

NBL Preservation Group

Newsletter

Diamond Jubilee Edition



THE DIAMOND JUBILEES

(Photo : www.colourrail.com)

I'm sure everyone will agree that many congratulations are due to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on celebrating her Diamond Jubilee this month. Her reign is an absolutely magnificent achievement that has been achieved with great dignity and devotion to duty, a wonderful example to us all.

Although officially the 'Silver Jubilee' Class, there were of course plenty of 'diamond' Jubilees for us to celebrate in the 20th Century, these being the 25 LMS 4-6-0's constructed by NBL at Queens Park Works in 1934. Designed by William Stanier, Hyde Park and Queens Park turned out 25 each and further examples were built by the LMS at Crewe and Derby to give a Class total of 191 locomotives. (although of course only the Queens Park locos carried 'diamonds'). They were very fittingly named after Commonwealth States and Countries, along with Royal Naval fighting ships and Admirals – giving schoolboy trainspotters, who of course new every name and number, a huge advantage in geography and history exams !

In the evocative photo above, NBL Jubilee No. 45559 'British Columbia' passes Penrith with a full complement of crimson & cream stock on a Glasgow to Manchester express in June 1956. Fortunately four Jubilees can still be seen today, NBL - built 'Kolhapur' & 'Bahamas' and LMS 'Leander' and 'Galatea'.



NB's largest excursion into the world of electric traction came in the form of Order No. L998 which was for 40 Class 4E 3,000 volt dc main line electric locomotives for South African Railways. Delivery of the locomotives actually commenced in 1951 with the bulk of the order being completed in 1952. Large was the operative word for the 4E's as they not only represented NBL's biggest order for electric traction but their 132 tons weight and 72,000 lbs nominal tractive effort put them amongst the heaviest and most powerful electric locomotives in the world at that time. No. E250 is seen above leaving Cape Town in January 1960.

The Class 4E's were specifically built for use on the main line from Cape Town through the Hex River Pass to Touws River where Class 25 and 25NC steam locomotives took over the running to De Aar and Kimberley. The first locomotives to be delivered however, were placed in service on the Natal main line while electrification from Worcester to Touws River was being completed.



Originally delivered in a plain bottle green livery, the colour of the 4E's and their almost 72 feet length soon resulted in the nickname 'Green Mamba' after a local snake. However, when the Hex River farmers complained that their colour scheme made them difficult to see, various stripes and whiskers were added. They ended their days in the standard SAR electric livery of Gulf Red livery with yellow stripes. The first and last of the class survive, E219 and E258 (NBL 26859 & 26898) both nominally stored for preservation.



Steam on the 5ft 6in gauge in Southern Pakistan, February 1985

Head north out of Karachi for around 150kms and you will come to Kotri Junction. At the time of my February 1985 visit it was home to three classes of steam loco with two of those covering most local passenger services in the area.

Twice daily shuttles ran on the main line to Tando Adam 70km further north and on the two nearby branches there were five return services to Mirpur Khas and three to Badin (each around 100kms distant). In other words twenty steam hauled passenger trains a day with most in daylight. The third class of loco handled most of the yard shunting at Kotri and nearby Hyderabad so there was definitely a lot happening!

I based myself at Hyderabad where there was suitable accommodation and a choice of restaurants. After a couple of weeks existing on tough mutton curry in other parts of the country I was overdue for some variety even if that variety only extended to chicken curry, either tender or tough depending, and vegetables that were guaranteed to be overcooked! It was a good base though from which to cover the broad gauge happenings plus it enabled me to commute out to Mirpur Khas where the metre gauge commenced.

In the photo above, SGC Class 0-6-0 No. 1196 shunts empty carriage stock at Kotri station. This loco was one of 14 of the class built by NBL at Queens Park for the North Western Railway of India in 1910 and carried works number 19285.

Steam lingered on for a number of years in Pakistan with fellow travellers reporting its gradual demise in The Continental Railway Journal. With new diesels delivered late in 1985 and the XA proving difficult to maintain it was planned to withdraw them almost immediately. The older SGC and HGS lingered on with the last reports of them in use around Kotri in February 1988.

L1 MEMORIES

Our recent feature on the LNER L1 Class 2-6-4 Tank Locos kindly prompted former BR Fireman, Jack Turner to send us the following Article :

Memories of the Thompson L1 2-6-4T Class Locomotives on the Former Great Central Lines from Neasden.

In 1952 after 2 years National Service, prior to which I had been a fireman on the LMS Branch Line from Aylesbury to Cheddington, which was closed during my time with the RAF, I found myself at the GC/GW/Met Shed at Aylesbury Town. This shed was a sub shed of Neasden and worked services into and out of Marylebone both over the Met and via the GC/GW Joint line via High Wycombe, down the GW Main Line to Banbury and to Woodford Halse and across to Bletchley. At this time Neasden had an allocation of 34 Thompson's L1 2-6-4T Class of Engines all of which were at various times worked by Aylesbury Footplate Staff.

My first time firing one was when I was still in the RAF. I was returning from leave and before joining the train at Aylesbury I walked up to the Engine and found it was a Neasden driver who I knew quite well He had a young lad recently arrived at Neasden from Scotland as his fireman, so Len asked if I would like to fire it and told the lad to go in the train.

All went well as far as Great Missenden and then when we started off Bang and we ground to a halt. Looking round we found that the connecting rod had broken allowing the piston to go through the Cylinder Head. On closer look we found a flaw in the connecting rod metal which had caused the break. Fortunately I had my Camera with me and took a number of photographs. Len was given a Form One for having too much water in the boiler causing the problem, but as I had sent him the photographs he was able to show them to the Shed Master and in fact it was later found that the particular batch of connecting rods all had this fault and had to be replaced. To this day I have no idea how Len and his Lad explained how I came to take the photos. Unfortunately I have no record of which locomotive was involved.

Because of their axle weight the L1's were not allowed over the Branch line between Aylesbury and Princes Risborough. This on a number of occasions caused problems if Neasden were unable to supply an A5 for the two evening services from Marylebone to Aylesbury via the branch. If we had an L1 on these diagrams a light engine had to be sent out from Aylesbury to take the train forward and we would have to take it via Ashenden Junction, Grendon Underwood Junction, reverse then back via Quanton Road to Aylesbury. We didn't mind this as it put a couple of hours overtime money in our pockets.

There was a considerable difference between some of the class as regards the amount of coal they used. On some which we soon got to know, you could fill the firebox up with coal and even though the first six miles were all uphill, you could get almost to Harrow on the Hill before you needed to touch the shovel again. On others you would have to be putting more coal on before you got a couple of miles up the line. I put this down to the valve settings.

Talking about shovels, the coal bunkers were badly designed with a restricted opening and a door to get out the coal. It wasn't unknown for a large lump of coal to get wedged across the opening stopping you getting any coal out. One had to work frantically with the pick to break it up. Sometimes you were unlucky and the pick shaft broke then you had real problems. Once or twice we had to stop at Neasden junction and run across into the loco and grab one off another engine.

Another fault we came across especially with the engines fitted with the Westinghouse Air Pump, some of which were transferred over to Neasden from Stratford, was of the pump sticking. The remedy - clout it with the shovel or pickaxe. They certainly did a lot of yeoman work over the years but as I have read in a number of publications, which I certainly agree with, they were not the best free steaming engines.

Jack A. Turner, former BR Firemen



DUBS TANK : The repaint of No. 196 is coming on fine at the Mizens Railway and, if it ever stops raining, we should finish the job pretty soon. Volunteers are still needed to help with this work though as, although Nick is seen here finishing off a superb job on one side, we still have the other side to do plus the cab and footplate etc.

LNER B1 No. 61306 : This fine locomotive has now been fully restored by Neil Boden at his Boden Rail Engineering works near Washwood Heath. One of only two surviving B1's, the engine will carry early BR Apple Green livery with its BR number 61306. Built in Springburn in 1948 as works number 26207 the loco took its name from another NBL B1 No. 61379 which was scrapped in 1962. Main line trials are planned and the loco is to take a starring role in the Mid Norfolk Railways Annual Steam Gala from 13th – 15th July.

FINNISH MIKADO No. 1060

Readers will be aware of our involvement with this loco which is currently stored pending sale or scrapping at the Epping & Ongar Railway. I would just like to clarify that we are in fact acting on behalf of one of our Members who is keen to save No. 1060 and none of our existing loco funds or projects will be impacted. There has been a lot of interest in this loco and, if successful, a small team will be set up to maintain it.

**Thank you all once again for your continued support
More News Next Month, Best Regards, Ken**

**Newsletter published by the NBL Preservation Group Ltd, Company Registration Number 7508287
A Not for Profit Organisation**

LANDS END TO JOHN O’GROATS 2012

856 MILES CYCLING MARATHON

SPONSOR FORM

As mentioned last month, I will be cycling some 856 miles between Land’s End & John O’Groats in July this year to raise funds and public awareness for our various projects. All being well I will be starting from Land’s End on the 8th July and plan to cycle around 50 miles per day. I may need a couple of rest days along the way but I should arrive at John O’Groats by the end of the Month ! Please support this effort with a small amount of sponsorship if possible. I will be paying my own expenses for the trip so all funds donated will go directly to our locomotive projects as shown below.

LOCOMOTIVE PROJECT	SPONSORSHIP AMOUNT
DUBS TANK RESTORATION FUND	
ENGINE 61662 APPEAL	
HENDRIE CLASS 1 4-8-0 SHIPPING FUND	
TOTAL AMOUNT SPONSORED	

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

EMAIL _____

HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE

- 1) By Cheque (Dubs & Hendrie) Please make payable to ‘NBL Preservation Group’
- 2) By Credit Transfer (Dubs & Hendrie) NBL Preservation Group, Halifax PLC Account Number : 00042211 Sort Code : 11-03-31
- 3) By Cheque (61662 Appeal) Please make payable to ‘Engine 61662 Appeal’
- 4) By Paypal (61662 Appeal) details on request
- 5) By Barclays ‘pingit’ Text Message (61662 Appeal)

Please forward all donations and sponsorship for the Lands End to John O’Groats ride to :

NBL Preservation Group, 4 Porchfield Close, Earley, Reading, Berks, RG6 5YZ.

All contributions will be acknowledged, thank you very much for your interest and support.

Best Regards, Ken Livermore