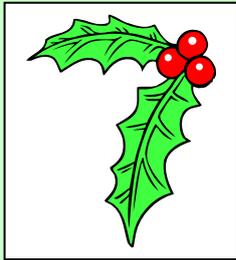
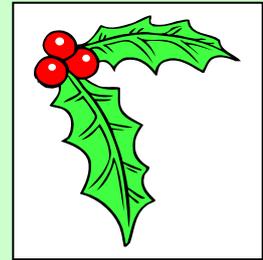


OXFORDSHIRE RAILWAY SOCIETY

11 DECEMBER 2019



Buffer Stop



Christmas greetings to all and welcome to the Society's 33rd annual film show, presented tonight by **Michael Clemens** on "England, Wales and Scotland in the 1960's". Michael has for many years been making available his family collection of cine and still photography through DVDs and books covering the midlands, Wales, the Southern's "Withered Arm" and much more.

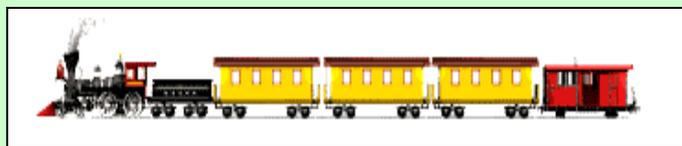


The snapshots above were taken on 30 December 1970 at Okehampton, just before the end of BR passenger services, and show 'Warship' 526 Jupiter on Meldon stone empties and class 122 single unit "bubble car" W55018.

These pictures serve as a handy reminder that next month on **January 8** Matthew Searle will be giving a display of historical slides showing *The Colour of Devon Steam* (and, wearing his Membership Secretary's hat, would like to remind you that subscriptions will then be due). Last month Colin Brading gave a presentation on the Wantage and Wootton Tramways.

More advanced notice: **February 12** will be our Members' evening, Annual General Meeting and photographic competition results. If you're thinking of offering a presentation, please sign up tonight or speak to a committee member. Entry forms for the photographic competition will also be available tonight or details can be had from matthew904@btinternet.com, which will also be the address for returning entries. Laurence Waters has very willingly agreed to be the judge again. The overall winner will be awarded what has now been formally named as the Frank Blackwell Cup.





OXFORDSHIRE RAILWAY SOCIETY

NODDING OFF

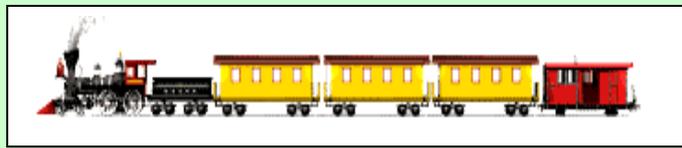


Top left: 142 065 in Northern Spirit livery, Newcastle Central, 1998; left: 143 610 in Regional Railways livery, Bristol Temple Meads, 1996; above: 144 002 in MetroTrain livery, Leeds, 1990

The end of 2019 should have seen the end of Pacers on the national rail network. Although Northern began withdrawal of its fleets in August, delays in introducing their CAF multiple unit replacements mean that they will linger on in Yorkshire into the new year, much to the annoyance of passengers and local politicians; Great Western is retaining its 143s pending cascade of 165/6s from the Thames Valley; and Transport for Wales's fleet will also persist for a while. A strange hybrid resulting from a merger of experimental research at Derby into a high speed freight vehicle, the need to provide more work for the Workington Leyland National bus plant, and the poverty of the British Rail Provincial services sector, the Pacers rapidly gained notoriety for vanishing from signalling panels and for their 'nodding donkey' ride quality – the editor's first trip in one given its head down the West Coast main line was exciting – and few have regarded them as much more than stopgaps.

Of the last-surviving classes, class 142 (introduced 1985) is primarily associated with the north west, the first batch being delivered in Greater Manchester orange and brown livery, but further notoriety came with the second batch, delivered in Great Western-inspired chocolate and spilt milk and branded with presumably unintended irony as 'Skippers', they suffered severe wheel squeal on the sharply-curved westcountry branches to which they were allocated, and were rapidly moved north, retaining their livery, although some have returned to the south west in First Great Western days. The all-Scottish-built class 143s originally went to the north east but spent most of their lives in Wales. What will probably be the last survivor, class 144 (the only variant to include 3-car units) mostly appeared new in West Yorkshire PTE maroon and buttermilk.

Given that all the completed single-car prototypes are preserved (only two on the British mainland), together with class 140 and several examples of class 141, quite a few from the recent batches are likely to go to heritage lines. 142 001 has been earmarked for the National Collection and 143 603 has already gone to the Swindon & Cricklade. Moreover Porterbrook are offering three carriages to the community groups that submit the best proposals for their use. Answers on a postcard...



OXFORDSHIRE RAILWAY SOCIETY



33 AT 60

December 17 1959 saw the first type 3 (class 33) diesel-electric delivered from the Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Company at Smethwick to the Southern Region at Hither Green, who put the first into service in January 1960 (and nicknamed them “Cromptons” after the electrical equipment supplier). 98 were built, including the dozen “Slim Jims” to Hastings line loading gauge. The use of electric train heating freed up space that would have been occupied by a boiler

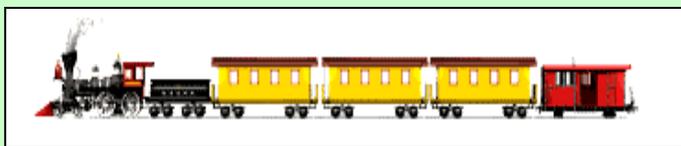
to accommodate a (well-tried) 8-cylinder Sulzer engine and 800-gallon fuel capacity within the established class 26 bodyshell.

The class’s highest-profile passenger workings were out of Waterloo: as tractor power at the Weymouth end of trailer sets (and workings down to Weymouth Quay) and coming chronologically between the ‘Warships’ and class 50s on the Salisbury and Exeter line. Although always being based on the Southern, they were in later years regularly diagrammed far beyond, including workings well into Wales. Notable freight workings included servicing the TransManche Link construction terminal on the Isle of Grain, and two long-distance double-headed services: the Fawley–Bromford Bridge oil tanks (which worked through Oxford) and the Cliffe–Uddingston cement working which took them as far north as York.

They remain popular on heritage operations, with twenty-seven surviving. West Coast Railways used 33 207 tailing last summer’s Windsor and other specials out of Waterloo.

Top: 33 008 Eastleigh, Bristol Temple Meads, 1987; bottom: 33 056 The Burma Star on Pullman special, Exeter Central, 1983





OXFORDSHIRE RAILWAY SOCIETY

60 YEARS A-GONE

On 31 December 1959 the County Donegal Railways Joint Committee ran its final rail services, the last Irish narrow gauge (three foot) commercial passenger operation: the last train, from Strabane to Stranorlar (*pictured*) was hauled by 4-6-4T no. 14 *Erne* (which survived until 1968).



DECEMBER TIMETABLE CHANGES

15 December sees major changes across the Great Western network. Some of local significance include: Paddington–Reading locals (2 trains per hour) transfer from GWR to Crossrail (although some TfL Rail class 345s have been used in passenger service from Reading since 26 November – *see photo below*); reinstated GWR Banbury–Paddington through service, using IET (1 return journey in each peak); Sundays only through service from Radley to Paddington, using IET; Cotswold line hourly through Paddington service and Worcestershire Parkway station opens. **Stop Press:** Ticket gates are now installed at the new entrance to Oxford station beside platforms 1/2: will it now be open by this Christmas?



COMING EVENTS

Thursday 12 December: 09.50 pu Oxford Parkway: Steam Dreams: Chinnor–Winchester/Eastleigh: 61306

Sunday 15 December: 12.10 at Oxford: Steam Dreams: Waterloo–Stratford-upon-Avon: 61306

Monday 16 December: 19:30: RCTS Thames Valley, Didcot Civic Hall: Members' images

Wednesday 18 December: 19:45: Basingstoke & District Railway Society, Wote Street Club: *Train of Events* (film) & buffet

Friday 20 December: 19:30: GWS Oxford, 58 Banbury Rd: Christmas meeting & quiz

A reminder: If you miss a *Buffer Stop*, want a preview or would like to see the colour version, you can view and download from the Society's website <www.oxfordshirerailwaysociety.co.uk>. Issues are normally available from the weekend preceding the relevant meeting.

"Buffer Stop" is edited by **Matthew Searle** <matthew904@btinternet.com> (who took the pictures, except: Stranorlar station by the late Walter Dendy from *Geograph Ireland* used under CC BY-SA 2.0; cup by Chris Brennan) and published by the Oxfordshire Railway Society; the views therein are not necessarily those of the Society; events may be altered. Society meetings are held at the Seacourt Day Centre, Seacourt Road, Botley, Oxford at 7.30pm on the second Wednesday in the month. **Closing date for next issue:** 2 January 2020.