



LOCOMOTIVE CLUB of GREAT BRITAIN **BEDFORD BRANCH**

Newsletter No 83 – February 2012

DIARY

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Saturday 11 Feb 1030 - 1700 Model Rly Exhibition at Stratton School, Eagle Fm Rd, Biggleswade, SG18 8JB

Saturday 18 Feb 1000 - 1600 MKMRS Exhibition Courtside Sports Hall, MK Coll, Sherwood Drive, Bletchley, MK3 6DR

Saturday 25 Feb 1000 - 1600 Maulden Model Rly Exhib Displays of Basset-Lowke, and Hornby 0 and 00 at St Mary's Church, Maulden, Mid-Beds, MK45 2AU

Wednesday 29 Feb. 7.30pm - Sandy Transport Soc. Blue Diesels - Barrie Woods at Quince Court, Engayne Avenue, Sandy (appr. from Waverley Av)

Friday 2 March 7.45pm - Kettering & Dist Loco Soc Railways within 50 Miles of Kettering - Peter Groom at Cornmarket Hall, London Rd, Kettering, NN15 7QA

Monday 5 March 7.30pm - RCTS Northampton LMS Locos into BR Service in 1948 - Bryan Benford at St Crispin Social Club, Berrywood Rd, Duston, North'ton, NN5 4XD

Thursday 8 March 7.30pm -- LCGB St Albans The Class 5AT Locomotive Project - Richard Coleby at Chiswell Gn. United Reformed Church Hall, Watford Rd, St Albans

Sunday 11 March 1000 - 1600 Model Rly Open Day Buckden Millennium Comm'ty Ctr, Burberry Rd, Buckden, PE19 5UY

Tuesday 13 March 7.30pm – LCGB Bedford Quiz vs. RCTS Northampton (Note 2nd Tuesday!) at Johns Hall, St Johns St, B'rd, MK42 0DL (nr St Johns Stn)

Saturday 21 April LCGB Main Club AGM Day 1030 - Visit to Willesden Traction Maintenance Depot 1430 - AGM followed by tributes to retiring Officers at St Paul's Church Ctr, Rossmore Rd Marylebone NW1 6NJ.

Date Change for our June Clubnight In order to avoid a clash with Her Majesty's party our meeting will now slip a week to **Tuesday 12 June**. Please amend your diaries, calendars, programmes etc.

THANKS to all contributors:- **PLEASE** send something for the newsletter – even if it's just one photo or a few lines. We're looking for **YOUR** thoughts and experiences. Material for March by Thursday 8 March please. *cheers, Geoff*

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(max. attachment **9 Mb** please)

www.lcgb.org.uk--have a look at the Bedford pages

CCR GALA – 27 to 29 January all John Morgan

John and Sheelagh went on Saturday when the sun shone:-

We managed to get the last but one parking place at Rothley at 8.30 - rightly anticipating the attending thousands.

Standing room only on most of the trains.

Luckily the weather was bright and clear for the majority of the day.

▼ *Newly restored Ivatt Cl 2 2-6-0 No. 46521 basks in the sun at Loughborough. It has an 89C Machynlleth shedplate!*



The variety of locos was truly astonishing:- 4953 'Pitchford Hall', 30053, 30777 'Sir Lamiel', 46521, 47406, 48624, 63601, 69523, 70013 'Oliver Cromwell' & 78019. The most locomotives that have been in steam operating services in the preservation era on the Great Central.

▼ *The visiting M7 from Swanage shunts the TPO set at Loughborough.*



To give an impression of the highlights:- while we waited at Quorn for the TPO drop we were able to watch the new turntable being used just after the M7 rolled past with a rake of green stock. Excellent. ■

LUCKY VISITORS to St Kitts *all Bill Davies*



Whilst on holiday in St Kitts I visited what was left of the 2' 6" gauge system. Unfortunately the sugar cane industry finally closed in 2005 leaving just a tourist train operation which runs in conjunction with cruise liners visiting St Kitts.

Originally steam operated by Kerr Stuart 'Brazil' class locos these were gradually replaced by diesels from 1934 onwards. Some later models were rebuilt in England as late as 1998 with more modern engines originating from Hunslet and Rustons. The route went right round the island – a distance of 30-odd miles, with loading areas at frequent intervals and a branch to the docks. Several spectacular trestle style viaducts exist and are in use by the tourist trains. They cross 'ghuts', or rivers at some considerable height and do not have railings.

Motive power is provided by two LYd2 0-6-0 diesels built in Romania at the August works in Bucharest for a sugar beet line in Poland. A third loco is dumped together with remaining sugar locos at the terminus adjacent to St Kitts Basseterre airport called Needsmust. Rolling stock is provided by double deck coaches built in America ▼

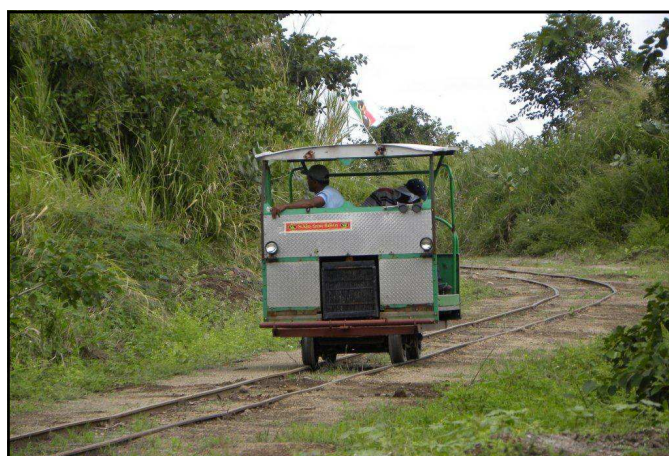


Downstairs is enclosed and air conditioned, whilst upstairs is open. Each car has an all inclusive bar which goes some way to explain the £60 pricetag. The commentary is neither too intrusive or cheesy or are the choir, who pass along from car to car. 10mph is a maximum speed so it takes some time to cover around two thirds of the system taking in the more scenic east coast. Double deck cars are essential as this allows views over the now rampant sugar cane. At La Vallee a turning circle has been

constructed and this is where passengers transfer to coaches to see the rest of the island. Originally trains made their way all around but this was found to take to long. Welsh Highland take note!!

From here to Basseterre the line is under 6 foot of verdant growth, only visible at crossings and some loading points. At Sandy point there was once a yard for assembling trains before dispatch to the sugar factory and it was here that the islands one semaphore signal existed.

Operated by the White Pass and Yukon Railway trains only run in accordance with cruise ship arrivals making it a little difficult for casual tourists. If trains are running the first normally departs Needsmust at around 08.30 a second if required around 12.00. However I did enjoy it especially the little Wickam style trolley that precedes each train to ensure the line is clear of debris ▼



. Antigua was our next island where I researched what had happened to the dumped steam locos I had visited in previous yearst appears that at least one has been cosmetically restored at a government workshop and moved to Bettys Hope sugar mill and the others are still in safe storage. ■

St ALBANS MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION

Geoff Biggs

This was a big affair with a big entrance fee of £7 with no old gits' discount. There were some very good looking layouts like this "Cambrian" scene but not much action. Far too many operators were talking to their mates of dealing with problems. Give me Hornby tinplate jobs going round and round tight bends at impossible speeds every time!



Letters Received

From WES SAUNDERS to COLIN SMITH

Dear Colin & Enid, Many thanks for the calendar and card. The LCGB newsletter was most interesting to read.

The reference to the late Geoff Goslin in the Nov 2011 edition, aroused my attention, with the reference to his origin from the Mid Suffolk Light Railway. I have visited some of this line's deserted route on previous visits to the UK. My father Alfred E. Saunders was brought up in a children's home in 1906 -1914 at Gipping. My own interest in railways, must surely stem from this Suffolk short line, via Dad's stories about it.

My present voluntary involvement is with a 50 mile preserved line in South Australia. It runs from Mt. Barker to the south coastal town of Victor Harbor. This 5'3 gauge track incorporates Australia's first public line, built in 1854. The power was originally by horses. Steam was to follow later. At the present we run 3 return steam passenger services per day between Goolwa and Victor Harbor during the summer holidays. The locos are a Pacific, 620 class and a smaller 4-6-0 Rx class , both ex South Australian Railways ,but restored by the members of Australian Railways Historical Society, or "Steamranger", as it is commonly known. I am a passenger attendant {conductor}. Having been to some of your Bedford meetings, and having heard a 2005 speaker mention the MSLR, it gives me great pleasure to write to your readers from 12,000 miles away.

regards, from Pt. Elliot, S.Australia.

ps - Further info about our line can be supplied.

From ROBIN PATRICK of York



▲ 70000 'Britannia' approaches Brighouse on ex Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway Calder Valley Route on Tuesday 24th January.

As I advised, the Royal Train was steam hauled from Preston to Wakefield Kirkgate, ECS then to Milford Jnc but the weather was 'orrible with pouring rain and dismal light but here is a picture. Prince Charles is believed to have ridden on the

footplate from Preston over Copy Pit to Hebden Bridge. Then at Wakefield he re-named the locomotive. Of note has white cab roof which I believe was Great Eastern inspiration by Dick Hardy for Royal Train workings. The locomotive then came forward from Milford Jnc to York National Railway Museum.

From PETER FLEMING of Dunstable

Dear Editor, Why was Britannia named at Wakefield? Kirkgate station is about the grottiest on the whole system (especially in the rain) as can be seen in another clip that is linked to the one you sent on the e-group about Britannia on the Royal Train.

Is 70000 really 70013? I wish they wouldn't mess around with identities.



▲ Bill Davies has been writing his memoirs for 2011. Here is Bittern at St Neots in that year.



▲ On 21 January, Rob Scudamore saw a special passenger train on unusual lines involving 66085 & 66213. The train is shown headed by 66213 on the access line to Wolverton Works which is essentially the original London & Birmingham route - it is shown passing former works buildings, including the Royal Train sheds, which are now non-railway works & residential accommodation. The Bletchley flyover was also visited.

NOSTALGIA DEPT. The 40th Anniversaries of the Hitchin and Northampton Branches have evoked such memories that we have a page of nowhere-near-news this time. Thanks to all contributors. *GT*

NORTHAMPTON In the currency of this Newsletter, this line closed forty years ago. Jack Turner supplied this extract fom April 1962's LCGB Bulletin:-

“Saturday, 3rd March, 1962, was a sad day for Railway enthusiasts in Bedford, when No. 84005 once again provided Motive Power for a 'last train' this time on the Bedford - Northampton Branch Line.

Although this run was a little noisier than the Hitchin Line closure a few weeks earlier, the locomotive carried several wreaths, including one provided by the L.C.G.B. (Bedford Branch). The train was very ably driven by Sid Stevens, himself a railway enthusiast.”

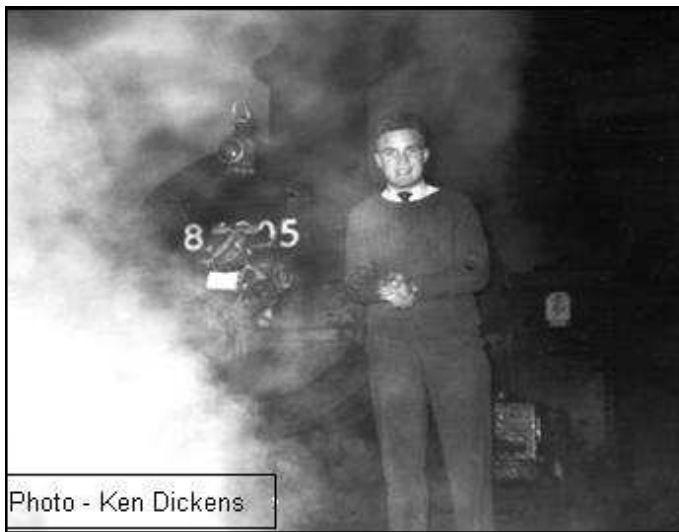


Photo - Ken Dickens

▲ Bedford Branch member Ian Hall (now resident in Tasmania) puts on a brave face after placing the wreath on the front of 2-6-2T No 84005, which hauled the last scheduled passenger train between Bedford and Northampton on 3rd March 1962.



The weather on 3 March 1962 was foul. No other photos have come to light but here are two **HITCHIN** Branch “Last Train” ones:-
 ▲ 84005's crew on arrival at Hitchin - Ken Dickens
 ► Bedford in the snow - Ian Hall



84005 on the Northampton Branch at Olney in their last days:
 ▲ Ken Dickens and ▼ Ken Fairey via Malcolm Burgoyne



▲ “3F” 0-6-0 No. 43474 heads South past Amphill. Over-length load on Bogie bolster. Single bolster as match truck. Class K “pick-up goods” headcode. Makes one feel old. Bill Davies collection.



▲ 44414 at Roade Jnc with 1T05 The South Bedfordshire Locomotive Club 'The Cobbler' Luton Bute St - Wolverton - Newport Pagnell - Blisworth - Wellingborough - Higham Ferrers- Luton Midland Rd on Saturday 19th September 1964 - Robin Patrick

[Your humble editor was on this train! - *Seoff*]