

NBL Preservation Group

Honorary President Professor Dugald Cameron OBE

March 2020 Newsletter



WEATHER BEATER

(photo : Alistair Moulstone)

Despite the unwelcome attention of 'Storm Dennis' LMS Jubilee 4-6-0 No 45596 Bahamas (NB 24154) braved the elements and successfully completed a run over the Settle & Carlisle line on 22nd Feb, arriving in the Border City more than 4 minutes ahead of schedule. With torrential rain affecting much of the area and the town of Horton in Ribblesdale cut off by flooding, the 85 years old veteran stormed up the Long Drag, passing dozens of stranded motorists who had been forced to abandon their efforts to chase the train. The engineers who built the Midland Railway route to Scotland back in the 1870's, obviously knew a thing or two about coping with bad weather ! We are very grateful to Alstair Moulstone for letting us use his superb photo of No 45596 just north of Lazonby Station on the outward leg of the journey. The strength of the wind can be judged from the way the exhaust steam is cutting across the fields in the background !

Several more mainline trips are planned for Bahamas this year plus of course regular spells of duty on the Worth Valley Railway. Full details can be found on the website : www.bahamaslocomotivesociety.com



THE NAMED 8F's

(photo www.gcrauctions.com)

It is probably quite well known that North British built more than 200 LMS 8F Class 2-8-0's during WWII but it is perhaps more obscure that a small number of these engines were officially named after War Heroes.



The British Army's Middle East Forces received almost 100 LMS design 8F's between 1941 and 1944 for use in Egypt and Palestine and 10 Railway Squadron, Royal Engineers, based on the Adabiya – Ataka military railway, south of Suez, named nine of these engines as memorials to their Victoria Cross heroes.

Several of the North British examples received names but the only one that assumed its rightful place in British Railways stock at the end of hostilities was WD No 70320 'Lt WO Lennox VC, Royal Engineers' which became BR No 48774. This engine had an interesting career, starting life as NB 24620 in 1940, it was allocated the number 8243 in LMS stock but was sent overseas becoming Iran State Railways No 41.108. In 1952 it returned to the UK and was renumbered WD 501 on the Longmoor Military Railway. It was eventually sold to British Railways as late as 1957 along with two LMS 8F classmates Nos 500 & 512.

Rather amusingly, the BR loco numbering team, believing them to be Riddles WD 8F's allocated them numbers 90733 – 90735, the next available for that class and No WD 500 (NB 24607) actually carried the number 90734 for a short time before the mistake came to light ! As BR 48773 – 48775 they were the last three LMS 8F's taken into BR stock. 48774 sadly lost its' nameplates at that point and was eventually withdrawn in 1965, 48773 lasted to the end of steam and is now preserved on the Severn Valley Railway.



Returning to the remaining Victoria Cross 8F nameplates, all nine of them were at one time displayed in Museum of Army Transport in Beverley, East Yorkshire but after this closed, they were dispersed to other military collections around the UK. As far as we are aware, the nameplate from ex LMS No 8021, Sgt J Smith VC, Bengal Sappers & Miners, is the only one that has ever come up for private auction.



D6358 STATEMENT

(photo courtesy Project 22)



Concerned about their apparent lack of progress, the Project 22 Management Team have put out a comprehensive statement on their website to re-affirm their intentions to re-create a North British Type 2 Diesel Hydraulic. They state that theirs is a new build project, not a rebuild or a conversion and that this route was adopted when the difficulties of converting a diesel-electric locomotive were investigated and ruled out due to the amount of work needed to alter the mainframe to take a hydraulic transmission, as the structural complications outweighed any saving in cost to build a new mainframe.

The group have an original NBL/MAN engine and a number of other components in storage, they have gained an incredible amount of information and specific details relating to the NBL Class 22 locomotives and how they were built and maintained, the history and the data acquired is vast. P22 are not yet ready to relaunch, but they are not far away, their aim of starting some form of construction by 2022 is certainly on the cards.

Internally, Project 22 is progressing slowly, but certainly. There is a small technical team beavering away building the CAD designs, purchasing drawings and manuals and they are still investing money into the group with the view of purchasing a suitable transmission when one becomes available.

If you would like to read the full statement please go to their Facebook page or visit the Project 22 website : <http://project22society.co.uk/news/news-update-february-2020/>

ZAMBEZI SAWMILLS**(main photo Derek Phillips)**

The Zambezi Sawmills Company was founded in 1916 to exploit forests of Rhodesian Teak along the banks of the Zambezi River above Livingstone and originally the timber was dragged to the river by teams of oxen for onward transportation by barge. However, by the early 1920s the forests near the river were used up and a 3 ft 6 ins gauge railway, the ZSR was built from Livingstone about 166 km north-west to Mulobezi.

A wonderful assortment of almost exclusively Glaswegian motive power was acquired second hand from various African railways for use on the line and NBL and its three constituent firms were well represented.



There was no direct road from Livingstone to Mulobezi and the indirect route was mostly unpaved and impassable during rains so the railway provided the only realistic method of transport between the two locations. The Zambezi Sawmills Railway continued to operate with steam until 1973 after which it was taken over by Zambia Railways and a sporadic diesel service was then provided. Enthusiast tours continued to be run however and the photo above shows ex Rhodesian Railways 12th Class 4-8-2 No 204 (NB 23733) leaving Mulobezi with just such a special on the return journey to Livingstone.



David Mitchell has kindly supplied these very evocative photos of regular steam operations on the Zambezi Sawmills Railway. That on the left shows ex Rhodesia Railways 7th class 4-8-0 No.69 (Neilson Reid 5791) at the back of Livingstone ZSR shed on 1st February 1973. On the right we see ex Malawi Railways G Class 2-8-2 No 57 (NB 27779) leaving Livingstone with the overnight train to Mulobezi on 18th November 1972. No 57 was in fact one of the very last steam locomotives ever to be built by North British at Springburn in 1957 and has fortunately been preserved at the Livingstone Railway Museum.

The ZSR contd.

(photo credits shown below)

Quite incredibly, a large number of the Zambezi Sawmills steam locos have survived. The main workshops and running shed, located at Livingstone have been turned into an open-air Railway Museum with around 20 locomotives on display and others are still to be found abandoned along the line.



When NBLPG Member **Bob Francis** visited the area in August 1985 he found 7A No 1021 (Dubs 3646) in use as a stationary boiler at Livingstone Sawmills. Just along the track was 7B No 1040 (Neilson Reid 5820) performing similar duties - this fine old engine was originally Imperial Military Railways No 113.



Intrepid travellers on a **Geoff Cooke** tour in 1994, 20 years after ZSR steam had ended, found nine steam locomotives abandoned in an overgrown siding near Mulobezi. It is thought that several steam locos still exist at Mulobezi and the more adventurous amongst us might like to try one of Geoff's tours to find them !

Details of Geoff's future trips to the Zambezi can be found on <http://geoffs-trains.com/Zambezi2021.html>



When regular steam ended on the line, two locomotives were donated to David Shepherd for his assistance with Zambian wildlife projects. The first engine, 10th Class 4-8-2 No 156 (NB 22799) which had worked the last ZSR train in 1973, is now maintained in superb condition at Livingstone (**John Batwell**). David's 2nd engine, 7A Class 4-8-0 No 993 (Sharp Stewart 4150) has been returned to the UK and is now on display at the Locomotion Museum in Shildon. It is seen here during its stay at Cranmore. (**KL collection**)

TASMANIAN DEVILS

(photos courtesy Rodney Towers)

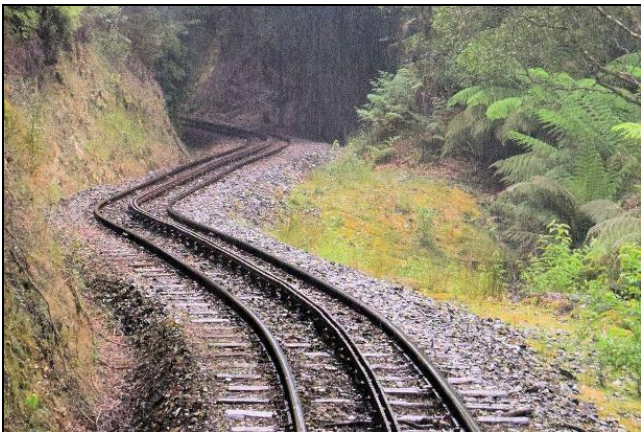
In January 2020, NBLPG Member Rodney Towers visited the West Coast Wilderness Railway in Tasmania and has written a full-length feature article about the line and their wonderful collection of 0-4-2 Rack Tank locomotives that were built by Dubs & NBL from 1896 - 1938. Our limited space doesn't allow us to justice to the article but Rodney has kindly allowed us to use some of his excellent photos to illustrate his visit.



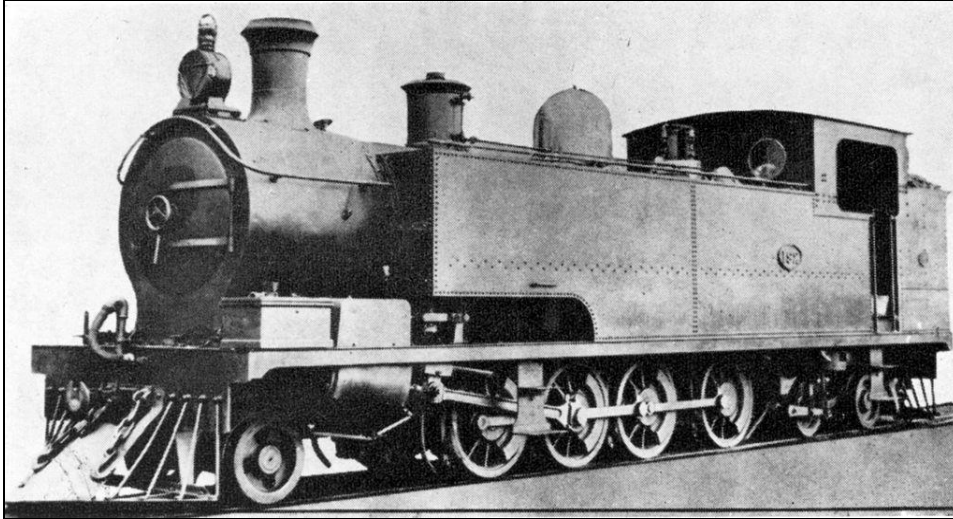
As mentioned in our November 2019 Newsletter, the WCWR is a 22 miles heritage railway running from Strahan to Queenstown. The line was originally built by the Mount Lyell Mining Company in 1893 to transport copper ore from the mines at Queenstown to the harbour at Strahan. Loco No 5 (NB 24418) looks in superb condition above, running alongside Macquarie Harbour and at Regatta Point Station in Strahan.



Repairs and overhauls are carried out at the WCWR's Queenstown Works where Nos 1 and 3 (Dubs 3369 and 3730 respectively) are seen on 11th January. Later the same day No 3 is seen on the ascent to Lynchford.



The Abt Rack system was adopted to enable steam locomotives to climb the steep ascent to Rinadeena Summit which features gradients of 1 in 16 in one direction and 1 in 20 in the other. Here we see the ABT rails and the steepness of the climb on the reverse curves near Rinadeena and the cab controls in loco No 5. Many thanks to Rodney for these interesting photos, we advise our readers when the full article is in print.



Following our feature on War Engines last month, John Middleton has written to point out that the first new locos acquired by the IMR were in fact a batch of six 2-8-4 Tanks that were diverted from a Neilson Reid Order for Western Australia in 1900, presumably because the IMR was desperate for motive power. The engines concerned were Neilson Reid Works Nos 5897-5902 of 1900 and were numbered IMR 100-105. They later became CSAR Class C Nos 203-208 and at least three of them were sold into industrial service where they continued working until the 1950' & 60's. We are very grateful to John for this information.

Class 24 2-8-4 No 3620 (NB 26332) has travelled across Australia from its long-term home in Cairns to a new base at Point Lonsdale. The 1948-built locomotive has not steamed since 2005 but is thought to be in good order and is expected to start hauling the Q Train, Australia's popular tourism restaurant attraction, by the end of July. We understand that the loco is still owned by New Zealand enthusiast Mr Ian Welch and has been loaned to the Q Train Company for this service.

The oldest surviving Dubs locomotive in the UK, NER 1001 Class 'Long Boiler' 0-6-0 No 1275 (Dubs Works No 708) is to move from the National Railway Museum at York to the Locomotion Museum at Shildon. Built as early as 1874, this historic engine was designed by William Booch who developed Robert Stephenson's 'long boiler' patent to try to match the power of the GWR broad gauge engines. 192 of the 1001 Class locomotives were built from 1852 onwards and No 1275 was the last one withdrawn in 1923.

Taff Vale 0-6-2 Tank No 85 (Neilson Reid 5408) is booked to appear at the Bluebell Railway Branch Line Weekend from 3rd – 5th April. Built for the Welsh Valleys coal traffic, No 85 was taken over by the GWR at the Grouping in 1923 and sold out of service in 1927. It then spent more than 50 years in industrial use before being preserved in 1970. https://www.bluebell-railway.com/whats_on/branch-line-weekend-3/

And finally : Our Colour Slide Show at Hoddesdon on 16th March went ahead as planned but two shows booked for April have now been postponed due to Corona Virus concerns.. The show due to take place in Enfield on 5th May is currently under review and a decision will be made next month. We regret having to take this action but of course it is better to be safe than sorry. Our enthusiasm for all our projects continues unabated though and fund raising by post and email etc will continue as before. Please bear with us as we work our way through this difficult period.

**Thank you all once again for your continued support.
More news to follow 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 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
A NOT FOR PROFIT ORGANISATION**

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

NAME :

ADDRESS :

TELEPHONE NUMBER :

E:MAIL ADDRESS :

JOINING FEE OR DONATION TO NEWSLETTER COSTS : £

DONATION TO HENDRIE 1301 TRANSPORT FUND : £

DONATION TO DUBS TANK 196 RESTORATION FUND : £

OWNERSHIP SHARES / DONATION TO 19D 2767 : £

OWNERSHIP SHARES / DONATION TO NBL TANK 25916 : £

TOTAL ENCLOSED : £

**Please make cheques or orders for Donations or Shares etc payable to ‘NBL Preservation Group’
All contributions will be gratefully acknowledged, thank you for your support.**