before some new weld is added. The boilersmith told him that apart from the welding on the inner wrapper plus a bit on the outer wrapper it is virtually complete with the thermic synthons all fitted in. They hope to be able to drop the inner wrapper into the outer wrapper by the end of March and then the long task of fitting all the 2400 odd stays into the structure beckons plus the fitting of the foundation ring underneath.

After work on the boiler is complete it will be sent to Eastleigh to be reunited with the frames and final assembly can begin. There is a long way to go but it shows what can be achieved by a dedicated team of preservationists ! We wish John and his colleagues the very best of luck and look forward to seeing Canadian Pacific in steam again in the years to come.

TAKING STOCK

(photos Richard Manton / KL Collection)



As we enter the 3rd decade of the 21st Century it seems opportune to take stock of the four steam locos that are currently in our possession and look at what we would like to achieve during the coming year.



Dick's glorious photos above show three of our locomotives as they were in their working heyday plus Dubsy on display at the Mizens. We are keen to restore each of them in the longer term but much work remains to be done before we get to that stage ! The notes below set out the current position for each one.

19D 4-8-2 No 2767 was retired from service in 2015 and donated to us by Sappi Saiccor the following year. A Lease Lend Agreement was signed with Patons Country Railway and the loco was moved to their Creighton depot in September 2017. The biggest hurdle to restoration is the need to re-tyre or re-place the driving wheels and funds are being raised for this at present. A wheel drop has now been installed at Creighton to enable repairs to take place and the aim is to restore the loco to steam in the next few years.

Class 1 4-8-0 No 1301 this historic David Hendrie locomotive was donated to us by Anglo Coal and has been on the back burner for some years but it has become our most urgent project for 2020. No 1301 and two 14R Class 4-8-2's are stored at Greenside Colliery but are currently hemmed in by piles of coal waste. All three are going to the Wonderboom Military Museum near Pretoria for restoration but there is a need for personnel involved in the project to attend a week-long Health & Safety Training Course before work can start. A meeting was held at Greenside Colliery on 16th January with our Chairman Nick Newport and Ben Minnaar from Wonderboom in attendance to resolve the training issue and arrange the move.

Industrial 4-8-2T 25916 after a brief but highly successful fund-raising campaign in 2019, this powerful tank loco was purchased from SANRASM and moved to the Wonderboom Military Museum last September. It is in fairly good condition having been restored for use at Richards Bay and for the time being a new coat of paint will get it ready for display. Longer term it is a candidate for return to the UK.

Dubs Tank No 196 we returned this fine old warrior to the UK in 2011 and she has been cosmetically restored for display. She has received a great deal of positive comment and we would like to provide some covered accommodation for her if agreement can be reached with our friends at the Mizens Railway.

We can all be immensely proud of what has been achieved to date by a relatively small group and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has joined us or contributed towards our projects.



ENGINE 61662 APPEAL

(photos : RC Riley / www.colourrail.com)

The winter months have not been conducive to working outside in the cold and wet so instead we have been focussing our efforts on acquiring drawings and photographs of the original engine. Numerous North British drawings exist in the National Railway Museum at York and in the Mitchell Library in Glasgow and we are gradually acquiring copies of those that will help us to move the project forward.



However, despite our best efforts and many hours of searching we have only come up with three colour photographs of No 61662 in British Railways days – and sadly none of these show the loco in action. The three we have found are featured here and show the engine ex Works at Doncaster in 1953, at Stratford shed in 1956 and at Liverpool Street Station in 1957.



We have found many excellent black and white photos of ‘Manchester United’ both in BR and LNER livery but if you are able to locate any further colour pictures please let us know so we can add them to our Archive collection. The photographer’s copyright on any new pictures will of course be respected.



Iván Pstyga of the Ferroclub Cdp Lynch has kindly contacted us from Buenos Aires to provide some details and photographs of the overhaul of their Neilson 2-6-0 No 11. Built in 1888 during the firm's transition period from Neilson to Neilson Reid, the little mogul carries works number 3854 and is seen above at the terminal Estacion Lacroze before being withdrawn for overhaul in 2010.



Iván tells us that around 20,000 US dollars will be needed to complete the overhaul but as there is no State funding to assist, the money is being raised by public donations and local events run by the Group. If you would like further details of this interesting locomotive or would like to help in any way please contact the Project Leader Seba Bianchi via the Facebook link : https://www.facebook.com/sseabbaess?ref=br_rs

HIGHLAND CONNECTIONS**(Information from Neil Sinclair)**

Following various news items in the railway press about David Hendrie and our Class 1A 4-8-0, Neil Sinclair has kindly written to clarify some details of Hendrie's career and that of George Reid who preceded him on the Natal Government Railway.

In the item about the proposed repatriation of the Hendrie 4-8-0 in issue 260 of Heritage Railway, it is suggested that David Hendrie was passed over for the post of locomotive superintendent of the Highland Railway in favour of Peter Drummond when David Jones retired in 1896 and that is why he went to Natal.

At this time, however, Hendrie was the HR chief draughtsman and the more senior post of assistant locomotive superintendent was held by James Conner. The HR minute books show that none of the company's staff were among the four people considered for the post held by Jones. A major reason for the appointment of Drummond was probably because he was the works manager, as well as the assistant locomotive superintendent, of the Caledonian Railway and one of his earliest tasks on the HR was the reorganisation of Lochgorm Works.

Hendrie continued to work on the HR for six years after Drummond's appointment. In 1900, after Conner left the company, he was appointed assistant locomotive superintendent and works manager. I would suggest that the reason Hendrie went to South Africa was probably because he was recommended to be locomotive superintendent of the Natal Government Railways by the retiring holder of that post, George Reid, a former colleague on the Highland Railway. When Hendrie arrived in South Africa, he would have found some familiar faces who had followed Reid from Inverness where he was the works manager. These included Hugh Jones, son of David, who had been the boiler shop foreman at Lochgorm.

George Whyte Reid was born in Glasgow in 1842. He was the son of Robert Reid, Carriage and Wagon Superintendent of the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway, brother of William Reid, Locomotive Superintendent of the North British Railway and uncle of Robert Reid, C&W Superintendent of the LMS.

He started his career on the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway and presumably followed William Stroudley and Dugald Drummond to the Highland Railway. He was certainly on the HR in 1871 when he married Janet Fleming. He worked his way up the HR locomotive department and became Works Manager at Lochgorm and thus, presumably, Assistant Locomotive Superintendent.

He was Locomotive Superintendent of the Natal Government Railways from 1896 to 1902 and was followed there by some of the HR's staff, notably Hugh Jones, son of, David, the HR's Locomotive Superintendent who had been the Boiler Shop Foreman at Lochgorm Works. Following his retirement and return to Scotland George Reid was retained by the South African government as inspector of locomotives and other material sent from Britain. He retained this position until his death in Bearsden (Glasgow) on 8th April 1919.

We are grateful to Neil for providing this very interesting information. Very few locomotives designed by George Reid survive but we have obtained photos of three of them as shown below. Left to right are NBL Industrial 4-10-2T No 23722 at RSME, Dubs H2 Class 4-8-2T No 329 at Hilton and NBL G Class 4-8-2T No 221 at George. The H2's were created by removing one pair of drivers from Reid's H Class 4-10-2T's.





COWLAIRS BANKERS

(photos courtesy www.colourrail.com)

Continuing the Reid family theme for a moment, in 1909 William Reid designed a series of 0-6-2 Tank locomotives for the North British Railway (a totally separate entity from the North British Locomotive Company). The first six came to be designated Class N14 by the LNER and a further 99 were built with detail differences as Class N15 between 1910 and 1924. 75 of the total of 105 locomotives came from NBL with the remainder split between NBR's own Cowlairs Works (also in Springburn) and Robert Stephenson.



Initially based in the Glasgow area for banking duties on the steeply graded Cowlairs Incline, the N15 series were dispersed over the former NBR system and examples could eventually be found in Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen. The evocative photo above shows No 69163 banking a heavily laden Queen of Scots Pullman out of Glasgow Queen Street in the Summer of 1961 – no doubt with one of the famous LNER Pacifics working hard at the front end ! I still regularly travel to and from Glasgow Queen Street and I'm delighted to say that, although the signals have been replaced with colour lights, the station has lost none of its charm.



Our two lower photos, both taken in May 1959, show No 69191 looking immaculate at Glasgow Eastfield shed and No 69127 next to the Aberdeen Ferryhill coaling stage in the company of an LNER A2 Pacific. Rather ironically No 69127 was one of the engines that had been modified with an extended coal bunker especially for the Cowlairs banking duties. The last of these locomotives was withdrawn in December 1962 and unfortunately none of them were saved for preservation.



A small team of local enthusiasts have recently started cosmetic restoration work on GMAM Garratt No 4112 (NB 27770) at Summerlee Heritage Park in Coatbridge. At one time there was a proposal to move this 191 tons engine to St Rollox Works in Springburn in a bid to provide jobs for the workforce but as reported last year, the Works closed in July 2019. No 4112 has a place in North British history being one of the last and one of the largest engines to be constructed at the former Neilson Reid, Hyde Park Works. At the time of writing, a private bid is being considered to re-open St Rollox so who knows what the future may bring.

Former Taff Vale 0-6-2 Tank locomotive No 85 has been booked to appear at the Bluebell Railway Branch Line Weekend from 3rd to 5th April this year. Built by Neilson Reid for the Welsh Colliery traffic in 1899, this chunky little tank engine is now preserved at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway so the Bluebell event will be a rare chance to see it operating in deepest Sussex !

Sad News this month is the announcement that the Reefsteamers preservation group are going into voluntary liquidation. Reefsteamers have operated mainline steam specials for many years and currently maintain a superb collection of steam and diesel locomotives at Germiston depot near Johannesburg. Many of these engines are of North British origin so we will keep a close eye on developments.

And finally, after several months of searching we have found a new publisher for our postal Newsletters. The January edition will be the first one from our new supplier and I hope very much that this will be the start of a long and happy relationship. Many thanks to everyone for bearing with us during the transition period and thanks also to a number of Members who have recently gone over to the email.

**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
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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 by letter or by e:mail. NBL related Photos can be uploaded direct to our Facebook page at : <https://www.facebook.com/NorthBritishLocomotives>

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.co.uk Please send items for the website to Dave Fox at : webmaster@nbloco.co.uk

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

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.** Alternatively, you can make a direct Bank Transfer to the NBL Preservation Group, Barclays Bank, **Account Number 03113302 Sort Code 20-71-03** (please email to advise if you use this option)

**NORTH BRITISH LOCOMOTIVE PRESERVATION GROUP
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