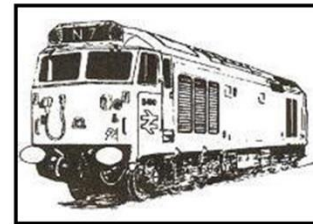
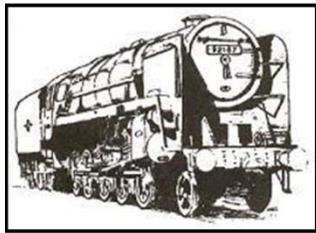


## OXFORDSHIRE RAILWAY SOCIETY



15 MAY 2023



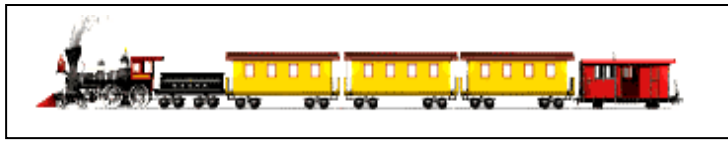
*Chinnor station with 9600.*

Tonight, **Stanley Hart**, Chair of the **Chinnor & Princes Risborough Railway Association**, will be giving a presentation on the line.

Last month on 3 April, Chris Youett delivered the second part of his slide presentation *We'll keep a welcome in the hillsides*. We are especially grateful to Chris who persevered in getting through to us on the very first day of the disruption caused by the emergency closure of Nuneham Viaduct (*right* – more overleaf).

**Next month**, we're back to our normal date, **Monday 12 June**, when Tony Stead will give a presentation on the Cholsey & Wallingford Railway.





## OXFORDSHIRE RAILWAY SOCIETY

### NUNEHAM VIADUCT CLOSURE

On 3 April, Network Rail made an unplanned complete closure to traffic of Nuneham Viaduct, just south of Radley, suspending all traffic between Kennington Junction and Didcot Parkway.

The condition of its southern abutment had been monitored since 2018, with a 50 mph speed restriction imposed in March 2022, reduced to 20 mph in January 2023 and 5 mph in the weekend prior to closure when a contractor injected material into the base of the embankment in an attempt to stabilise it temporarily; however monitoring caused suspension of traffic for safety reasons with large cracks in the abutment brickwork clearly apparent. Although there was some reconstruction in 1929 the southern abutment probably originates from installation of the first bowstring structure in 1907 (not 1909, as Network Rail publicity has it).

The original plan was to reopen at the end of April with a temporary structure supporting the bridge span while the abutment was replaced; however, it rapidly became apparent that it would not take substantially longer to carry out the full replacement during the closure period. Some contractor access had already been provided for the temporary works and deep piling into the river bank has been undertaken, with some equipment on a floating platform. The determination at the time of going to press is to complete the work on June 9, reopening at line speed the following day.

Great Western trains have been covered by replacement road transport, but from the start of May, rush-hour Oxford–Radley and Didcot–Culham shuttles have been scheduled using single line working. At first, CrossCountry services from the north were terminated at Banbury, but this has evolved to a pattern of trains from Manchester running through to Oxford and those from Newcastle terminating at Banbury with the gaps covered by replacement coaches to connect with Bournemouth services terminating at Didcot Parkway. Chiltern Railways, additionally trying to cover for West Coast Main Line traffic during an Easter Euston closure, initially issued a warning about overcrowding on its Oxford trains, but from April 17 adjusted its whole peak hour timetable in order to provide extra seating capacity on its Oxford–Marylebone service. Southampton Docks intermodal trains have been diverted via the West Coast Main Line and Acton, a route cleared for W10 hicube containers. Car trains from Cowley to Southampton are running via the Bicester Chord and Greenford Loop as is aggregate traffic serving the Banbury Road terminal at Oxford Parkway.

### EAST WEST RAIL

Chiltern Railways is being contracted to operate the first stage of East West Rail services between Oxford and Milton Keynes via Bletchley when the route opens at some point between December 2024 and September 2025.

### BEECHES AUCTION

Assets of the late Adrian Shooter's Beeches Light Railway at Steeple Aston are being auctioned on 23 June by Pugh & Co. of Ledbury. A group has been formed to try and buy his iconic Himalayan Darjeeling locomotive and keep it in the UK based at Statfold Barn.

### COMING EVENTS

**Saturday 13 May:** 10:30–16:00: Oxford & District Model Railway Club, Collinwood Road URC Church, Headington: Open Day

**Saturday 27 May:** 11:10 arr Oxford: Steam Dreams: excursion ex Paddington: 61306? [*if running, presumably arriving via Parkway*]

**Thursday 17 July:** 07:00 pu Oxford: Saphos Trains: *Welsh Marches Express*: steam Bristol–Shrewsbury

*"Buffer Stop" is edited by Matthew Searle <[matthew904@btinternet.com](mailto:matthew904@btinternet.com)> (who took the photographs) and published by the Oxfordshire Railway Society; the views therein are not necessarily those of the Society; events may change. Society meetings are held at the Kidlington Baptist Church hall, High Street, Kidlington, Oxford at 7.00pm, normally on the second Monday in the month. Closing date for next issue: 5 June*