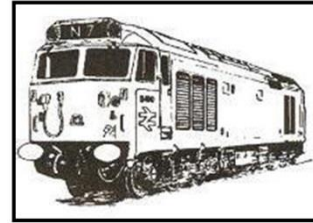
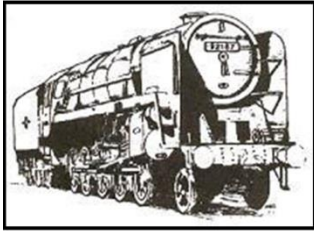


OXFORDSHIRE RAILWAY SOCIETY



11 SEPTEMBER 2023



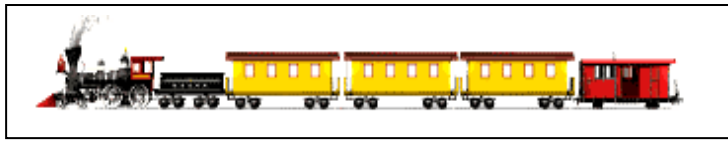
*Great Northern Railway
no. 251 at its new home,
the Danum Museum in its
Doncaster birthplace*



*50 023 Howe and 50 034
Furious on an up
Network Express at
Oxford, May 1989*

Our speaker tonight is **David Mather**, former Area Manager at Oxford, and his subject is *Full Circle – Nottingham to Nottingham via Oxford and beyond*. He will start with his forebears' employment on the GNR and continue with his career on the WR.

We finished last season on 12 June with Tony Stead giving a presentation on the Cholsey & Wallingford Railway. At our next meeting, on **9 October**, member Peter Darkin will be travelling from Bridgnorth to talk about the **Severn Valley Railway**.



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LOCAL RAIL NEWS

Extended hours have had to be introduced on the highway works under Botley Road railway bridge to make up time following delays caused by the discovery that a brick invert, apparently part of a Victorian groundwater drainage system for this notoriously flood-prone location, is much more extensive than earlier surveys had predicted. ** Buckingham Group Contracting, who refurbished the line from Bicester Village and built Oxford Parkway station, ceased trading last month; their rail business has passed to Kier. ** Privately-owned 31 270 *Athena*, carrying Regional Railways livery, arrived at Didcot Railway Centre late last month on medium-term loan, while Didcot's class 14 is going on short-term loan to the Epping Ongar Railway. ** The Industrial Railway Society has recently published *The Railway, Locomotives & Company History 1818–1960 of the Oxford Gas Light & Coke Company* by Colin Judge at £20 – see <https://irsshop.co.uk>.

BEDFORD–BLETCHLEY

The Bedford–Bletchley line has been without passenger trains since Vivarail went into administration at the end of last year. In June/July, London Northwestern secured DMUs 150 137/9/41 from Northern for use on the service, but as it does not currently operate the class, staff training is needed as well as adornment in a predominantly green Marston Vale livery. Introduction on peak services is expected later this autumn but a full service replacing the long-term substitution is not expected until January next year. Meanwhile, Great Western has purchased the Class 230 multiple units previously used on the line from Vivarail's administrators at scrap value and they have been moved (by road) from Bletchley to Reading Train Care depot.

DEEP FRIED

Chiltern's 06:14 Stourbridge Junction–Marylebone on 27 July was Britain's first passenger service to be powered by hydrotreated vegetable oil, which is essentially waste cooking oil (in 68 014). On the same day Chiltern was able to restore its Oxford–London service to half-hourly after two days when – with some irony – depot problems had prevented sufficient DMUs being fuelled to maintain a full timetable.

IRON SHERPA

Darjeeling Himalayan Railway 19.B, late of the Beeches Light Railway, has been secured by the Darjeeling Tank Locomotive Trust at auction for a relatively modest £250K and, together with her two replica coaches, will remain in the UK, based at Stafford Barn. Here she is expected to be joined by the other Indian mountain railway locomotive resident in Britain, Matheran Hill No. 740, as well as the late Adrian Shooter's Post Office Railway unit. Mr Shooter's ex-Jubilee Line construction locomotive has gone to the Festiniog Railway and his Model T-based inspection car has also gone to north Wales.

COMING EVENTS

Wednesday 13 September: 11:31 arr Oxford Parkway: *Belmond British Pullman*: Victoria–Hinksey Sidings & return: 2 x 67

Wednesday 13 September: 19:45: Basingstoke & District Railway Society, Wote Street Club: *In the Land of the Gods* (Eritrea and Darjeeling: Paul Whittle)

Thursday 14 September: 18:45 for 19:00: Pendon Museum: Special Viewing for prebooked ORS members

Sunday 17 September: 10:30–16:00: Oxford & District Model Railway Club, Cherwell School, Marston Ferry Road: *Oxrail 2023* exhibition [ORS in attendance]

Tuesday 19 September: 19:00: RCTS, Didcot Civic Hall: *Swindon Works – the final years* (Harry Roberts)

Friday–Sunday 22–24 September: GWS, Didcot Railway Centre: Autumn Steam Gala: 4953 visiting

Tuesday 26 September: 09:40 pass Oxford (through lines): Branch Line Society: *Pines Express*, Leeds–Swanage & return: XC HST

Monday 27 September: Basingstoke & District Rly Soc: *Manchester Area Railways* (Alastair Wood)

“Buffer Stop” is edited by Matthew Searle <matthew904@btinternet.com> (who took the photographs) and published by the Oxfordshire Railway Society; the views therein are not necessarily those of the Society or the Editor; events may change. Society meetings are held at the Kidlington Baptist Church hall, High Street, Kidlington, Oxford at 7.00pm on the second Monday in the month. Closing date for next issue: 2 October