

NBL Preservation Group

Honorary President Professor Dugald Cameron OBE

July 2020 Newsletter



SUMMER KNIGHTS

(photo : RC Riley)

We have a Southern theme in the Newsletter this month so here is a wonderful view at Bickley station in the summer of 1958 as North British 'Scotch Arthur' N15 No 30767 'Sir Valance', with the down 'Kentish Belle' Pullman service, overhauls N Class 2-6-0 No 31404 on a down excursion for bound for Ramsgate. Some of my earliest memories of steam are seeing the 'King Arthurs' streaming along the Kent coast line on holiday trains to Herne Bay or Broadstairs in the late 1950's.

I have to start this month with a couple of small corrections – Les Labuschagne of Wonder Steam Trains Pty kindly points out that the Company actually came into being in March 2018 when they took over from Friends of the Rail. The July 2019 date is when Michael Barkley joined WST. Sorry for my error Les, we look forward to further news about your exciting progress in the future.

Long term Member Colin Alliez mentions that Sharp Stewart 0-4-0ST 1585 moved from Carnforth to Ribble Steam Railway under the Furness Railway Trust on 4th December 2018. They intend to restore her to working order as a Saddle Tank – so they will have one tender loco (SS 1448) and one Saddle Tank. Many thanks for the update Colin, much appreciated.

THE OLD ORDER(photos : www.colourrail.com)

Quite surprisingly, North British only received two orders for steam locomotives from the Southern Railway. However, pre-grouping lines in the area had been good customers for the three constituent firms and when the railways were Nationalised in 1948, the Southern Region of British Railways inherited no less than 18 different classes that NBL & Co had helped to build. Here are some of the older Dubs, Neilson Reid and Sharp Stewart locos that could still be seen in the south of England in BR days.



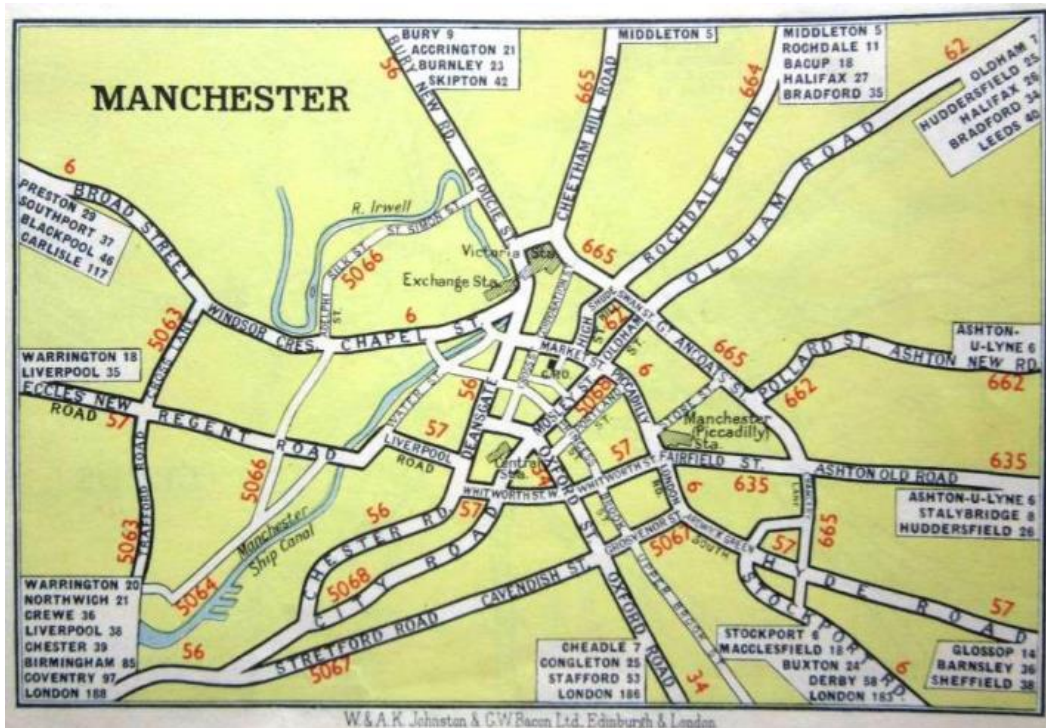
The idyllic scene above shows Dubs LSWR 4-4-2 Tank No 30584, complete with early season holidaymakers, at Lyme Regis station in May 1960. Designed in 1882, three of this long-lived class worked on the Lyme Regis branch until 1962. The last one, No 30583 is happily preserved at the Bluebell Railway. On the right, SECR C Class 0-6-0 No 31690 basks in the sunshine at Ashford shed in April 1962. This example was built by Neilson Reid for the South Eastern & Chatham Railway in July 1900 and two of the class lasted in departmental use at Ashford Works until 1963.



LSWR 0395 Class 0-6-0 No 30567 blows off impatiently in the gloom of London Victoria in January 1959. One of 18 Neilson members of the class to survive into BR days, No 30567 was built in 1883 and withdrawn in Sept 1959. In the meantime, Dubs T9 'Greyhound' 4-4-0 No 30718 has arrived at Salisbury with an enthusiast's special. How well turned out the locomotive and passengers appear ! Nine Elms-built T9 No 30120 has been preserved and can nowadays be found in full working order at the Swanage Railway.



London Chatham & Dover R Class 0-4-4 Tanks were becoming hard to find by 1955 but one of the last survivors, Sharp Stewart No 31666 was captured on a push pull train at Tunbridge Wells West in August that year. Exeter Central is the location for our final picture as Dubs LSWR 700 Class 0-6-0 No 30327 rolls in, passing N Class 2-6-0 No 31839 on the centre road. The '700' Class were designed by Dugald Drummond and were known as the 'Black Motors', they worked on British Railways until 1962.



Whilst work on No 61662 remains at a standstill, perhaps we can take a brief look at steam locomotive production in the Manchester area and the links to North British.

Sharp, Stewart and Company, who were one of the major constituents of NBL, were initially based at Atlas Works in Great Bridgewater Street, Manchester. The company was formed in 1843 when the original 1828 firm of Sharp, Roberts & Co. was reorganised. Sharp Stewart moved to Glasgow in 1888 when they took over the works of the Clyde Locomotive Company in Springburn, renaming it Atlas Works. In 1903, having built over 5,000 engines, the company amalgamated with Neilson Reid and Dubs & Co to form the North British Locomotive Company.

Beyer Peacock & Co built their Gorton Foundry in 1854 two miles east from the centre of Manchester at Openshaw on a 12-acre site, on the opposite (south) side of the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincoln (MS&LR) line from Richard Peacock's previous works. At the Foundry, Charles Beyer designed and manufactured machine tools needed to build the locomotives, and oversaw locomotive design and production. Richard Peacock dealt with the business side, often travelling to continental Europe to secure orders. Between 1909 and 1958, Beyer, Peacock built more than a thousand Garratt locomotives, three batches at least were sub contracted to NBL when the BP order book was full.

Gorton Locomotive Works, known locally as the '*Gorton Tank*', was the main locomotive works of the Great Central Railway. It was completed in 1848 by the MS&LR and locomotive building for the MSL, Great Central and British Railways continued until 1954 by which time more than 1,000 engines had been constructed. Gorton's most notable locomotives were the heavy freight 2-8-0's, many of which were sent overseas during World War I. The Great Central were good customers of North British and no less than 369 of these superb workhorses actually came to be built by NBL in Glasgow.

EAR TRAVELS**(photos : David Mitchell)**

Contributor David Mitchell has kindly sent us these scenes of NB locos from his travels on the East African Railways in steam days. Pride of place goes to this glorious view of EAR Class 29 No 2929 'Teita' (NB 27444). It is working train S14, the daily Moshi - Tanga mixed (2nd & 3rd class) in 1970 and is seen at Kahe Junction, 12 miles south east of Moshi and where the line to Voi left the Tanga line.



The EAR operated railways and harbours in East Africa from 1948 until 1977. It was formed for the East African High Commission by merging the Kenya & Uganda Railways with the Tanganyika Railway. It was dissolved in 1977 when the three national railways of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika were formed.



In November 1969, David found EAR Garratt No 5207 (NB 24076) on the scrap line at Dar es Salaam along with Class 24 No 2450. No 5207 was originally Kenya & Uganda Railways Class EC2 No 73 'Nzoio' and was one of 10 Garratts built for the KUR at NBL's Hyde Park Works in 1931. The whole class was later, in EAR days transferred to the Central line in Tanzania. The other engine Class 24 No 2450 was also originally a KUR engine, Class EB3 No 211.

EAR Class 30 No 3006, named Ha, (NB 27452) is seen at Tabora shed in November 1970. The decoration is for one of the Muslim religious festivals. It was often the procedure to decorate engines for religious festivals. At the time of the picture the 30 class were all working the Central line, for which they were built, though not allowed between Dar es Salaam and Morogoro or on the Mpanda branch. they were allowed part way along the Tabora - Mwanza line, which was being re-laid.

We are very grateful to David for these interesting historical views and information.

REGM GARRATTS(main photo **Richard Manton**)

Randfontein Estates Gold Mines is the oldest operating gold mining company on the South African Reef having been registered in 1889. The original mines closed in 1970 but subsequently reopened in 1973 and saw continual expansion. Various steam locomotives were used on the mine's extensive private railway over the years and during the period 1893 to 1995, REGM became a major attraction for enthusiasts with its use of some 20 or so ex South African Railways GMAM Garratts.



REGM's numbering system made it quite difficult to identify individual locomotives as several numbers were used more than once. Three different engines carried R14 for example and at least two ran as REGM R10 and R15 at various times. Power units were sometimes swapped for operational reasons which added to the confusion. However, based on the original SAR numbers, at least seven of the engines were of North British origin with those from Henschel and Beyer Peacock making up the remainder.

Richard Manton's amazing 'aerial' photo above shows four REGM Garratts in blue livery in April 1986. The interim maroon livery shows up well on R9 & R17 (BP and Henschel respectively) as they await their next duty at Millsite yards in February 1985 (**Geoff Hall**) whilst the second R14, SAR 4135 (NB 27787) is seen thundering along the 'main line' near Cooke Plant with a heavy train in February 1990. (**KL Collection**) Six of the REGM Garratts survive although all are stored out of use at the present time.

VINTAGE INDIA

(photos courtesy : Simon Colbeck & Mark Carter)

Simon Colbeck & Mark Carter have both posted photos of North British locos in India on Facebook recently and have kindly agreed to let us use them in our Newsletter.



Top left shows a pair of non-standard broad gauge former Bengal Nagpur Railway HS class 2-8-0's on shed at Santragachi shed near Calcutta. These are HS 26020 NBL of 1913 and HS 26078 NBL of 1921. The late Basil Roberts spent a number of months in India in 1980/1981 trying to photograph as many steam classes as he could. This is another of his record shots from that trip dating from 13/01/1981. (Simon Colbeck)

Top Right shows another image from Basil Roberts' 1981/2 India trip. HGS 26715 at Sitarampur 04/11/1981. By this time, although still plentiful in Pakistan HGS's were getting thin on the ground in India. This engine is nominally former East India Railways No 1506 built by NBL in 1921, works number 22379. but to my eyes it I'm not sure what remains of the original loco. The worksplate looks distinctly like a Beardmore and the cab window is not a typical HGS type, looking more like a central India H4 class. (SC)

Below left : The last six classic BESA 4-6-0s left in service with the Indian Railways were based at Vadodra for pilot and local passenger services. The early morning sun picks out the lines of broad gauge (5'6") Western Railway of India H 24306 at Vadodra (Baroda) shed on 22 October 1978. H 24306 was originally built by North British of Glasgow (works no.22911) in 1922 for the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Railway. (Mark Carter)

Below right : At the other end of the scale on the South Eastern Railway of India - at Ranchi narrow gauge (2'6") 2-8-2s BS 618 and BS 626 both built in the UK in 1915 by Nasmyth Wilson (#1093) and North British (#21099) respectively. They are being prepared prior to running an empty iron ore train to the mines at Lohardaga later in the day - 10 January 1979. The notes from Mark's diary say that the overnight journey from Kharagpur was spent dozing in the luggage rack ! The veg restaurant at Ranchi served decent puris and singara - the non-veg restaurant would only serve omelettes; as the sun went down he sipped tea on the veranda of the South Eastern Railway Hotel (Mark Carter)

We very grateful to Simon & Mark for the use of these atmospheric views of a bygone era !



During the lockdown, one of our Members, Rodney Towers, has come up with the unusual idea of a ‘Start the Year Again’ ‘Steam Hauled’ Calendar running from July 2020 - June 2021. It features 16 different steam locos in recent action around the world. Rodney has donated this Calendar as a Fundraiser for Refurbishing Community Meeting Spaces in Holy Trinity Church, Ripon, but purchase of copies is open to anyone with Steam train or Railway interests. The Calendar is in A3 format as the selected images have greater impact when larger. The price is £15.00 per copy. Rodney will hand deliver at no extra cost within the North Yorks area but alternatively postage can be arranged at modest extra cost dependent upon whether UK or overseas destination. For further details about Calendar content, payment and delivery, please contact Rodney Towers at 01765-677247 or mob 079-1702-8665 or email rodneytowers4472@gmail.com



And finally, our friends at the Umgeni Steam Railway, who helped us considerably with our Dubs Tank project, have launched an appeal to get them through the current situation. If you are able to support them in any way at all, please contact them directly through their website : <http://umgenisteamrailway.com/>

**Thank you all once again for your continued support, stay safe out there !
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
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