

TRACK TOPICS

Newsletter of the Southern Counties Railway Society

www.southerncountiesrailwaysociety.co.uk

FUTURE MEETINGS

Meetings are held in the George Lee Room at Christ Church, Waterloo Road, Freemantle, SO15 3BS. Doors open at 18:15hrs with the lecture/slide show commencing at 18:45hrs. The room will be vacated by 21:15hrs. Anyone arriving late should knock hard on the church door. Parking is available at the adjacent school, though drivers are requested not to park on the matting.

Anyone requiring assisted transport from Southampton Central station should contact Paul Gosling on 02380 635766. If he is unavailable at the time of the call a message should be left on his answer phone.

Saturday 16th November: Terry and Justin Foulger will visit us from Basingstoke to illustrate the railway scene in the 1990s and 2000s.

Saturday 21st December: Andy Lamb and Ryan Lamb will show a further selection of Iron Horse Productions DVDs. Seasonal refreshments will be available during the interval.
2025

Saturday 18th January: Members' photographic evening. Please bring slides or digital images on a memory stick with sufficient material for a maximum of a 15 minute presentation. Digital images must be in jpeg format.

2025 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Members are reminded that subscriptions to the Society are payable by 31st December. The rate for 2025 is unchanged from 2024 at £20.00. The family membership rate is £25.00

Subscriptions may be paid in cash or cheque and sent to Mr Ryan Lamb, 11 Mansion Road, Freemantle, Southampton, SO15 3BQ. Cheques should be made payable to Southern Counties Railway Society (full name, not initials). Alternatively, payment may be made by bank transfer to account number 000555007, sort code 30-98-75. If paying by this method please use your name as the reference and advise the Treasurer (e mail address) that a payment has been made.

BEQUEST TO SOCIETY

The Society acknowledges with thanks a bequest of £150 by the late Peter Cowan, a friend of SCRS member Rodney Youngman, who was asked to dispose of his railwayana and share the proceeds between societies Rodney was associated with.

MEETING REPORT - OCTOBER 2024

We welcomed Richard Coghlan to our October meeting to give a presentation on the Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway. He began by giving historical information regarding the railway. Under an 1873 Act it was to have joined the LSWR 2 miles north of Micheldever. Later the plans for the link to the LSWR near Micheldever were abandoned and replaced by plans for an

independent line to Southampton which would have been reached via Chilworth and Shirley. The DN&SR funds ran out by the time it reached Winchester so the independent line was never built and a link with the LSWR was made at Shawford Junction. Major infrastructure works in the Winchester area included a tunnel by Winchester Chesil station and Hockley Viaduct. The viaduct is notable for its early use of concrete with the bricks only being an outer facing. The northern section of the DN&SR opened first and was operated by the GWR. The LSWR were concerned about losing their monopoly on traffic to Southampton and an arrangement was reached with the GWR that their locomotives would not operate south of Winchester. Through running between Didcot and Southampton commenced in 1891.

Following the Grouping of the railways in 1923 the DN&SR became part of the GWR. The line was downgraded in the 1930s but was a vital link in World War 2 and existing passing loops were extended and new ones installed. After the war decline set in and passenger services south of Newbury ceased in March 1960. Freight in the 1960s included oil trains from Fawley, but the line closed south of Newbury in 1965 and north of Newbury in 1967.

After the historical introduction Richard took us on a journey of the line with many of the photos being taken between Southampton and Winchester. In 1957 preserved 3440 "City of Truro" was restored to working order by British Railways and was often to be found on DN&SR services working scheduled trains.

ROUND AND ABOUT

Information supplied by Andrew Cameron, John Goodrich, David Lindsell, Stewart Smith.

Class 20: 20007 + 20205 arrived at Eastleigh depot for overhaul as 17:07hrs from Bristol Bardon Hill on 3rd October. On Saturday 12th they ran as light engines to Reading, departing Eastleigh at 10:18hrs and returned topping and tailing Mk3 coach 12142 as 14:08hrs Reading - Eastleigh Depot.

Class 56: 56078 arrived at Eastleigh as a 12:42hrs light engine move from Westbury on Friday 4th October. 70811 + 56094 arrived as light engines at Eastleigh as 12:13hrs from Westbury. They proceeded to Hoo with the addition of 56049 "Robin of Templecombe" at 14:32hrs later that day and have made other appearances such as 56094 running as a light engine from Eastleigh to Westbury on the morning of 22nd October. 56094 left the south via Hinksey on 29th.

56049 took an empty rake of rail carrying wagons from Eastleigh (09:54hrs) to Marchwood on 28th October.

Class 70: 70020 has been repainted in Freightliner's orange and black livery at Loughborough. It arrived at Southampton on 18th October behind 66533 on 06:04hrs Leeds - Southampton Freightliner which failed and lost 2 hours at Appleford.

70008 will be the next member of the class to be repainted.

Class 455: Movements noted in October were:

3rd: 5864 was sent from Wimbledon to Bournemouth.

8th: 5850 was sent from Wimbledon - Bournemouth. 5920 + 5864 were returned to Wimbledon from Bournemouth.

10th: 5850 was returned from Bournemouth to Wimbledon.

14th 5718 + 5732 were sent from Wimbledon to Bournemouth.

22nd: 5903 was sent from Wimbledon to Bournemouth.

25th: 5872 was sent from Wimbledon to Bournemouth. 5732 returned from Bournemouth to Wimbledon.

31st: 5873 + 5857 were sent from Wimbledon to Bournemouth. 5903 was returned from Bournemouth to Wimbledon.

Class 458: Movements reported in October were:

1st: 458406 arrived at Bournemouth towed by GBRf liveried 57310. The loco then took 458503

from Bournemouth - Eastleigh Yard,

2nd: 458503 was to move from Eastleigh Yard - Widnes but 57310 failed at Woking where the train terminated. 57305 arrived as a rescue loco on 3rd and departed with 458503 at 19:01hrs on Monday 7th.

8th: There was a movement of units from Bournemouth Depot to Eastleigh Works. One of them was probably 458405 as it was seen in the works with an unidentified unit on 12th.

18th: 458519 was sent from Wimbledon to Bournemouth Depot.

23rd: 458402 arrived at Bournemouth towed by 57306 using the usual 12:17hrs Wembley - Southampton and 16:03hrs Southampton - Bournemouth paths. 458519 was taken from Bournemouth - Eastleigh Yard by 57306 for forwarding to Widnes the following evening.

458406 was observed on a test run from Bournemouth to Basingstoke on 31st October.

Class 700: Thameslink unit 700106 was returned from Eastleigh Works to Three Bridges on 18th October by 37407 "Blackpool Tower" which had arrived with barrier coaches the previous day. See also stock moves.

Class 701: Movements reported in October were:

23rd: 701052 was taken from Long Marston to Wimbledon by 47739.

30th: 701033 was escorted from Long Marston to Wimbledon by 47739.

Classes 800 - 802 Movements reported in October were:

3rd: 802008 (GWR unit) left Eastleigh for Reading, thence Paddington and North Pole Depot.

4th 802107 (GWR unit) arrived at Eastleigh.

10th: 800108 left Eastleigh for Reading, thence Doncaster.

14th: 801202 (LNER electric unit) arrived at Eastleigh towed by GBRf's 57306.

23rd: A unit, thought to have been 802107, left Eastleigh for Reading at 11:31hrs.

24th: 802111 (GWR unit) arrived at Eastleigh.

25th: 801202 left Eastleigh towed by 47739.

28th: 800104 (LNER bi-mode) arrived at Eastleigh.

30th: 800028 (GWR unit) arrived at Eastleigh.

Eastleigh Railway Institute: The Institute closed at the end of March with the completion of the sale of the building to Junction Church taking place in early October. Rooms are available for community use, with the RCTS and Southern Electric Group both holding their meetings there.

Freight and other operations: New Freightliner

workings from Tuesday 1st October are 16:31hrs Southampton Maritime - London Gateway and 03:05hrs London Gateway - Southampton Maritime. The services run to London Gateway on Tuesdays and to Southampton on Wednesdays.

Locomotives reported on the Chichester stone train in October were 59203 on Wednesday 9th, 59204 on 16th, and 59102 "Village of Chantry" on Monday 21st

Gypsum: As mentioned briefly in November's Track Topics, Freightliner now operate the gypsum trains between the Western Docks and Mountfield. 66508 "City of Doncaster" brought the first rake of wagons from York to Millbrook Freightliner terminal, arriving shortly before 04:00hrs. They were booked to move to the Western Docks via the Maritime Freightliner terminal but in the event the loco ran round at Millbrook and proceeded to Southampton Up Yard at about 14:50 before returning to the Western Docks, passing Millbrook station at about 16:20hrs. Locomotives reported on the services in October were 66508, 66539, 66542, and 66557.



66508 passes Millbrook station with empty gypsum wagons on its way from Millbrook Freightliner Terminal to Southampton Up Yard on 3rd October. Photo: J Goodrich.

Military Trains: 66310 was reported on 12:18hrs Marchwood - Kineton on Monday 21st October. Following on numerically, 66311 was observed at Swaythling on 31st October on 07:24hrs Bicester - Marchwood.

Operational Incidents: There were no trains at Chandlers Ford on Tuesday 15th October until 16:00 due to signalling problems. The 13:21hrs Southampton Up yard - Westbury which normally runs via Chandlers Ford was routed via Southampton and used Platform 2.



Weekend engineering work in the Southampton area in November saw many freight trains diverted via Andover. 70015 is seen passing Andover on 26th October with 06:05hrs Leeds - Southampton Maritime. Photo: D Lindsell.



387205 takes the Netley line at St Denys on 23rd October with 15:20hrs Southampton - Brighton. It is seen on the points by Horseshoe Bridge. Photo: J Goodrich



166204 is seen at Eastleigh on 12th October after a heavy shower on the diverted 12:30hrs Cardiff - Portsmouth Harbour. Photo: J Goodrich



35028 is seen at Andover on 12th October with 07:14hrs Victoria - Exeter "Atlantic Coast Express". Photo: D Lindsell

Special Trains: On 2nd October 67021 was in charge of 09:47hrs Victoria - Newbury racecourse and after the stock was serviced at Salisbury, 16:53hrs Andover - Victoria.



73082 "Camelot" is seen working tender first on 13:05hrs from East Grinstead at Horsted House Farm Crossing on 13th October as part of the Bluebell Railway's Giants of Steam event. Photo: D Lindsell.

On Saturday 12th October 47810 "Crewe Diesel Depot" and 47805 "Roger Hosking MA 1925 - 2013", both in green livery carrying their original

numbers D1924 and D1934 topped and tailed 05:42hrs Crewe - Portsmouth Harbour via Eastleigh and 16:19hrs return.

Also on 12th, 35028 "Clan Line" worked 07:14hrs Victoria - Exeter St David's Atlantic Coast Express organised by the Railway Touring Company passed Andover at 09:21hrs with 47812 at the rear. This was followed by the 09:45hrs Victoria - Bath British Pullman with 67021 leading and 67024 at the rear.

Stations: Improvements planned for completion by the end of March include a new customer information screen in the car park at Southampton Airport Parkway, ticket validators at Dean and Mottisfont & Dunbridge, and additional benches at Woolston and platforms 1 and 4 at Southampton Central.

Stock Moves: 37407 brought Universal Barrier Vehicles 96602 "Henry", 96607 "Philp", 96603 "Oliver", and 96605 "Ernest" from Kidderminster (09:25hrs) to Eastleigh Works on 17th October. Arrival at Eastleigh station was some 130 minutes late at 16:16hrs. The barrier vehicles were former Motorail vehicles. 37407 is the former D6605 and was new in October 1965. It became, 37305 under TOPS, and gained its current number in August 1985 when it was fitted with electric train heating equipment.

Rail Adventure's HST power cars 43423 and 43467 arrived at Eastleigh on Saturday 19th October with 10:50hrs Wembley - Eastleigh Works which conveyed a variety of vehicles. They left later that day as 15:46hrs to Kidderminster with barrier coaches 96605/03/07/02.

Test Trains: 43271 + 43252 powered the 15:28hrs Salisbury - Southampton test train on Thursday 17th October. The train was terminated short and reversed at Redbridge on its outward working.

73962 "Dick Mabbutt" + 73965 "Des O'Brien" were employed on Monday 21st October's 11:15hrs Derby - Weymouth - Eastleigh test train. Workings on 22nd and 23rd followed the usual pattern before they left Eastleigh for Reading at 12:55hrs on Thursday 24th.

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY - John Goodrich

December

1909

Public services The London Brighton and South Coast Railway's South London Line electric service between London Bridge and Victoria

commenced on 1 December. The electrical system used was 6700 volts ac supplied using overhead wires. This was replaced by the Southern Railway's 3rd rail system in June 1928.

1944

4-SUB unit 4102 was completed at Eastleigh Works and was followed by 4103 - 4110 in January - March 1945. Work on new units had been

suspended due to the Second World War, but 4101 was allowed to be completed and emerged in September 1941 for entry into traffic in October of that year.

1949

New locomotives were 34098 "Templecombe", 34099 "Lynmouth", 34100 "Appledore", and 34101 "Hartland". 34099 had the shortest working life of this batch and was withdrawn in November 1964. 34100's main claim to fame is that it worked the final steam hauled Golden Arrow on 11 June 1961. 34101 is preserved on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

1959

73086 was named The Green Knight, the name formerly carried by 30754. 73113 was named Lyonesse, the name formerly carried by 30753.

1123 was the first of the small batch of additional 3-

H Hampshire units numbered 1123 - 1126 to be built at Eastleigh. All were completed that month.

1974

3015 was the final 4-REP unit to enter service.

411506 was the first of the production run of rebuilt 4-CEP units to emerge from Swindon Works. It was the former 7133. Only 411501/02, 411506 - 411509, 411598 - 411608 carried the full 6 digit numbers. Units were renumbered randomly but with specific number ranges being allocated based on differences in the original units. 411598-411608 were delivered in reverse order.

Information from Blood and Custard web site, The Book of the Merchant Navy Pacifics, The Book of the West Country and Battle of Britain Pacifics, British Railways Standard Steam Locomotives Volume 2 (RCTS publication).

ENGINEERING WORK - David Mead

There are many planned closures of lines for engineering works between now and the end of the year. Some of them are listed below.

West of England Line partial closure Friday 9th November until Friday 22nd November: The main work will be replacing a mile of track at Honiton Tunnel, which involves installing new rails, sleepers and ballast. The existing track is over 50 years old and prone to faults that can cause disruption and delays. The brand-new track will make for smoother, more comfortable and reliable journeys. Routine maintenance will also take place on level crossings between Feniton and Cranbrook, and improvements to drainage along the track will also be made. Buses will replace trains between Yeovil Junction and Exeter St. David's and Axminster and Exeter St. David's. (In addition, there will be no trains between Salisbury and Yeovil Junction on Sunday 1st. December).

Lymington Branch Line Closure: The Brockenhurst to Lymington Pier branch line will be closed from Sunday 22nd. December 2024 to Friday 3rd January 2025 due to engineering work. Buses will replace trains.

Woking Area Closure: On 22nd. December and 23rd December buses replace trains between Petersfield/Chichester/Portsmouth Harbour/Southampton Central. Buses replace trains between Woking and Basingstoke from Monday 23rd December 2024 until Sunday 5th.

January 2025 (there are no buses on Christmas Day or Boxing Day).

Westbury Closure: Major engineering work is taking place at Sherrington viaduct and Westbury station closing all lines between Saturday 28th December 2024 until Thursday 23rd January 2025. Buses will replace trains between Chippenham and Salisbury via Westbury and will include Frome. The Westbury avoiding line will remain open for London to Exeter and vice-versa services with most trains diverted into Frome for the bus service to Westbury. For those travelling from Southampton to Bath, some bus services will operate from Salisbury to Westbury. In addition, ticket acceptance will be made on some local service bus routes.

London Paddington Closure: Major engineering work between London Paddington and Ealing Broadway will mean total closure of surface main line services in and out of the terminus from Friday 27th. December 2024 to Sunday 29th. December 2024. A limited number of trains will divert in and out of Euston (rare track if you are a train enthusiast). Most services will start and terminate at Reading. Local services (Elizabeth Line) along the Thames Valley will run.

Crewe Station Closure: Between Friday 27th. December 2024 and Friday 3rd. January 2025, Crewe Station will be closed due to engineering work. During this period there will be reduced services between London – Liverpool/Manchester.

LIFE AS A RAILWAY CLERK by David Mead

(continued from page 66 November Track Topics)

It was during this period when I was invited to join the Railway Ambulance Service. Staff in those

days were encouraged to take up extra mutual improvement courses, such as Rules and Regulations, and I was invited to become a First Aider attending classes during the lunch break. The room we practiced in was one below the concourse. At Waterloo there was another world of rooms, stores and staff canteen, all hidden from the

general public. I progressed well with the first aid, took the annual St. Johns Ambulance exams and in later years took part in competitions around the South and outdoor incident exercises. I kept the first aid going throughout the rest of my career in various locations and even for a while in retirement until the classes were all closed down due to modern medical practices, mobile telephones and patient confidentiality, which made the ambulance classes obsolete.

The BATS project kept me in the Finance office until Tuesday 18th March 1986 when I moved to The European Travel Centre at Victoria. This was a complete change again having to learn the continental rail and shipping business. On the downside it meant a longer time away from home with a walk from Waterloo to Victoria each day, or on wet days underground train in the rush hour, but with a change at Embankment meaning it sometimes was quicker to walk. On the plus side it was a new challenge and as I had been fairly well travelled in Europe I knew the majority of routes and border stations. I was involved as a part of a team dealing with postal and telephone bookings - the busy periods were holiday times of course. We dealt with and booked a great deal of holidays - Southern France, Italy, Austria and Switzerland being most popular. We were also agents for the majority of shipping routes to the continent. We also dealt with services to the Channel Islands, Isle of Man and both Southern and Northern Ireland. The office also booked motorail (this was when passengers and their cars could travel together on one train) - the most popular being Calais to Marseille where there were connections and sometimes through carriages along the Cote d'azur to Ventimiglia. Some chose to travel westwards to Spain to such resorts as Alicante, Barcelona and Benidorm. We had various old fashioned German and French computers to obtain the reservations but tickets were still written by hand. These included sleeper and couchette accommodation. I had my own rubber date stamp and unique number for the international coupons so if I had made a mistake, I could be tracked back to my office. Fortunately most problems were sorted out in the office by a check clerk before the tickets were sent to the customer.

We had one office accident which required my first aid skills. An office window cleaner fell into the glass and seriously lacerated his wrist. I was able to stop the blood flow and secure it in a bandage and sling before the ambulance arrived. 1987 was soon upon me and one of the first of very sad happenings I was involved with was that of Monday 7th. March when the office was full of the terrible news about the "MS Herald of Free Enterprise" vessel which sank on leaving

Zeebrugge drowning 193 passengers. Some of the lost passengers, we had booked previously in the office so the counterfoils were extracted to assist with the maritime investigators. (We were agents for Townsend Thoresen who owned the vessel. It had only been in service since 1980 and was scrapped following it being raised). Outside the office windows - one side we overlooked platform one, so every Thursday - we witnessed the Venice Simplon Orient Express depart and on the other side of the building we had grandstand views of any royal family or statesmen coming or leaving Victoria. (Often state visits used Gatwick Airport, then train to Victoria). Walks in my lunchtimes included a short walk to Buckingham Palace and regular visits around the sections of the station were made and also occasional walks to the coach station. I had two "jollies" known as educational trips - one to Ostend on the hydrofoil - a meal in the railway canteen hosted by Belgium Railways and returning via Zeebrugge to Felixstowe overnight. The other was a trip to Calais to study the operations of the seaport to include a meal courtesy of SNCF (French Railways), a visit to a nightclub and an overnight hotel stay. My stay at Victoria was fairly short with my last day being on Friday 27th. November 1987.

The following Monday I became chief clerk at Basingstoke Station's Travel Centre. This was something completely different. Although I had booking office experience, I now had to learn APTIS (All Purpose Ticket Issuing System). No longer were there card tickets but now the familiar orange tickets which were all coded from computer downloads. I did a two day course in Eastleigh to learn the system. I also had to learn the station reservation computer systems. One of the interesting bookings was to be on the overnight sleeper trains that ran for a short time from Bournemouth to Edinburgh. I managed a trip once on it and although very popular, British Rail decided to withdraw it after just a short period of operation. As an 'educational' one day I along with some of the staff went to the Isle of Wight and were given a coach tour and promised commission if we could sell combined rail, sea and hotel packages. We hardly sold any though. However there was a small commission if we sold "Network Railcards". This was a card to offer discount travel within the newly formed Network South East (10th. June 1986). I used any commission of mine to donate to the Woking Railway Homes.

To be continued

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