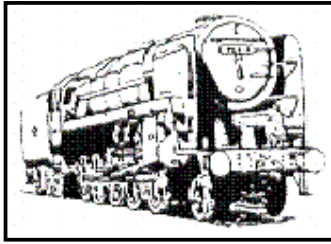


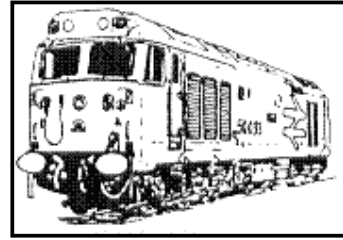
OXFORDSHIRE RAILWAY SOCIETY

MAY 2011

bufferstop@hotmail.com



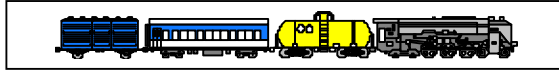
Buffer Stop



Although not actually on a preserved 'byway', 5700 Class 0-6-0T No. 3738 is seen at the Great Western Society site at Didcot on April 3rd this year with a six-wheeled milk tanker and autococh epitomising the archetypal GWR branch line train. The Collett-designed locomotive was constructed in 1937, and was one of no less than 863 of the same Class! Photo: Peter Heath

Welcome to this evening's meeting and to the return of our popular speaker Gerry Siviour, whose pictorial presentation covers the 'Preserved Byways of Great Britain'. Gerry always gives us an in-depth and educational (well, he was a teacher!) lecture on his chosen subject and I'm sure tonight will prove to be no exception.

Last month we changed the normal format and held a quiz hosted by David Brace, chairman of Basingstoke & District Railway Society, who also set the questions. This appeared to be enjoyed by all the entrants even though many of the questions were very challenging. Four teams, comprising of four members in each, took part with the 'run-away' winners being Matthew Searle, Chris Brennan, Andrew Suckling and our latest new member, Mike Ashworth with a score of 174! It was difficult to give a maximum score as there were several instances where one could claim a bonus point, but the 'basic' total was 200, so well done to the winners and all who took part. Incidentally, David had just returned from a 'railway-orientated' holiday in India, including the famous Darjeeling line, and has been booked to visit us again in April 2013 to give a talk entitled "Three Indian Hill Railways".



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SOCIETY NEWS:

Annual Dinner: to be held at 'The Railway', Culham Station on Thursday October 20th. We don't need names and numbers until the September meeting, when the menu will be available, but put it on the calendar now!

Exbury Gardens & Steam Railway: Society outing on Sunday August 14th; please put your name down tonight. A minibus will be used if there are sufficient numbers.

81F Crossword: no entries, correct or otherwise(!), have been received at the time of going to press, so *please* put your thinking caps on and send your entry to Charles Parker as soon as possible!

A4 Envelopes: If anyone has any used ones - with window - and flap still intact, could they please let Terry Walden have them - for Society business, of course!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

May 16th. RCTS, West Oxford Democrats Club, Osney at 7.30pm. AGM and Members Slides.

May 27th. GWS, 58 Banbury Rd., Oxford at 7.30pm. 'In an English Country Garden'-Richard Crane.

June 4th. Statfold Barn Railway Open Day, invitation only; see www.statfoldbarnrailway.co.uk

June 11th. 'Radley Wind-Up' model railway exhibition, Radley Village Hall (Society sales stand).

August 20th. Toy & Train Collectors Fair, Exeter Hall, Kidlington. 11.0am-4pm.

SOMESAY ISLAND RAILWAY:

This garden railway, situated at Wing, near Leighton Buzzard, will be open on August 27th-29th and is highly recommended by some members of the Society who have visited in the past. Battery-operated trains, which are 1/24th scale, run on 1.25in track over a complex layout using simplified versions of normal railway operating disciplines (shunting, signalling etc) in the charge of the visitors under the watchful eye of the 'not-as-thin-as-he-was' controller! As attendance is limited to 30, you have to state the date you wish to visit (please mention the ORS!); contact details are 01296 688913 or welaws@aol.com. Further details on www.somesayislandrailway.org.uk

Rail Developments: Oxfordshire County Council help press the buttons.

At the recent meeting of Thanet Valley Branch of RailFuture, the guest speaker was Adrian Saunders the Rail Development Officer for Oxfordshire County Council *writes Chris Brennan*. Adrian gave a list of all the positive developments nearby: Crossrail; electrification to Bristol, Oxford and Newbury; Reading station; Southampton to Midlands loading gauge; and Evergreen 3. Cotswold Line improvements should finish in September and allow hourly trains; and then in September work will start at Didcot taking 18 months. For HS2, the preferred route was acceptable to OCC as there would be only 5 km of route within the county, but OCC was aware that one of the alternative routes (one going closer to Heathrow) would have a big impact with 19 km inside Oxon.

On the negative side, there had been set backs with Wrexham & Shropshire closing, and the Marylebone to Birmingham improvements being behind schedule. Also no money was available for Oxford's additional bay platform, and the Reading to Gatwick electrification was on hold.

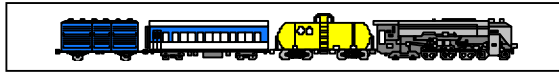
Stations:-

There are **22 stations in Oxon** and car parking was an issue for OCC - particularly at Hanborough where cars were being parked on grass verges alongside the A4095; a station for Grove & Wantage had been given planning permission in 2007 but needed £8.5m of funding!

Services under consideration were:

Honeybourne to Stratford reopening has a study underway.

East-West services could be introduced as early as 2017 with 1 train every hour from Oxford to Milton Keynes and 1 every hour to Bedford.



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Reading was now considered part of the wider East-West picture although it was realised that measures would be needed to avoid Oxford becoming a bottleneck for Reading-Oxford-Bletchley traffic.

Overall, Adrian gave a very useful summary of everything that's happening locally, and it's good to know we have an enthusiastic rail supporter at Oxfordshire County Council.

Postscript: how many of the 22 railway stations in Oxfordshire can you name without using a map?
NB: Wallingford and Chinnor are not included in the 22. No prizes, just a bit of fun!

THE GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY SOCIETY

This is an abridged version of an article written by member Mark Horseman which originally appeared in the 'Kennington Chronicle'.

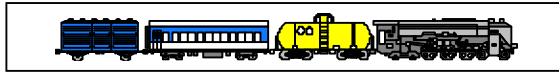
...One of the GWR's flagship locos, KING EDWARD II, made its first public appearance in steam on Saturday 2nd April after almost 50 years. The loco initially was saved from the scrapman's torch, when the then permanent way department of British Railways, wanted a couple of locos, to test the strength of some bridges. Two engines were readily available 6023 King Edward II and 6024 King Edward I. After they had served their purpose as heavy objects they were sent to Woodhams Scrapyard at Barry in South Wales, where they languished for a long time. 6023 suffered the ignominy of becoming derailed whilst being shunted there, and someone thought it easier to cut the derailed wheels spokes than to re-rail the loco. This seemed to seal the fate of 6023, as a new wheelset would be needed to enable the loco to run again. 6024 was eventually bought for preservation, and a number of existing parts of 6023 were used for 6024. Then in the late 70's the loco was bought by the Barry Steam Locomotive Action Group, eventually selling it to Harveys of Bristol in the mid 1980's. The loco found its way onto the harbour side at Bristol, where restoration began, with help from a government training scheme. The loco was dismantled, but alas the government funding ceased, and it seemed that 6023 was again at the end of the line.

A group of GWS members always thought that the GWS should have a King class loco, and brought pressure for the loco to be brought to Didcot, which happened in 1990. The first thing to be done was to rectify the cut wheelset, and a new one was cast (a first for preservation) machined and placed under the loco in mid 1995. Work continued cleaning, repairing and making where too badly corroded or missing, the hundreds of parts that make up a steam locomotive. Various castings were required; sometimes patterns having to be made first, in other cases the extensive collection of patterns saved by the GWS from Swindon were able to be used. Lastly the boiler was restored, with new tubes, stays etc. After a final coat of paint, and an inspection for the insurers the loco was ready to carry on from the 1,554,201 miles it had travelled in its 32 years service with the Great Western Railway and then British Railways. When originally built the King's had single chimneys, but in the early 1950's significant improvements were found by converting them to a double chimney arrangement. 6023 has been restored as built, with a single chimney, and when it made its public debut on 2nd April 2011 looked and sounded absolutely fantastic.



Photo: Mark Taylor

Another major project that is nearing completion is the restoration of an original GWR Steam Railmotor, car no 93 which was built in 1903 and is the only surviving GWR Railmotor body, which was later converted to a push pull trailer in the mid 1930's. It has now been reconverted back to a steam powered Railmotor. These were normally found on lightly used lines, one ran for a while on the line from Oxford through Wheatley to Princes Risborough, and there are photos of one stopping at Kennington Halt when that existed in the early 1900's. Amazingly this



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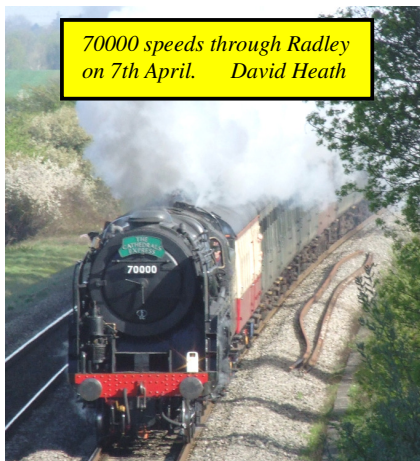
vehicle travelled nearly half a million miles in service, before conversion. A completely new boiler and bogie had to be constructed for this vehicle, as no parts existed. Much of the restoration work was carried out at Llangollen for the GWS with financial assistance from the heritage lottery fund. A new Railmotor shed has also been built to accommodate the Steam Railmotor, and a trailer vehicle which it can push / pull. The trailer is not expected to return to Didcot for about another 18 months. The Steam Railmotor is to enter passenger carrying service on Saturday 28th May this year...

RULE BRITANNIA

On April 7th No.70000 *Britannia* hauled *The Cathedrals Express* from Oxford to Canterbury and back. Chris Gray was on board the train and wrote an article in the *Oxford Times* the following week, part of which is reproduced below with his kind permission...

William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Oliver Cromwell, The Black Prince and Alfred the Great all waited their turn. **Lord Hurcomb** took precedence in the naming of the steam locomotives built to propel the rail passengers of Britain into the second half of the 20th century. Who's he? Why, none other than the chairman of the British Transport Commission. Nice one, Cyril (his first name). But while Hurcomb settled for No. 70001, pride of place in the 55-strong class of 7P6F Pacifics was given to **Britannia** (hoorah!). She hit the rails, No. 70000, in January 1951.

During my years as a trainspotter – whose pleasures, viewed in retrospect, rival almost everything I have enjoyed since – I never once clapped eyes on the doyenne of the class, which were dubbed 'Britannias' in honour of the female personification of our island. *Clive of India* and *Sir John Moore* were familiar sights, though, on the Kings Cross-Grimsby-Cleethorpes expresses previously hauled through my home city of Peterborough by **Edward Thompson's** B1 4-6-0s, often *Mayflower*, which is also now preserved.



What a huge pleasure it was, then, to greet the mighty locomotive for the first time as she prepared to speed a trainload of passengers south in -another first -*The Cathedrals Express's* inaugural trip from Oxford. Immediately following a careful restoration this was (dare I write 'first' again?) the engine's 21st-century debut on the main line. As she pounded into the station it was a surprise to see that she had been turned out in unlined black. She was also without the nameplates that had been bestowed upon her by Minister of Transport **Alfred Barnes** (no locomotive name for him, I think) at Marylebone on January 31st 1951. In consequence she seemed to be attempting an impersonation of her classmate No. 70047, aka 'the unnamed Brit'. "For some reason the London Midland Region was slow to name its allocation of the last batch, and 70047 was never named" says

my definitive guide to the BR 'Standard' engines. But for *what* reason, I wonder.....

And Finally: A big 'thank you to all those who have contributed to the Newsletter over the past few months and I look forward to receiving more items in future. With no meeting now until **September 14th** there should be plenty of opportunities to write something about your summer holiday trips, and don't forget to take pictures for the Annual Photographic Competition! Please also consider writing longer articles for '81F'; I'm sure that the new editor of that magazine will be most appreciative!!

Contributions for "Buffer Stop" are always welcome and can be sent to the Editor at 11 Ferny Close, Radley, Oxon, OX14 3AN, or via e-mail to bufferstop@hotmail.com

Editor-in-Chief: Peter Heath. Features Editor: David Heath. "Buffer Stop" is published by the Oxfordshire Railway Society: the views therein are not necessarily those of the Society or the Editors. Meetings are held at the Seacourt Day Centre, Seacourt Road, Botley, Oxford at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday in the month.