

# NBL Preservation Group

Honorary President Professor Dugald Cameron OBE

## October 2017 Newsletter



### BACK IN BLACK

(Photo Courtesy Charles Friel)

As regular readers will know, Neilson Reid 4-4-0 No 131 (NR 5757 of 1900) is being restored to main line running condition by the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland at their Whitehead Museum. The latest report from the RPSI says that No 131 is now repainted in GNR (I) lined black livery and a shunt was carried out at Whitehead depot on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October to enable the loco to be photographed.

The lined black livery was applied to GNR(I) engines from about 1914 onwards and painstaking research has been carried by the RPSI out to get the details of the lining and lettering absolutely correct. No.131 would have looked like this when she was out-shopped from Dundalk in 1920, when she received her piston valve cylinder block, and the super-heated boiler. The 3,500 gallon tender was introduced slightly later. The paint job is now mostly complete, with some lining on the far side to add, and still requires the final details of crests and "GREAT NORTHERN" lettering on the tender.

We are very grateful to Charles Friel for allowing us to reproduce the photograph and look forward to seeing the finished loco running on the main line in the near future. Further details of No 131's restoration and RPSI activities can be found on their website <https://www.steamtrainsireland.com/news/62/131-news>



Another historic locomotive in the news this week is Beaconsfield shed's former 'Prestige' 25NC No 3454 'B I Ebing' which is being restored at Bloemfontein on lease lend to New Zealand locomotive owner Ian Welch. Ian tells us that No 3454 is one of his favourite SAR steam locomotives and that he is delighted to have her on loan. It is hoped that the initial phase of restoration work can be carried out by the end of October and the engine can then be moved under cover.

Roger Griffiths captured No 3454, which is uniquely fitted with transversely mounted double chimneys, on raitour duty at Beaconsfield South (Kimberley) on 3 July 1999. This was part of a 15-day steam tour of SA arranged by the LCGB, with 3454 hauling the train from Orange River to Kimberley. Roger said that he was very glad he made the trip as a couple of years later, such widespread steam activity was officially ended.



One of fifty-five 25 Class locomotives completed at NBL's Hyde Park Works in 1953, No 3454 (NB 27314) was original built as a Condenser but had the condensing equipment removed in the 1970's. It was named 'BI Ebing' after the Chief Engineer at Kimberley who designed it's dual Lempor exhaust system on the principles set down by LD Porta and David Wardale. Significant savings in coal and water were recorded after the modifications were carried in 1985 but no further engines were similarly treated. It is wonderful to know that this fascinating locomotive will now have a new lease of life.

## 61662 UPDATE



(photos KL Collection)



Work has continued on the front footplate curves this month with the right hand side being cut to the correct profile and drilled for fitting. Both sides are now securely rivetted into place making the front end look much more presentable for visitors to the Mizens Railway's Oktoberfest celebrations on 15<sup>th</sup> October.



Another small task completed recently was to make a template for the right side front valance. This was successfully trial fitted and will now be taken to Offord & Co in Bracknell to be replicated in steel.



In their infinite wisdom, BT have recently decided to change some of our email addresses so unfortunately [engine61662@btinternet.com](mailto:engine61662@btinternet.com) will no longer be valid. This is not a major problem as most of the email traffic comes directly to myself or via the Webmaster or Project Leader addresses on our 61662 website. However, it will impact anyone trying to send Paypal donations so could I ask people not to use this method for the time being, until we get a chance to set up a new address with BT. Dave Fox has kindly removed the paypal donations link from our website – but other methods of transferring money to help our Engine 61662 Appeal are still of course very welcome !



The Caledonian Railway tended to rely on small 0-4-4 Tank Engines to haul its local passenger services but in 1916, their Chief Mechanical Engineer, William Pickersgill, designed a batch of 4-6-2 Tanks to improve performance on the Inverclyde line. Twelve of these handsome locos were turned out at NBL's Hyde Park Works in Springburn in 1917, carrying North British works numbers 21480 to 21491. Officially known as the 944 Class (after the first engine in the series) they were soon dubbed the 'Wemyss Bay Pugs'.

After almost 30 years hard service with the Caley, and later the LMS Railway, the Pacific Tanks were displaced from their original duties by the newer LMS 4MT 2-6-4 Tanks and at Nationalisation in 1948 only one them, LMS 15355 (ex CR 949) remained at Greenock. Two had been withdrawn by this time and the surviving 10 engines were sent to Beattock shed for banking duties on the notorious incline.



Our photos show **Top** : the last-built member of the class No 55361 in BR lined black livery at Beattock shed. **Left** : LMS 15355 at Glasgow Central, this engine was allocated BR 55355 but was withdrawn in 1948 so the new number was never carried. **Centre & Right** : two views of No 55352 (ex CR 946) in unlined BR Black at Carlisle Kingmoor and Beattock sheds in June 1950 and May 1951 respectively.

Withdrawals accelerated in the BR era and the last of the Class, No 55359 (NB 21489) was taken out of service in October 1953. Sadly none of these fine engines were preserved.

(5)



## WHAT'S IN A NAME ?

(photos KL Collection)

Since our 19D arrived safely on site at Creighton, several people have asked us if the loco will be given a name. This is of course for our Members to decide so your comments are very welcome on this topic. First of all we need to decide if the loco should carry a name and if so, what it should be and what style of nameplates should be adopted.

A selection of SAR style nameplates are shown below and if there is sufficient interest we will have a vote to decide the name and the type of plates to be carried. Please note that all our members & friends are welcome to comment on this issue and to suggest names - but only those who have donated to the 19D Appeal will be entitled to vote for the choice of name once the short list has been drawn up.



Picture 1 shows the most common style of SAR nameplate, this usually shows the loco's shed or home city  
Picture 2 shows the type of curved plates that were sometimes attached to cabsides above the numberplate  
Picture 3 shows the type of plates attached to the front of the smokebox, in this case on 25NC No 3481  
Picture 4 shows a UK style straight plate, more commonly used on Tank Engines in South Africa.



On a more serious note, additional funds are now urgently needed to overhaul the loco and return it to service. We were advised by Sappi that the wheels were in need of turning or even re-tyring and Patons are considering the various options for this at the present time. The boiler is also to be examined and will no doubt need to be re-tubed etc to put it back into steam. The distinctive 'Saiccor No 3' plates were retained by Sappi when the loco left Umkomaas so replacement 2767 / 19D Cabside Plates have now been ordered.

To help with fundraising we are keeping the 2767 Share Issue open at the present time and anyone donating £100 or more will receive ownership shares in this superb locomotive. Cumulative donations will also count towards Shares and if you wish, we will be pleased to accept future contributions in smaller instalments.

**SHUNTER 27941 UPDATE****(Notes & photos courtesy John Payne)**

Hot on the heels of last month's report on the restoration of NBL Diesel Shunter 27656, we have received an update from John Payne on his progress with a similar engine NBL no 27941.

With the gear case from engine 169 fitted to the block from engine 425 the first job was to release each of the securing bolts in turn, fit the tab washers, re-tighten and bend the tabs up to lock the bolts. Before anyone says anything, I know it's not good practice to re-use tab washers, but these particular ones are a thin large diameter flat washer with a tang that engages in a locating hole, leaving a large area of washer to be bent up again to lock the bolt head. With this completed the alignment of the gear case to the block had improved, one side matching exactly and the other with a minute step, I estimate of less than 0.010".

The next step was to refit and seal the blank plugs to the bottom of the camshaft oil feeds, followed by fitting the main oil gallery and oil pressure regulating valve. Instead of using the original aluminium "O" ring seals, these were replaced with conventional nitrile rubber ones.

By August 2017, I had intended to press on and remove any remaining loose paint, hone the cylinder bores, and move the block under cover for a coat of primer and start the rebuild proper, but fate took a hand with all work coming to a stand due to a close relative suffering a stroke. With an extra demand on my time, the emphasis shifted to working on those parts that could be taken home and dealt with in the garage.

Rather than go into detail, I will let the photos tell the story. The oil pump from 425 was cleaned out, but not stripped as it was in good condition, whilst the oil filter from 425 had been fiddled with at some time in the past and was scrapped, being replaced with the one from engine 169. Photo 1 shows the oil pump and filter assembly laid out on the floor, with a new hand priming pump and additional piping to accept the addition of an electric priming pump, plus a bridge pipe (in red oxide) that replaces the lines to and from the radiator mounted oil cooler. The thought of a sectional radiator oil cooler failing at around 100psi did not appeal!



Of the three coolant pumps (centre photo), one was found to have broken shaft leaving the other two to be shot blasted and overhauled. One common feature of the NBL shunter is the number over the years that have suffered from frost damage to the cylinder block, (two out of the three engines on this project having suffered) apparently due to the coolant pump gland seal being intolerant of the searching effects of anti-freeze. My initial thoughts were to see if I could re-engineer the gland seal, however reading an article about the operation of the Southern Region diesel loco fleet, it mentioned that rather than use normal anti-freeze, they had used a water/soluble oil mix, the thinking being that it also formed a protective anti corrosive film on all the water surfaces. So, no re-engineering, I simply have to carry out an overhaul and use soluble oil as an anti freeze even if the rubber hoses decay a bit quicker! Photo 3 shows the steam cleaned cylinder block.

Immediately following this period, and having accepted a request earlier in the year to return to my old employment on a part time basis (after taking early retirement in 2007) progress remained slow, only to be delayed again in mid-February by the same relative returning to hospital with a chest infection for a month followed by six weeks intermediate care. Now twelve months later things are beginning to get back to a more settled state. (We wish John the best of luck with this project and look forward to future updates – Ed)



**As mentioned** in our August Newsletter, WD 2-10-0 No 90775 (NB 25438) has now been named 'The Royal Norfolk Regiment'. The ceremony took place at Sheringham on 9<sup>th</sup> September and was attended by Brigadier Woodham who was representing the Royal Norfolk Regiment and today's Royal Anglians. It was good to see No 90775's NBL Worksplate prominent in the official photos. More images can be found on the M&GN Joint Railway Society Facebook page and on their website <http://www.mandgn.co.uk>

**With deep regret** we have to record the passing of the world famous wild life artist & steam enthusiast David Shepherd who died on September 19<sup>th</sup> aged 86. David was one of the world's most outspoken conservationists but was possibly most famous for his superb paintings of steam locomotives and wildlife. He was the first President of the NBL Society when we were formed in 1989 and was presented with NBL 15F No 3052 by SA Transport Services in 1991. He once told me that he planned to paint a picture for Safmarine in exchange for them shipping the loco back to the UK but sadly this will not now happen.

**DHRS Vice Chairman** Paul Whittle reports that the extended general strike in support of 'Gorkhaland' finally ended on 27<sup>th</sup> September and that life is slowly returning to normal in the Darjeeling region. It is hoped that DHR services between Darjeeling and Ghum will resume by the end of October. Restoring the rest of the route is dependent on the removal of several landslips and extensive vegetation growth and is likely to take the rest of the year. Significant updates will be posted on the DHRS web site : [www.dhrs.org](http://www.dhrs.org)

**On a totally separate** DHR / NBL related topic, Colin Rainsbury tells us that a group of narrow gauge enthusiasts have obtained a full set of NBL / Sharp Stewart 'B Class' DHR Saddle Tank drawings and are considering building a new locomotive that would incorporate as much of today's modern steam technology as possible. Colin stresses that this is only a proposal at the present time but he is very interested in hearing from anyone who may be interested in the project and especially anyone who has access to a CAD set up to help them to put the drawings onto computer. Please contact Colin by email at : [lynbarn58@gmail.com](mailto:lynbarn58@gmail.com)

**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](http://www.nbloco.co.uk) Please send items for the website to Dave Fox at : [webmaster@nbloco.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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**

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ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP JOINING FEE (Optional) : £10

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

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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.**