

NBL Preservation Group

Honorary President Professor Dugald Cameron OBE

September 2017 Newsletter



AFTERNOON DELIGHT !

(Photo Courtesy Dylan Knott)

This photo says it all, our SAR 19D locomotive No 2767, still in its Sappi Saiccor blue livery, arrived safely at Creighton depot on the Patons Country Railway during the afternoon of Wednesday 6th September.

The preservation of 'Saiccor No 3' as she has been known for almost 30 years, began back in February 1990 when a small group of NBLPG Members visited Umkomaas for the first time. On that momentous occasion I explained to the locomotive's driver that we were going to preserve a South African 25NC and take it back to the UK and he answered that perhaps we might like to preserve this one when it was retired from service ! A series of letters to the Sappi Management followed and they agreed in principle that they would donate No 3 to us when she was no longer needed.

In the years that followed our Chairman Nick Newport and several other members made regular visits to the line and a good working relationship was built up with the staff and management. At first we thought that the end of steam at Sappi would come before the turn of the century, but of course No 3 and its sister No 2 soldiered on long after steam had ended elsewhere and the pair were eventually withdrawn in August 2015.

Fortunately for us the current Sappi Management agreed to honour the promise made 25 years ago and No 3 was duly handed over to us on 26th January 2016. Thanks to the generosity of our Members were able to raise the haulage costs for the move to Creighton and we are very grateful to Julian Pereira and his colleagues at Patons Country Railway for kindly agreeing to provide her with a home. A big vote of thanks is also due to Dylan Knott for project managing the move and co-ordinating all the activity between Sappi, the haulage company and the Railway. It's early days yet but we hope very much that it might be possible for her to steam once more in preservation. More photos and details of the move can be found on page 5.

ROCKS BY RAIL

(Photos courtesy Garath Earnshaw)

An interesting NBL survivor is gradually being brought back to life at the Rocks by Rail Ironstone Museum at Cottesmore in Rutland. Tony Sinclair and his colleague Garath Earnshaw are restoring North British 330hp 0-4-0 Diesel Shunter No 27656 which was built at Queens Park Works in 1957.



No 27656 originally worked at CA Parsons Engineering Ltd near Newcastle but was sold to Tyne & Wear Metro to help with the construction of that system. However, it is thought that the loco was never actually used by its last owner and was stored for many years with the exhaust uncovered. As can be imagine this has done the power unit a NBL-MAN w6v17.5/22as no good at all.



Tony and Garath have already fired up the Generator and grinders and removed the overhang on the brake blocks and tyres and, after lots of banging and spraying of oil, now have a working handbrake. Next they plan on stripping the bonnet and removing the heads to assess the bores etc. They are very keen to obtain photos of the loco at Parsons or Tyne & Wear and if anyone can help could they please contact Ken asap.





After a couple of weeks break for the Summer holidays, our work parties resumed on 12th September. The steel for the front footplate curves was collected from our supplier in Bracknell and trial fitted to the loco. As expected, some trimming was required, but the left-hand side was soon cut to size using an angle grinder and was then drilled and fitted into place. Both sides were given a coat of red oxide paint to protect them from the elements but the right-hand side will need to be trimmed and drilled on our next visit.



This year sees the 80th Anniversary of the completion of the original 'Manchester United' locomotive and we are making every effort to get the front end of the new engine into a presentable condition for public display. Funds are urgently needed to move the project forward so if you are able to help in any way please make a small donation or buy a Share.

You can use the form at the end of this Newsletter or visit the donations page on our dedicated 61662 Appeal website at : <http://www.engine61662appeal.co.uk/help.html> Thank You.



We have featured New Zealand's Ab Class Pacifics in these pages before but I couldn't resist these two wonderful historic photographs sent in recently by correspondents Trevor Cheer and Wilson Lythgoe. With 141 examples, the Ab's were of course the largest class of steam locomotives ever to run in New Zealand. 85 of them were constructed at NBL's Queens Park Works in Glasgow between 1920 and 1925 but two locomotives were lost in the wreck of the SS Wiltshire in May 1922.

The top photo was taken by Bob Hepburn on 29th August 1957 on the northern outskirts of Napier, and depicts Ab838 heading north between Westshore and Bay View with 972 goods bound for Wairoa – about 70 miles away. Ab838 was the last "Ab" class locomotive built for NZ Railways and carried NBL works no 23206. She entered service in August 1925 and was withdrawn in September 1966.



Photographed by JM Creber at Aickens station on 25th August 1962, Ab804 and A474 pick up the 3 cars used by the Railway Enthusiasts Society for their Midland Rail Tour. The cars will be added to the goods train parked up on the main, for the trip up to Otira. Ab804 was NBL 23173 and worked until April 1966. Seven Ab's have been preserved including 2 of the NBL locos - and two more remain on the seabed.

(5)



THE ROAD TO CREIGHTON

(photos courtesy Dylan Knott)

On Monday 4th September, after weeks of planning and discussion, we received a message from Mercor that their lowbed had left Potchefstroom and was en route to Umkomaas - the move was underway at last ! This 420 miles journey had to be made the day before the loco move as the Mercor staff had to attend a 4 hour safety induction at Sappi before being allowed to work on the site.



After the induction course was completed, the tender was safely loaded and transported to Creighton. The Mercor crew then spent a second night in KwaZulu-Natal ready for an early start back at the mill next morning.



The eighty tons 19D proved a little harder to load than the tender but, with a little help from a Sappi tractor unit, No 3 was soon safely winched aboard.



As mentioned earlier, the chimney and dome cover were removed to reduce height but the locomotive still made an impressive sight attracting much attention from the locals on the 86 miles journey to Creighton. Patons' staff kindly re-fitted the chimney and dome cover soon after the loco was unloaded.

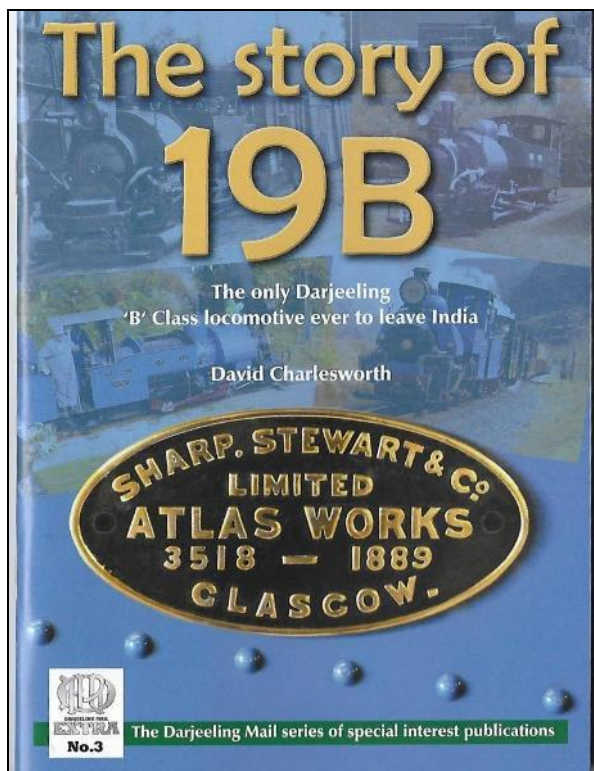
TROUBLED TIMES AT DARJEELING

(Notes & photos courtesy Paul Whittle)

Paul Whittle, Vice Chairman of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Society, has written to tell us that severe political problems have caused the suspension of all services on the line since 12th June. The troubles stem from the long-held aspiration of the Gorkhas (Nepalis who over many years have settled in the Darjeeling hills) for a separate state called Gorkhaland – still within India, but carved out of the existing territory of West Bengal.

Violence flared in mid-June and since then an indefinite strike called by the powerful GJM party has effectively shut down the local economy. In Darjeeling and surrounding towns the shops, schools, banks and other services have been shut, as have the 87 tea gardens with crippling effects on the output of tea. Some of the protests have turned violent. More than 10 people have died in clashes and there have been several bomb explosions.

Sadly the DHR has not been immune to the troubles and the railway has become a target for militants. Gayabari station was torched on the night of 15-16 July and a second attack on 13 July virtually destroyed it. Sonada station was badly damaged by fire on 8 July and on 13 July the heritage DHR Elysia HQ at Kurseong was also damaged by fire. Tindharia Workshop has been closed and inaccessible due to the militants' restrictions on road movement. During this whole period the only activity on the line has been at Siliguri Junction depot where the staff have tried to continue to maintain their fleet of NBL and Sharp Stewart 0-4-0 ST's, although hampered by the lack of access for spare parts.



With the DHR out of action the only operational B Class loco in the world has been Adrian Shooter's beautifully maintained No 19B, the only B class engine to have ever left India and later rescued by him from a museum in the USA. Built in 1889 at Glasgow by Sharp Stewart, 19B has the oldest working locomotive boiler in the World. On 2nd September the DHRS launched its latest publication, 'The Story of 19B', a colourful, attractive and detailed account of the loco from its time in India, its sale to an American millionaire and its subsequent repatriation and renovation in the UK. Priced £6.95 plus postage the booklet is available for purchase on the Society's web site at www.dhrs.org This website will also carry updates on the political and operational situation at Darjeeling.



The two Glasgow Mountain Tanks that arrived at the Outeniqua Railway Museum in George a couple of years back appear to have received some cosmetic attention. As this photo picked up on Facebook last week shows, G Class No 221 (NB 16084) has had its chimney replaced and looks much tidier whilst A Class No 103 (Dubs 2499) seems almost pristine in the background ! These two historic veterans escaped from long term storage at Dunns Loco Works and Millsite shed respectively.

Following the successful move of our 19D No 2767 to Creighton we will shortly be issuing Locomotive Ownership Shares to everyone who contributed £100 or more to the Appeal. Our default process will be to send out electronic copies of the Certificates as this will keep our costs to a minimum but if you would prefer a hard copy sent in the post, please advise Ken asap. (Postal Members who do not have email will of course receive hard copies) Thanks once again to all the Members who saved the loco by funding this move.

We have a rare copy of the North British 50th Anniversary Catalogue for sale with proceeds to be split between ourselves and the Thompson B1 Locomotive Trust. This 117-page booklet was produced by NBL in 1953 to celebrate 50 years production of railway locomotives from the formation of the Company in 1903. It is profusely illustrated with at least a dozen of the photographs in full colour. Soft covers, approximate size 10.5 ins x 8.5 ins. Offers over £40 to Ken please by the end of October.

And finally : we have two Colour Slide Shows lined up for October. 'Steam on the Great Eastern Lines' will be shown for the Hoddesdon Railway Circle on Monday 2nd October and 'Engines of the North British Locomotive Company' will be given an airing for the Meon Valley Locomotive Society on Tuesday 10th October. Please let me know in advance if you would like to attend either Show.

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

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.co.uk Please send items for the website to Dave Fox at : webmaster@nbloco.co.uk

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**. Alternatively, you can make a direct Bank Transfer to the NBL Preservation Group, Barclays Bank, **Account Number 03113302 Sort Code 20-71-03** (please email to advise if you use this option)

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

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

NAME :

ADDRESS :

TELEPHONE NUMBER :

E:MAIL ADDRESS :

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP JOINING FEE (Optional) : £10

DONATION TO DUBS TANK No. 196 RESTORATION FUND : £

DONATION TO 19D 2767 RESTORATION COSTS : £

DONATION TO HENDRIE CLASS 1 TRANSPORT 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.**