

NBL Preservation Group

Honorary President Professor Dugald Cameron OBE

August 2015 Newsletter



NBL TRIPLE HEADER

(Photo Peter Sweetten)

It's not often that a triple headed steam special is seen on the main line these days – so one featuring three North British steam locomotives as motive power is exceedingly rare. However, just such a run took place in Australia on Sunday 19th July when three Victorian Railways R Class NBL 4-6-4's Nos R707, R711 & R761 celebrated 30 years of main line running in the Melbourne area with a trip to Seymour and back.

Fortunately our correspondent Peter Sweetten was on hand to record this brilliant event and kindly sent us a superb selection of photographs capturing the day. In the picture above, No R707 'City of Melbourne' leads classmates R761 and R711 (in blue livery) on the approach to Broadford. The headboard reads '30 Years of Mainline Running 1985 – 2015'. As can be seen, the cold clear winter weather allowed for some superb steam effects and a large number of railfans gathered at the trackside along the route.

Seventy of the powerful R Class 'Hudsons' were built at Springburn during 1950 / 51 carrying NBL works numbers 26990 to 27059. No less than seven of the Class survive, four of which are in operational condition.

Full details of the R Class can be found on : https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victorian_Railways_R_class



A 'new' photograph of No. 61662 'Manchester United' has come to light courtesy of Rail Photoprints. It was taken by Chris Davies at Colchester shed in February 1959 and shows the loco in stored condition at the back of the shed. We know that No 61662 was not actually withdrawn from service until December 1959 so hopefully it still had one last working summer ahead of it. The photo does show that the tender still carries the old style 'Lion & Wheel' BR crest which brings us neatly to last month's vote. Thanks to everyone who took the trouble to send in a vote on this issue, very appropriately the result was overwhelmingly in favour of the old style crest. We are almost at our target for the lining but some funds are still needed so we can bring in Gerald Whittaker & Co to complete the lining out and fit the crest.

On the practical front, our weekly work party had a minor set-back during the first week of August when we discovered that some uninvited visitors had been up in the cab at the weekend and worst of all, had opened the coal doors to get through to the coal space. We were concerned that our security was compromised as many of our spares were stored in the tender so some time and effort had to be spent putting in a temporary wooden bulkhead to prevent further access. We will need to construct a more permanent fixture as soon as possible.

The Mizens Railway has always provided a very secure home for our project but following the incident we felt that we needed to clearly identify which areas the public should not enter for their own safety. New warning signs have been fitted to the cab and some temporary fencing has been put in place around our working area to prevent uninvited access. Our stored parts have been securely sheeted over to protect them from the elements and hopefully we can now get back to some restoration work without further ado.



By the way, Rail Photoprints have amassed a wonderful selection of locomotive and railway views on their website at <http://railphotoprints.zenfolio.com> – it's well worth checking out if you have a spare moment.



Project 22 took another major step closer to their objective of building an NBL Class 22 diesel locomotive with the purchase of an NBL-MAN L12V 18/21 engine number 220 from the East Lancs Railway. The engine has a history of use in Class 43 Warships between 1964 and 1969 and is believed to have been new in a Class 22. The engine was recovered some years ago from the docks in Barking, having been in marine use, and stored at Bury on the ELR against possible future use in a Warship. Now, the engine has been secured for Project 22 and will be delivered very shortly to the groups working base in South Wales for overhaul. It is believed that this engine was in regular use up until the previous owner bought it, so it is expected to be in a reasonable condition.

Project 22, now 15 months old, has developed from a Facebook group where the concept of building a new loco was first discussed, to an operational organisation that is in the process of completing a full build business plan. This area of the project will involve a further 12 months' work from the Management Committee as all drawings and components are identified and located.

Support for the Project is growing with positive feedback from existing Hydraulic groups. Funds have been raised to purchase the engine through a positive donation scheme being run by the group. The Donate and Invest program offers investors the opportunity of paying in a monthly contribution to the Project. 90% of the funds are placed in trust and used for the build.



Engine 220 in store at Bury, as can be seen, externally it needs a clean-up. Right : NBL-MAN engine builders diamond plate, sadly it is understood that the builders plate is now missing from engine 220 but the full details of the engine are stamped in the block. New Members and supporters are urgently needed for the Project so if you would like to make a donation please see their website <http://www.class22newbuild.co.uk> Or you can find them on Facebook at : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/218449265028960/?fref=ts>

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RETURN TO RIO

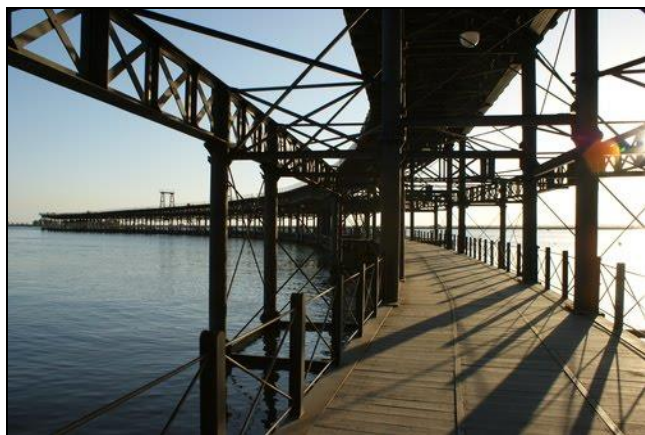
(photos courtesy <http://gwrarchive.org>)



After our June feature on the Tharsis Railway at Corralles, this month we are heading to Huelva on the opposite side of the River Odiel for a return visit to the Rio Tinto Railway. Back in September 2012 we covered the preserved section of the railway around Naya and this time, thanks to the Restoration & Archiving Trust we can look at some Rio Tinto scenes at the southern end of the line.

In our top photo, taken by Richard Chandler in September 1970, Dubs 3ft 6ins gauge 0-6-0T number 73, (works number 3582 of 1898), propels a loaded train onto the upper tier of the Rio Tinto loading staithe on the River Odiel at Huelva. These impressive staithe, known locally as the 'Muelle del Tinto' were restored in 2003 by the Huelva Town Council, and today provide a point of interest (lower right) for those wishing to take an energetic stroll high above the river.

The Rio Tinto Railway used a total of 248 engines of more than 20 different classes during its 120 years of operation but the defining locomotive images were possibly the chunky 'I' & 'K' Class 0-6-0T's, more than 80 of which were supplied by Dubs & NBL between 1880 and 1912. In our second photo from Richard Chandler (lower left), 3ft 6ins gauge 'I' Class 0-6-0T number 80, built by North British in 1905 (works number 16590), stands in the Rio Tinto shed yard at Huelva on 12th September 1970.



Twenty two Rio Tinto steam locos survive, some preserved and some just dumped, around Rio Tinto and at the Industrias Lopez Soriana scrapyards in Zaragoza in Northern Spain. Photos of many of them can be found on the excellent Spanish website : <http://www.locomotoravapor.com>



The Sappi Saiccor pulp mill at Umkomaas said farewell to steam operations with a public open day on 5th August. This was the last regular steam operation in South Africa and the event brought to an end 156 years of working steam in that country. Over the years many different steam locos had been employed at Sappi, mainly hauling inbound timber over a 3 Km branch line from the exchange sidings just north of Umkomaas.

When our correspondent Roger Griffiths visited the line in October 1976 he was fortunate to find a pair of Glaswegian 8th Class 4-8-0's No. 1155 & 1170 in use. Both engines were built at Hyde Park Works in 1903. No 7 in the top photo was NBL 15796 and is seen running alongside the Umkomaas River with a load of timber for the Mill. No 6 below, shunting at the exchange sidings in immaculate condition was NBL 15811. Locomotives of this type survived long enough on the line to become the last 8th Class 4-8-0's in service in the whole country and two of the Sappi engines, Nos 1155 & 1197 have survived into preservation.



Since the mid 1980's the Mill relied on a trio of ex SAR 19D Class 4-8-2's to cover all traffic and two of these remained operational until the end of steam. Robert Stephenson 19D No 3 is believed to be the very last RSH steam locomotive to remain in regular service anywhere in the world and we hope to bring you some good news about the future of this fine engine soon. The photo above left shows your editor and the Umgeni Steam Railway's Graham Gillett standing in front of 19D No 2 in the company of Sappi Rail Transport Manager Henry Anderson and driver Phillip Potgieter during a visit to the line in March 2009.

THE NZR Uc Class

(photo : Keith Cullen)



In 1900, New Zealand Loco Superintendent T.F. Rotheram decided that it would be necessary to order additional 'U Class' 4-6-0's from Great Britain and ten engines of a modified version, the Uc's were duly constructed the following year by Sharp Stewart & Co for service in the South Island.

These locomotives represented the final development of the 'Addington' type ten wheelers. They were exceptionally fine looking engines, similar in appearance to the previous 'Ua Class' but with higher pitched running boards along the boiler. Several improvements had been made from the original locomotives however, including larger cylinders, piston valves and increased boiler pressure. This increased the tractive effort to 18,340 lbs at 80% boiler pressure compared with 14,590 lbs for the Ua's.

On arrival in New Zealand, the 'Uc's' were initially allocated to Dunedin and Invercargill but eventually all were stationed at Southland. This remained the home for most of the Class until the 1920's when they were sent to the West Coast. They were popular with their crews but according to one old driver, they were 'coal scoffers' and had a tendency to slip if not managed carefully.

The 'Uc's' could sometimes be found hauling the West Coast expresses between Greymouth and Hokitika and for many years they were the most powerful engines allowed to run on the line between Stillwater and Reefton. They were still being used in the mid-fifties to work special passenger trains on the Reefton line but by this time they were mainly employed on mixed traffic and freight trains.

This evocative photograph, kindly sent to us by Wilson Lythgoe, shows Uc 369 with a mixed freight at Mawheraiti on the Greymouth to Westport line in the mid 1950's. No 369 was Sharp Stewart works number 4753 of 1901 and was withdrawn from service in January 1957.

Withdrawals of the Class commenced as early as 1934 but seven survived until 1955 when one more was written off. The remained were taken out of service between 1957 and 1959. Although none were initially preserved a number were dumped in rivers as erosion prevention measures, and three have been recovered for potential restoration including No Uc369, featured in our photograph.



GNR(I) Neilson Reid 4-4-0 No 131 hauled its first passenger trains since its recent restoration at the Whitehead Festival on 25th July. It operated within the RPSI site using the tender off BP built 4-4-0 No 171. A new tender is being built for her at a cost of £50,000 and she also needs TWPS installed before she can haul trains on the main line (another 30K unfortunately). Further details and photos are on Facebook at : <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.895205067211550.1073741874.715053831893342&type=3>

There are around thirty NBL and Constituent related items listed for the Great Central Railwayana Auction to be held at Stoneleigh on Saturday 5th September. These range from a fine selection of worksplates and numberplates to a very rare nameplate 'Samson' which was originally carried by one of the early NBL 'Royal Scots' in 1927. If you have pocket money to spare you may like to visit www.gcructions.com for a full list of the 500 interesting Lots on offer.

And finally, a big vote of thanks to our 61662 Webmaster Dave Fox who has very kindly offered to set up a new NBL website for us. Dave has managed to register the new site at : <http://www.nbloco.co.uk> and will soon be loading it with information about NBL and ourselves. We will add a connecting link from our old site as soon as the new one is ready to go. In the meantime, anyone wishing to contribute articles or photographs to the new site should please contact Dave direct at foxdavid@tiscali.co.uk

**Thank you all once again for your continued support
More news to follow next month, Best Regards, Ken**

**Newsletter published by the NBL Preservation Group Ltd, Company Registration Number 7508287
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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.net

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.**

**NORTH BRITISH LOCOMOTIVE PRESERVATION GROUP
A NOT FOR PROFIT ORGANISATION**

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

NAME :

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ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP JOINING FEE (Optional) : £10

DONATION TO DUBS TANK No. 196 RESTORATION FUND : £

DONATION TO HENDRIE CLASS 1 4-8-0 SHIPPING FUND : £

DONATION TO LNER TENDER RESTORATION FUND : £

SHARES IN ENGINE 61662 (AT £25 PER SHARE) : £

TOTAL ENCLOSED : £

All donations, loans and subscriptions will be acknowledged, thank you for your interest and support. Please make cheques or orders for Donations or Membership payable to ‘NBL Preservation Group’

****Please make Cheques for Shares in Engine 61662 payable to ‘Engine 61662 Appeal’ thank you.**