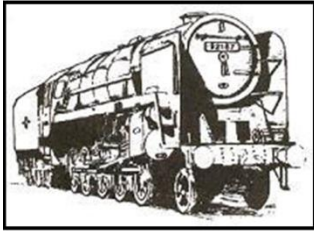
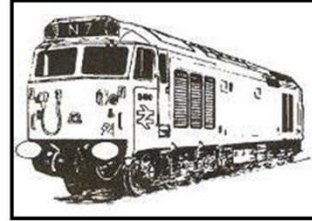


OXFORDSHIRE RAILWAY SOCIETY



Buffer Stop



9 JUNE 2025

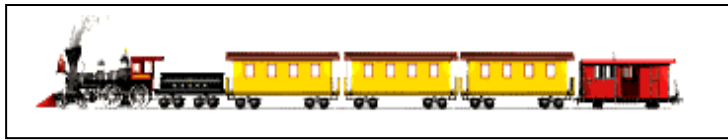


View on the Covasna–Comandău forest railway in Romania in February 1997 (photo by “Günther1986”)

Tonight, our member Alan Wiffen will be presenting videos of narrow gauge forestry railways of north east China and of Romania in winter; and Ivan Cadge will be showing a selection of acquired slides, some of which are identifiable and some of which will need guesswork.

Last month, Keith Brown came from the Watercress Line to take us over the Mid-Hants Line from its origins to closure in 1973. Our next meeting is on **Monday 8 September** when Paul Finch is coming from the Western Locomotive Association to tell us about their fifty years of preserving diesel-hydraulics. We'd be glad if anyone can bring surplus model railway equipment, books or other saleable items to that meeting, as we shall have a stand at Oxrail 2025 on 14 September.

Don't forget while you're about over the summer our annual **photographic competition**: the categories are Steam; Diesel & Electric; Railway Related; and Architecture.



OXFORDSHIRE RAILWAY SOCIETY

COMING EVENTS

Saturday 14 June: 09:15 pu Oxford: Pathfinder Railtours: *The Torbay Coastal Grid* Derby–Paignton: Colas Rail class 56

Sunday 22 June: 10:30 arr: Watercress Line: ORS visit

Saturday 5 July: 06:50 pu Oxford: Pathfinder Railtours *The Ffestiniog Slater* Swindon–Blaenau Ffestiniog: 2 x WCR class 37

Thursday 10 July & Thursday 21 August: via Oxford: Steam Dreams: *Spirit of Summer Lunch/Sunset Steam Express* circulars from Paddington: 70000 (July)

Friday 18 July: 16:00 pu Didcot Parkway: Pathfinder Railtours *The Thames & Kennet Courier* Reading–Bristol Parkway circular (with add-on options): 2 x WCR class 37

Friday 22 August: 11:30 arr Oxford Parkway: Belmond British Pullman ex Victoria: DB class 67

Saturday 23 August: 10:20 pu Didcot: Railway Touring Co: *Cotswold Venturer* Victoria–Worcester: LSL steam

Saturday 30 August: 07:15 pu Oxford: Pathfinder Railtours: *Cumbrian Explorer* Westbury–Carlisle: diesel

Saturday 6 September: 06.45 pu Oxford: Saphos Trains: *English Riviera Express* High Wycombe–Kingswear (for Dartmouth): LSL steam from Taunton

FIFTY YEARS ON – news from the ORS's founding year of 1975

Due to temporary closure that summer of the Great Western Main Line between Westerleigh and Wootton Bassett for track relaying in preparation for squadron introduction of HSTs, Newport–Didcot Power Station coal trains were diverted via Worcester and Oxford. That summer and autumn, BR planned to deliver more than ten million “easy guides” to its services to households across the country. **July 4** Peco opened the 7¼ in. gauge Beer Heights Light Railway in Devon. **July 13** The North Norfolk Railway opened for regular tourist traffic out of Sheringham station. **July 19** Piccadilly Line services were extended from Hounslow West to Hatton Cross as the first stage of the extension to Heathrow Airport. LT subsequently began introduction of the Metro-Cammell 1973 Stock trains on the line, but delays required some units to be stored temporarily at Bicester. **July 19–20** Stage One of the London Bridge resignalling came into service. **August 6** Weaver Junction accident: a caustic soda tank train with inadequate brake power collided with a Freightliner with destructive results. **August 10** The gas turbine powered APT-E achieved in excess of 152 mph (245 km/h) over two miles east of Didcot as the culmination of a series of tests run between Goring and Uffington. **August 13** Royal Mail issued a set of commemorative postage stamps to mark the 150th anniversary of public railways. **August 16** Darlington North Road Station Museum opened. **August 24–30** Rail 150 exhibition at Shildon. Many interesting moves took place to get the exhibits there, including 7808 from Didcot. **August 31** Cavalcade, Shildon–Heighington, led by new replica *Locomotion*. The oldest locomotive working under its own steam was *Shannon* (1857) from Didcot.

LOCAL RAIL NEWS

Rail magazine has announced that **Chiltern** are almost certain to take on the lease of thirteen sets of CAF Mk 5 carriages previously used on TransPennine Express to be introduced during next year on its Class 68-worked Birmingham line services. This would have the potential to free up some Class 168 DMUs, perhaps for **East West Rail**. There is still no news on a date for introduction of regular EWR passenger services, other than “by the end of 2025”. Recent confirmation that a Universal Studios theme park is to be built on the former Stewartby brickworks site holds considerable potential for the Bletchley–Bedford section of EWR which lies alongside. Funding for EWR has drawn ire from Welsh politicians as it is designated an “England and Wales” scheme, from which Wales feels it does not directly benefit. Arriva, on behalf of its **Grand Central** subsidiary, has made an application to the Office of Rail and Road to run a Newcastle–Brighton service via Oxford; however, with rail renationalisation having commenced on May 25, the future of open access operations is not fully clear. **Network Rail** is installing horizontal props under the Botley Road bridge to help support the replacement rail bridge structure and plans over July and August to complete the water and sewage pipe diversions at the site.

“Buffer Stop” is edited by **Matthew Searle** <matthew904@btinternet.com> 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 Kidlington Baptist Church hall, High Street, Kidlington, Oxford at 7.00pm on the second Monday in the month. **Closing date for next issue: 1 September**

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