

THE COMMUNICATION CORD



60163 TORNADO

New Steam for the Main Line

No. 41 Winter 2016



Neil Whicker

Tornado at Paddington Station after returning with 'The Red Rose'.

AI ENGINEERING REPORT

by David Elliott

Tornado has continued to operate well with few 'out of course' repairs. The most significant incident occurred on 26th October during preparation for the engine and support coach move from the Severn Valley Railway to London. The discovery of a steam leak in the smokebox when the regulator was opened resulted in the locomotive failing the Fitness to Run (FTR) exam. The following day with the fire out

and the pressure reduced, David Wright discovered that the gasket between the anti-vacuum valve (snifting valve) and the superheater header was blowing. The anti-vacuum valve is the object which sticks out of the top of the smokebox behind the chimney and can be heard operating each time the regulator is opened when the steam pressure closes the valve with a distinct 'clink' noise.

The function of the anti-vacuum valve is to let air into the steam circuit when the locomotive is coasting with the regulator shut. When coasting, the pistons create a vacuum which when the valves open to exhaust, causes char in the smoke to be drawn back down the blast pipe into the cylinders. The air let in by the anti-vacuum valve reduces this effect. The air has an additional function of cooling

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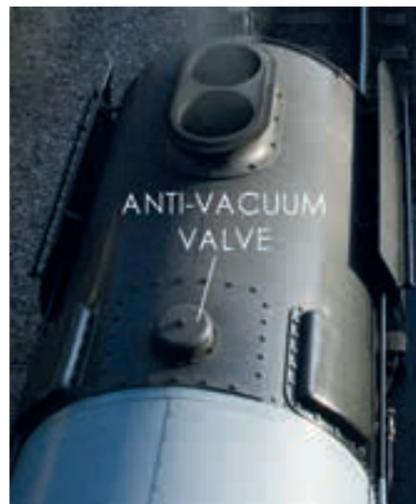
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Sponsors and contact information

the superheater elements when there is no steam passing through them. This reduces the tendency of the elements to be burnt when the regulator is closed after a prolonged period of high outputs. The gasket and the moving part of the valve were replaced, and an FTR successfully achieved. Fortunately with the next main line 'Belmond British Pullman' operation being on 6th November, there was still plenty of time to move the loco to Stewarts Lane for this train.

The other 'out of course' repair was to replace the concrete fire arch in the firebox. The existing arch was still serviceable but pieces were starting to fall off it. David Wright and his team replaced the arch at Stewarts Lane and the new one is performing well. **TCC**



Anti-vacuum valve.

SUPPORT COACH

The arrangements for storing emergency equipment and other essential items on the support coach have not been entirely satisfactory, so a set of bespoke shelving has been installed in the guard's compartment to house these items. The layout was designed by Rob Morland and built by Tom Blight who is one of David Wright's team **TCC**

DARLINGTON LOCOMOTIVE WORKS UPGRADE

The main development at Darlington Locomotive Works has been the completion by Darlington Council of the renovation of the exterior. This has involved repair and reinstatement of missing or boarded up windows, total renewal of the rendering and repair of guttering and down pipes. This work has been made more demanding by the listed status of the building, hence windows have to be wood framed and of appropriate period appearance, the render uses lime mortar and the paint has a traditional lime base and required

several more coats than would be needed for modern paints.

The final result is very pleasing and our thanks are due to the Darlington Council team and contractors who have worked around us in a very considerate and co-operative way to ensure that our work in DLW was largely unaffected by the refurbishment.

2016 marks the 50th Anniversary of the closure of Darlington Works so it is good to see one of the original Stockton & Darlington Railway buildings being cherished and cared for. **TCC**



Renovated exterior of Darlington Locomotive Works.

David Elliott

From the chair by Mark Allatt



As I finalise this column in mid-February, No. 60163 *Tornado* has just worked her (and the Trust's) first train of the year - 'The Red Rose' - this train was

fully booked, selling well from the moment that we announced it - proving that the right train with the right starting points, route and destination taken to market suitably early will generate a sufficient return to be commercially viable and create enough profit to keep *Tornado* operating on the main line on a day-to-day basis (excluding five yearly overhauls). This is a stark contrast to our unfortunate experience with 'The Peppercorn Phoenix' last year.

The Trust's second train is 'The Devon Belle' on Saturday 2nd April sees *Tornado* returning on southern routes with a visit to the historic city of Exeter. Full details on page 9, or go to www.a1steam.com. Our third train of the year is the 'The Scarborough Flyer' on Saturday 4th June. This will be the first time that *Tornado* has hauled a revenue earning train to the famous East Coast resort and the recreation of what was the LNER's fastest pre-Streamliner era express. Full details on page 13 or go to www.a1steam.com.

There will be more A1SLT promoted trains with *Tornado* in the second half of 2016 but one already pencilled in the diary is the 'Flying Hamburger' on Saturday 3rd December, from London to Birmingham (to visit the famous German Christmas Market) and the Severn Valley Railway.

2016 will also see *Tornado* hauling trains for other promoters. Most notable will be the 'Belmond British Pullman'. As supporters of the Trust you can receive a 10% saving on journeys for travel on the 'Belmond British Pullman' before July 2016 - just quote code TO10 at time of booking.

As the majority of our main line trains apart from the 'Belmond British Pullman' will for the foreseeable future be promoted by the Trust, it is vital that we fill them and so I would ask that you look at next year's developing programme to see which trains you are able to support and also encourage friends and family to experience some of *Tornado's* magic.

Tornado will also be making several heritage railway and centre visits during 2016, starting with the Didcot Railway Centre over Easter and including the Severn Valley Railway's Autumn Steam Gala in September where there will be special

events for supporters. The details of other visits are currently being finalised.

As you know, last year marked the 25th anniversary of the launch of the project to build a new Peppercorn class A1 with the first meeting at The Railway Institute in York on 17th November 1990. In this issue of *TCC*, Phil Champion (brother of David, long-standing Trust volunteer and former editor of our first journal *The Pioneer*) writes about the Trust's pre-history - a sort-of prequel to David's four part story of the Trust's early years - using material discovered by long-term covenantor Bob Parkinson in *Steam Railway News* (SRN). A fascinating read!

Most importantly we wanted to use our 25th anniversary as an opportunity to highlight the importance of The 163 Pacifics Club - our desire to complete what we set out to do 25 years ago and purchase *Tornado's* tender. Thanks to your most generous support we now have 79 members of The 163 Pacifics Club - tremendous progress but we still have a long way to go.

Sadly 2015 also saw the death of our president Dorothy Mather, widow of Arthur Peppercorn, designer of the Peppercorn class A1s and the last chief mechanical engineer of the London & North Eastern Railway just six weeks short of her 100th birthday. By happy coincidence, the A1SLT trustees, advisors and management team met in Darlington for its annual strategy weekend on the weekend of 22-24th January and over dinner on the Saturday evening toasted Dorothy's memory on what would have been her 100th birthday. Until very recent years, Dorothy joined us at this dinner to encourage us in our efforts and regale us with stories of her life with Arthur and her own history with the Trust. Many of us on the Trust's board remember celebrating Dorothy's 90th birthday in such a fashion!

Although no-one can directly replace Dorothy due to her unique link with *Tornado*, the Trust does need a new president and there is no-one better qualified to take up this mantle than David Champion, my predecessor as chairman and the man who devised the funding basis for *Tornado*, the monthly covenant and the marketing slogan, 'build an A1 for the price of a pint of beer a week' (now also used for our new P2). In this issue of *TCC* David recounts his personal memories of our late president and how she took on such a pivotal role for the Trust. Thank you David for agreeing to take on this new role. I would also like to welcome Tim and Ben

Godfrey, grandsons of Sir Nigel Gresley, as vice presidents of the Trust.

Meanwhile in Darlington Locomotive Works the construction of No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* continues to race ahead with the fitting of more parts of the footplate and the trial fitting of the cab. We have also taken delivery of the locomotive's distinctive smokebox door and other components for the smokebox which means that it won't be too long before both cab and smokebox are fitted to the frames.

With over £2m now pledged to our P2 project, we need to keep up our fundraising efforts if we are to achieve our 2021 target. However, in order to keep to our self-imposed schedule we need to raise around £700,000 every year until 2021 which gets harder as each year goes by due to the nature of our 'P2 for the price of a pint' monthly covenant scheme. And from an engineering perspective our big leap forward in 2016 will be the aim to wheel No. 2007 *Prince of Wales* in time for our Annual Convention on Saturday 1st October 2015. This will require an additional £150,000 on top of our projected income for the P2 Project for 2016 and so we will be launching a campaign to fill this gap in the spring - please look out for our mailing and give generously if you are able.

Thank you again for all for your continued support for both *Tornado* and *Prince of Wales* throughout our 25th anniversary year. With a great programme of main line trains and heritage railway visits planned for *Tornado*, major changes in the make-up of the main line steam scene and significant progress expected in the construction of *Prince of Wales*, 2016 has the potential to be a bumper year for the Trust - may it be a happy and prosperous one for all of our supporters too.

● I don't intend to repeat what has been written in the railway and national press about West Coast Railway Company Ltd (WCRC) following the Office of Rail and Road (ORR)'s issuing of a Prohibition Notice to WCRC on 17th February 2016. Under the terms of the Notice, WCRC will not be able to operate trains on the main line network until the ORR is satisfied its governance and operations meet industry practice and are fit for the scale of its operation. Needless to say, *Tornado* will continue to be operated on the Network Rail main line by DB Schenker, which has worked successfully with the Trust since the locomotive's completion in 2008. **TCC**

OUR NEW PRESIDENT, DAVID CHAMPION by Mark Allatt

David was born 1948 in South Shields, County Durham, the middle of three brothers, Dennis older, Phil younger. A Hornby Dublo train set in Christmas 1955 cemented David and Phil's life-long love of railways. Whichever route they took to Newcastle, the boys knew that when ensconced on platform 9 at Newcastle Central with an Ian Allan ABC, they would be treated to a feast of LNER motive power which still held sway for their last few years on the ECML. In due course they witnessed the depressing run down of steam and the change to diesel, aghast that so few of the Pacifics were being preserved. Round about this time, in 1964, David read an editorial in *Railway Modeller* that said the best way of preserving locomotives for the future was to make models of them. It infuriated him and he shouted angrily at Phil that, "No it bloody isn't, the best way is to start making new steam engines and, mark my words, one day somebody will".

This idea lay dormant for a quarter of a century while David indulged his other passion of playing music in bands. David married Gillian (the singer in the band), moved to rural Northumberland to work for the Port of Tyne Authority in 1970. David moved on to a northern building society in 1976 and by the early 1980s was running the estates side of things at their large Head Office.

At the beginning of the 1990s he was 'head-hunted' to be one of the founder-partners in a new venture being set up by Lord Rothschild, together with elder brother Dennis, opening up the Newcastle office. At the same time a series of letters and articles appeared



Mandy Grant

David Champion presents Mark Allatt with the original business plan.

in *Steam Railway News* proposing build a brand new Peppercorn class A1. Enquiries revealed that the proposal was only very tentative, using a traditional type of railway club structure, and raising money by selling souvenirs. David immediately sensed that this would never deliver a new A1, and offered to come up with a workable business plan. The next part has become A1SLT lore, when one warm night after dinner David took the remainder of a bottle of particularly good red wine to his study and sat down with pen and a single sheet of paper (presented to the Trust at its 25th

Anniversary Convention); the method just seemed to flow, the kind of organisation, how it would operate, and most crucially, how to raise the money. In twenty minutes it was done and David instinctively knew it would work - it still is working today!

Sadly, in late 1999, Gillian was diagnosed as terminally ill with widespread cancer. David decided give up work and all other commitments to care for her during her remaining time, stepping down from his pivotal role as A1SLT Chairman after nine year's steering the project forward. When Gillian died in November 2004, David had lost his soul mate, no longer had a career or income and his prospects were grim. Happily some friends ran Barter Books, the UK's biggest second hand bookshop in Alnwick Old Station and offered David a job - and ten years later he is a Director of this wonderful company. Following Gill's death David was reunited with Lillian, a close friend of Gill's who had moved to Calgary in 1969 and was visiting the UK. They were married the following year. David became once again heavily involved with the Trust, signing up as Covenantor No. 1 for the new P2 *Prince of Wales* and now stepping up to the role of president of The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust from a few years as vice president. **TCC**



Graeme Bunker

New Trust Vice Presidents Ben and Tim Godfrey start the profiler cutting No. 2007's frames.

EDITORIAL by Graham Langer



Indulge me for a minute please. Have you ever wondered what it must be like to be part of winning racehorse syndicate, to have a share in a thoroughbred and enjoy the thrill of watching it run? Of course the down side is that a stake in such an animal can be extremely expensive (and the associated bills crippling) with no guarantee of a return on your money... Hang on though, if you are reading this you are already a member of a winning syndicate, whose steed has run every season for the last seven years, has shown form on almost every track in the country (sometimes setting 'course' records) and has only been pulled up twice! What is more you can be a member of this successful syndicate for as little as the

price of a pint a week! And it gets better because you can also have a share in her new stablemate, currently growing up in Darlington and due in training in 2021!

Talking of *Prince of Wales*, extraordinary progress is being made at Darlington Locomotive Works with many of the components sourced during last winter being machined and fitted to the frames. In order to keep the pace up we will be launching a series of initiatives this year - make sure you have your cash/chequebooks/ internet banking (delete as appropriate) at the ready.

Meanwhile our current main line contender will be putting in a full season's work so, why not attend a 'race meeting' this year and support your 'runner' on the track in person? The Trust is organising a number of great days out with *Tornado* so get on board and book some tickets now. A guaranteed 'winner' every time! **TCC**

DIARY 2016

Below are the future operations *Tornado* is confirmed to be involved in. More details will be published on www.a1steam.com as trains are finalised. P2 events will also appear in this section with further details on www.p2steam.com. Tour company contact details below.

● **Saturday 12th March** - Belmond British Pullman - The Golden Age of Travel (Surrey Hills)

● **March 25th to March 28th** - Easter at Didcot Railway Centre

● **Tuesday March 29th** - Driver Experience at Didcot

● **Saturday April 2nd** - 'The Devon Belle' - London Waterloo to Exeter - A1SLT (bookings through UK Railtours)

● **Friday April 8th** - Belmond British Pullman - The Golden Age of Travel (Surrey Hills)

● **Wednesday 11th May** - Belmond British Pullman - London Victoria to Bath & Bristol

● **Friday 27th May** - Belmond British Pullman - The Golden Age of Travel (Surrey Hills)

● **Saturday 4th June** - 'The Scarborough Flyer' - London King's Cross to York and Scarborough - A1SLT (bookings through UK Railtours)

● **Saturday 18th June** - Belmond British Pullman - The Golden Age of Travel (Surrey Hills)

● **Friday 1st July** - 'The Harwich Pullman' - London Victoria to Harwich Town. (bookings through Papyrus Rail UK)

● **Saturday 23rd July** - Belmond British Pullman - The Golden Age of Travel (Surrey Hills)

● **Friday 12th August** - Belmond British Pullman - The Golden Age of Travel (Surrey Hills)

● **Wednesday 7th September** - Belmond British Pullman - London Victoria to Bath & Bristol

● **Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th September** - Severn Valley Railway Gala

● **Friday 30th September** - Belmond British Pullman - The Golden Age of Travel (Surrey Hills)

● **Saturday 1st October** - Annual Convention.

● **Saturday 22nd October** - Belmond British Pullman - The Golden Age of Travel (Surrey Hills)

● **Friday 4th November** - Belmond British Pullman - The Golden Age of Travel (Surrey Hills)

● **Saturday 3rd December** - 'The Flying Hamburger' - London to Birmingham and the SVR-A1SLT

Belmond British Pullman
Didcot Railway Centre
Papyrus Rail UK
Severn Valley Railway
UK Railtours

Tel: 020 3117 1300 Web: www.belmond.com/british-pullman-train
Tel: 01235 817200 Web: www.didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk
Tel: 01908 410450 Web: www.papyrus-rail.com
Tel: 01562 757900 Web: www.svr.co.uk
Tel: 01438 715050 Web: www.ukrailtours.com

TORNADO ON TOUR

from Shropshire back to 'The Smoke' by Huw Parker

Geoff Griffiths



6th November, the 'Belmond British Pullman' - with autumn tinting the leaves, *Tornado* rushes through Putney.

The first part of this period saw *Tornado* appearing at the Severn Valley Railway for two days dedicated for her Covenanters and supporters. The locomotive was turned out to a very high standard indeed thanks to a dedicated support crew, who spent the first part of the week cleaning and polishing, only to have some of their effort undone once the fire was lit in windy conditions causing much smoke to issue forth from the firebox door rather than the chimney! To say the air was blue would be an understatement, but the

damage was quickly rectified as photographs of the Covenantors' Days testify. The locomotive went on to haul service trains over the next two weekends, with a short stint of driver experience trips in the mid-week. The final weekend saw *Tornado* operating alongside *Royal Scot*, which was building up mileage ahead of her return to mainline duties, and a combination of the two locomotives drew many people to the railway and the lineside despite the poor weather conditions!

Our return to *Stewarts Lane* was delayed after a failed gasket was discovered in the smokebox, but some swift work by the engineering team soon rectified the problem and the locomotive moved south once more behind a Devon & Cornwall Railways diesel in time to resume the last few Belmond trains prior to Christmas. The first in November and then two further trains in the second week of December were well loaded and the locomotive performed admirably, despite some poor track conditions on the second trip, where leaf fall and damp rails led to some challenging driving! This creates further challenge for the fireman, when the locomotive cannot settle into a steady demand for steam, but our DBS crews managed all three trains admirably before heading for a well-earned break during the Christmas and New Year period until the end of January.

The same is not true for our engineering staff who visited *Stewarts Lane* during this period of inactivity to address some minor repairs and maintenance that are not possible whilst the engine is hot or in steam. We programme these repairs, routine maintenance exams and boiler washouts into the longer periods of down time between steaming, so whilst the engine may not be out and about in steam, there is a constant demand on the engineering team and



Les Bailey

8th December - *Tornado* heads the 'Belmond British Pullman' through Mortlake.

support crews to keep the locomotive and coach in running order. By the time this edition of *The Communication Cord* is out and you are reading this, *Tornado* will be back in traffic after a couple of steam tests and a full boiler washout. We look forward to a busy programme again this year and hope to see you on one of our mainline excursions or Preserved Railway visits. Here's to a successful 2016! [TCCG](#)



Yoshi Hoshida

12th December - with another Surrey Hills Excursion, *Tornado* passes Shere Heath.

AI PROJECT PRE-DAWN - Part I by Phil Champion

You might suppose the 'AI Project' started in 1990. Not so. The early days have been recounted in several publications by my brother David who devised the funding basis for *Tornado*, the monthly covenant and the marketing slogan, 'build an AI for the price of a pint of beer a week' – now also used for the P2. We joined the project in May 1990 after David had extensive discussions with Mike Wilson and we thought we knew the very early history. However, long-term covenantor Bob Parkinson has shed new light on the earliest days by acquiring relevant copies of *Steam Railway News* (SRN) and sending them to David who showed them to me. They highlight some contemporary opinions although later on I've included items from my AI log plus David's memories.

The first public inkling of a possible AI project was a small 1" x 1½" boxed advertisement amongst fifteen others in the 20th January 1989 issue - it was dwarfed by a much bigger one for components for *Galatea*. From the start the choice was either a Gresley class P1 (not P2) 2-8-2 or Peppercorn class AI. It read, "LNER Gresley P1 2-8-2 or Peppercorn AI 4-6-2 - are YOU interested in seeing the construction of a fully operational replica, built to main line standards? If so write to Box SRN40" and then gave the publisher's Southport address. The start date has thus moved from early 1990 to January 1989. However, deciding to build a P1 or AI then getting the advertisement into this fortnightly newspaper means the genesis had probably started in late 1988.

In his 'Comment' for issue No. 56 of 17th February Technical Editor Gordon H. Walker wrote, "The advertisements that have appeared in the last few issues... have produced some response." He added that current steam locomotive operating facilities would favour the P1 replica because its low axle loading would allow it to be used on most private railways. He thought that an AI would be a more difficult type to test run and operate. He could foresee, though, an ideal AI scenario of regular steam running on a privatised S&C.

Various readers' letters are of interest. Tony Teperek of Leeds thought the AIs were candidates for "the most aesthetically pleasing design ever" (very hard to disagree with that!). The P1 was a strange choice as only two were built; they were not totally successful and didn't last long. Why not build the more successful P2? In issue No. 60 of 21st April S.J. Temple



reckoned, "I think it unlikely any replica steam locos can, or will, be built". The 'It can't be done!' brigade had started already! Locomotive owner Graeme Binns was more forward looking when he contested that in the following issue. He replied that, "Modern technology has brought within the reach of preservation schemes that were totally unthinkable years ago... With computerised machining techniques, it will be a simple and much cheaper task in the year 1999 than it is today." Other writers proposed a myriad of other new build projects. Incidentally, in January 2013 Graeme mentioned in a letter to *Steam Railway* that he was one of a group of people who started the AI project off in Stockton's Green Dragon pub. More doubts came with issue No. 64 of 2nd June and Ian Prickett of Wakefield strongly thought that a P1, AI or LBSCR Atlantic would just be a "marvel" rather than "a regularly useful engine today" D. McVinnie and D. Wilson of Barrow-in-Furness thought that a people might think a replica was not a 'real' engine and proposed instead designing a new modern, 1990s steam loco.

David's discussions with Mike Wilson in spring 1990 showed that the project was an offshoot of a plan to preserve Stockton station. A steam engine had been thought to be a useful part of the attraction. More background on this is found in SRN76 of 17th November 1989. The Stockton and Darlington Railway Preservation Society was formed in February 1988 to reverse the decline of Stockton station. They managed to get it Grade 2 listed. By late 1989 they were looking to lease or rent some station rooms then, with land available and a BR connection plus a large catchment area, set up a railway heritage centre. The society had monthly meetings in the Georgian Theatre in Green Dragon Yard, just off Stockton High Street. The Chairman was Mike Wilson with Neville Anderson as Membership Secretary.

Progress on a new steam locomotive was indeed slow by November 1989, ten months after that boxed advertisement. To be fair that was not the society's main focus; improving and developing Stockton station was. SRN 76 announced that a feasibility study had started into building a replica LNER steam loco on Tyneside. Enthusiasts could help decide which type by writing to Mike or 'phoning him. Possibilities mentioned included an AI, P1, North British or North Eastern Atlantic or K3. The study was in conjunction with Matatec Limited. This was a firm of ship repairers based in Seaton Delaval, North Tyneside who would build the locomotive. The replica would be for possible use on the main line. A 'large number of people' had shown interest in a replica. Various components were thought to be available for an AI.

Matatec came to be mentioned in SRN a number of times. They were said to be building a new tender tank for A4 *Union of South Africa* and were recommended in SRN for other work such as boiler repairs. In fact, the tank was built by the engineering firm Longridge in Blydon, further west, past Newcastle and on the Tyne's south bank. A later AI project CME contacted Longridge for an AI tender tank quotation on the basis that they had built the one for that A4.

Over a year had passed when a public meeting was to be held in the "North East of England" on Saturday 24th March 1990 to decide which replica should be built - back to the P1 versus AI choice. SRN's comment was very positive, explaining how so many of the components of such a "daunting project" had already been made in preservation - and technical progress would help with the others. Tellingly, it concluded with the comment, "The building of a 'modern' replica would now appear to depend on the raising of sufficient capital to pay for the available expertise." *To be continued* **TCC**

'THE DEVON BELLE' - a wonderful spring trip to Exeter

by Graeme Bunker

On Saturday 2nd April 2016 No. 60163 *Tornado* will set out from London Waterloo station and head for Devon and the historic city of Exeter. With the assistance of our friends at South West Trains we will be making a fast turn from London to Woking via Surbiton and on through Surrey and Hampshire to pick up more passengers at Basingstoke. We then head via Andover to Salisbury where the locomotive will take water. Our route is then via the former LSWR route via Yeovil including the steep climb to Honiton Tunnel, a real test for *Tornado*.

After a break in Exeter our return route starts with the climb to Whiteball tunnel which marks the border between Devon and Somerset. Heading back towards the capital we take the former GWR route via Castle Cary, Westbury and Newbury, a beautiful scenic route as well as one that will challenge *Tornado* with its fast running and long climbs. At Reading passengers who joined us at Basingstoke leave us for a short trip by service train to Basingstoke. *Tornado* steams on taking us back to London Victoria station via Ascot and Twickenham. **TCC**



Online and telephone bookings are handled by our booking agents UK Railtours. Go to www.a1steam.com to make an online booking or call 01438 715050 to book over the phone. In the event of cancellation or haulage problems please see our full terms and conditions of carriage.

FARE	PRICES
Standard Class	£95.00
First Class Non-Dining	£149.00
First Class Dining	£225.00

Provisional Timings for 'The Devon Belle' on Saturday 2nd April 2016 are as follows:

STATION	OUTWARD	RETURN
London Waterloo	07:55hrs	****
Basingstoke	08:45hrs	****
Exeter	13:30hrs	16:30hrs
Reading	****	20:45hrs
London Victoria	****	22:00hrs

Terms and conditions are available on request. All profits from this tour go towards keeping *Tornado* on the main line in future years.

The Trust respectfully requests that anyone wanting to see *Tornado* follows the rules of the railway and only goes where permitted.

TORNADO ON THE SEVERN VALLEY – a volunteer’s perspective

by Mandy Grant

Mark and I arrived in Bewdley on Friday 9th October, to spend a week working at the Severn Valley Railway, along with other volunteers from The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust. At 19:00hrs on Friday evening we received a ‘phone call asking if we would be free to help out at Bewdley MPD, where she was about to be serviced, following three days of running for a selection of photo charter events.

We met up with volunteers Andy Hardy, Tom Macdonald and Mike Abbott. Since *Tornado* had not been cleaned for several days at the request of the charter organisers, the task for the evening was to clean up the bottom end, including footplate, frames, wheels and motion, all of which were rather dirty!

The five of us set about cleaning every nook and cranny with paraffin rags, with very little light at the depot, we were able to make use of *Tornado*’s running board lights and a couple of lanterns which just about illuminated the wheels and frames enough for us to see what we were doing. At 23:00hrs, after four hours of solid graft we had pretty well finished cleaning this section of the locomotive.

Early the following morning Andy, Tom and Mike were joined by several of the SVR volunteers, who worked really hard to get the top half of the locomotive cleaned up and ready for the weekend’s running. On Saturday and Sunday, Mark and I switched roles as we were rostered to work on the merchandise stand at Kidderminster station for the weekend.

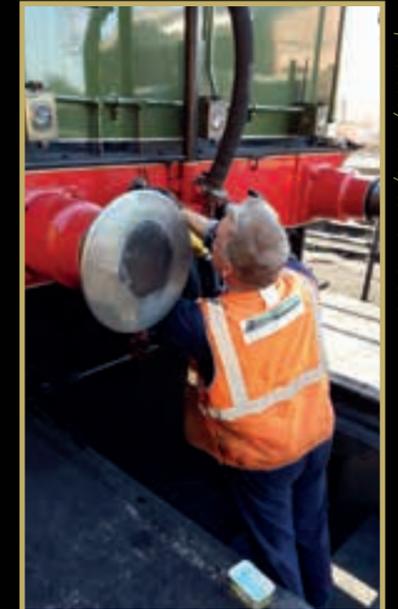
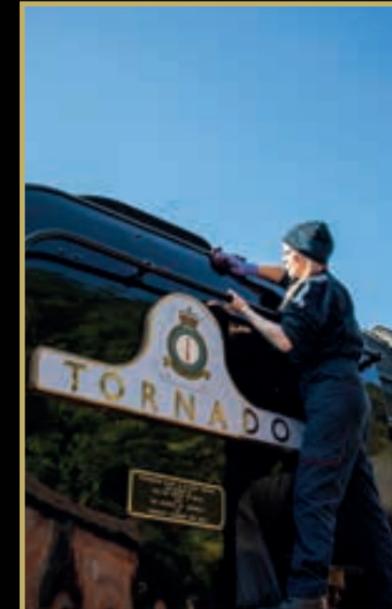


Above: Mike Abbott and Mark Grant cleaning the chime whistle valve and pipework.

Far right: David Burgess cleans the tender buffer beam.

Right: Mandy Grant cleaning the smoke deflector.

Below: Mike Abbott and Mandy Grant.



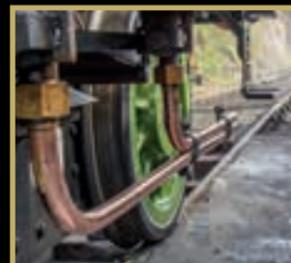
Andy Hardy on the footplate at Kidderminster.



Duncan Ballard on the regulator.



Above: *Tornado* on shed following bottom end cleaning at Bewdley MPD, 23:00hrs 9th October 2015.



Right: Tom Macdonald cleaned and polished the drain cocks.



Above: Mike Abbott cleans the smokebox door.

Left: Mandy Grant cleaning the cab.

On Monday 12th October, we arrived back at Bewdley MPD to spend three full days along with Mike and Tom, cleaning *Tornado* ready for the Trust’s special Covenants’ and Founders’ days. The weather was perfect for all three days and allowed us the time to really get *Tornado* looking pristine! During the Monday we concentrated once again on the motion, frames, front end, cladding and tender, everything was washed/ragged, waxed and polished. We carried on until darkness fell, leaving the metal work and cab for the following day.

First thing on Tuesday, Tom cleaned out the grate and checked the brick arch and firebox. Following this inspection, I set about cleaning and polishing the cab, fittings and tender gauges, whilst Mark, Tom and Mike cleaned the drain cocks, whistles, taps, and all of the pipework and oil boxes and then went over some areas on the paintwork which had been missed in the failing light the previous evening. Before we knew it, darkness was upon us once again!

On Wednesday we were joined by David Burgess, as we finished off the final bits of cleaning! Andy Meredith came along to light the fire and to carry out the necessary safety checks and inspections

which *Tornado* needed to pass, in order to haul the private charter trains on Thursday and Friday. At this point, I went back to the support coach and gave the kitchen a good clean, whilst David Burgess drew the short straw and carried out a necessary repair to the toilet! Graeme Bunker arrived late afternoon and once *Tornado* had passed her inspections, we all gave the cab and front end a final fettle, to remove some of the fresh soot which had built up after the fire had been lit. At the end of the day, we were all feeling rather tired but satisfied in the knowledge that *Tornado* was looking her best, ready for our supporters’ events over the following two days. **TGS**

Tornado sits on Platform 1 at Kidderminster station after hauling the last train of the day - 15th October 2015.



All pictures by Mandy & Mark Grant

All pictures by Mandy & Mark Grant

GEOFFREY COLIN BIRD – A TRIBUTE by Richard Peck

Geoff began his railway career as a Premium Apprentice at Darlington Works. Having gained a thorough grounding in all the manufacturing processes at this large locomotive works, he joined the erecting gang building new Peppercorn class A1 locomotive No. 60130 *Kestrel*. Tradition had it that the erecting gang always got to go out with 'their' locomotive on its first test run. Geoff was looking forward to this, but unfortunately his 21st birthday fell two days before, at which point his apprenticeship ended – so he missed out on the first test run for No. 60130!



He moved to Darlington Bank Top Shed as a Supernumerary Running Foreman, a training position which he described as, "neither nought nor summat". In due course he progressed into the post of Relief Shedmaster for the District, and relieved as required as Shedmaster at various sheds including Kirkby Stephen, Northallerton and Thornaby.

After a brief spell working on the Western Region in 1959, he returned to Darlington Bank Top Shed, this time as Shedmaster in his own right. The railway system of career advancement meant a move in due course to Hull, working in the office of the District Motive Power Superintendent. In 1965, he was appointed Shedmaster at York. Here he was involved with the run-down of steam locomotives, but he did not like to let them go too easily! He was famously involved with the special run of No. 60145 *Saint Mungo* from York to Newcastle and back on 31st December 1965 (as recorded by Geoff in *TCC 40*).

He was also instrumental in keeping a Pacific in steam at Darlington (No. 60124 *Kenilworth*) and York (No. 60145 *Saint Mungo*), as standby locomotives for the rather unreliable diesel locomotives, right through until March 1966. The last occasion

No. 60145 was in steam was 17th April 1966. Even at this late stage, there was still the need to retain steam locomotives for passing out firemen as drivers. This was often done by utilising Jubilees from Holbeck, but Geoff also managed to hang on to a couple of Gresley class V2s (Nos. 60806 and 60831). No. 60831 worked on such turns for the full week of 10th to 14th October 1966, going out with the 08:18hrs York to Hull and returning on the 11:45hrs Hull to York. The last V2 in steam at York was No. 60831 on 8th December 1966.

After moving the last V2 out of the shed at York, it was noticed that there was a middle connecting rod still lying in the pit. Geoff asked for this to be cleaned up and moved into his office as a memento. This was very much appreciated 40 years later when the National Railway Museum (NRM) found it necessary to repair the middle engine on No. 60800 (No. 4771) *Green Arrow*!

At this time, the Motive Power organisation of locomotive and maintenance was split in two, and Geoff continued at York, now looking after traincrew. He still managed to get himself involved in 1975 with the team moving historic locomotives from Queen Street and Clapham into the then new National Railway Museum which had been 'his' shed. His next move took him to Doncaster as Divisional Traction Engineer, the post from which he retired.

Following retirement he continued to get great enjoyment from offering his services as Consulting Engineer to the NRM. He was also a very active model engineer, with traction engines and 5" gauge locomotives, which he used to run at the Ryedale Society of Model Engineers at Gilling East.

Geoff died on 3rd December 2015, aged 88. Throughout his career, he was always well liked and respected. All who knew Geoff recognised him as a true gentleman, no one ever heard him swear. He will be greatly missed as another important link with our past. His wife 'Patto' passed away in 2013, and he leaves two sons, a daughter, and several grandchildren. **TCC**



No. 60124 *Kenilworth* working the Tees-Tyne Pullman. *Kenilworth* was one of two A1s Geoff Bird managed to retain into 1966, the last of their class to remain in traffic.

Jim Meeds

'THE SCARBOROUGH FLYER'

-A late spring trip to the sunny Yorkshire coast by Mark Allatt

We are delighted to announce the recreation of 'The Scarborough Flyer' and *Tornado's* first visit to Scarborough on a revenue earning train. This main line steam railtour will run from London King's Cross to York and Scarborough and back, picking up passengers at Potters Bar (for M25), Peterborough and York. This tour will feature No. 60163 *Tornado* hauling historic carriages with passengers in First Class Dining receiving a traditional silver service throughout the journey. *Tornado* first visited Scarborough with her first main line test run from York on 4th November 2008.

The British preoccupation with visiting the seaside prompted the London & North Eastern Railway (LNER) to launch this famous named train in the summer of 1927 to popularise this northern resort with Londoners. Running non-stop from London King's Cross to York – a rare accolade – the 'Scarborough Flier' (as it was also written until the 1950s) was by 1935 the fastest express on the LNER, beaten only by the streamliners. After a wartime pause 'The Scarborough Flyer' survived until 1963. It was usually hauled by an LNER Pacific to York where a Gresley class D49 would usually take over for the Scarborough leg.

On Saturday 4th June 2016 The A1 Steam Locomotive Trust will re-create the magic of going by steam to the sea. With new ex-LNER Peppercorn Pacific No. 60163 *Tornado* in charge,

'The Scarborough Flyer' will travel from London King's Cross station along the East Coast Main Line to York, then along the delightfully rural branch line through Malton to Scarborough itself. We expect there to be much fast running at the permitted maximum of 75mph



Tornado passing Arksey on 26th September 2015.

and with this being a late spring tour we anticipate wonderful views of the stunning Yorkshire scenery.

Scarborough retains much of its old character, with Victorian cliff lifts linking the higher town with the curving promenade and the beach. The characteristic bustle of the South Bay contrasts with the tranquil North Bay, where the North Bay Railway (probably the finest example of a traditional seaside miniature railway in Britain)



offers fine cliff top views over the North Sea. A special discount is available to passengers on 'The Scarborough Flyer'. Open top sightseeing buses offer a grandstand view of this very agreeable resort and there are bracing seaside walks to be enjoyed too. After a three hour break *Tornado* will haul the train back to York where an electric locomotive will take over for the return run to London King's Cross.

First Class Dining fares are available for travel right through to Scarborough only. First Class Non-Dining and Standard Class fares are available to either Scarborough or York, and also for the journey from York to Scarborough and back to York but numbers are limited. **TCC**

FARE	London /Potters Bar/Peterborough to Scarborough	London /Potters Bar/Peterborough to York	York to Scarborough
First Class Dining	£235.00	****	****
First Class Non-Dining	£159.00	£139.00	£59.50
Standard Class	£99.00	£89.00	£39.50

Provisional Timings for 'The Scarborough Flyer' on Saturday 4th June 2016 are as follows:

STATION	OUTWARD	RETURN
London King's Cross	08:15hrs	21:30hrs
Potters Bar	08:40hrs	20:45hrs
Peterborough	09:50hrs	20:00hrs
York	12:30hrs	17:30hrs
Scarborough	13:30hrs	16:30hrs

Terms and conditions are available on request. Guaranteed 'tables for two' in First Class Dining and First Class Non-Dining are available for a supplement of £25.00 per person. All profits from this tour go towards keeping *Tornado* on the main line in future years.

Online and telephone bookings are handled by our booking agents UK Railtours. Go to www.a1steam.com or www.ukrailtours.com to make an online booking, or call 01438 715050 to book over the phone. In the event of cancellation or haulage problems please see our full terms and conditions of carriage.

Geoff Griffiths

GEOFF BIRD - PART 2 by Graham Langer

It was with sadness that we heard of Geoff's passing, made more poignant by the fact that had had recently been in contact with me to supply a couple of articles for The Communication Cord. Fortunately he had sent this material a couple of months before he left us and in TCC 40 we carried his story about the epic run that Saint Mungo made on New Year's Eve 1965. We can now publish the second part, which is effectively his memoir and forms a fitting tribute to the man who played such a key role in the final days of the Peppercorn class A1s. I will let Geoff carry on...

"I was a Premium Apprentice with the LNER at Darlington Works and was one of the last to be taken on in that capacity. The crop that was contemporary with me (and a few that followed) remained life-long friends and colleagues which stood me in good stead for the rest of my working career with the railway.

I started in Darlington works on 24th April 1945 having left school the previous July, the vacancy that I was to occupy was not available until the April of the following year hence the delay. In the interim period I was working with Octavius Atkinson's a light engineering company in Harrogate (where I lived) and during my period with them I learned enough to pass the government exam for electric and gas welding together with flame cutting, all these were required for the war work which the company was undertaking. I must say that this also was very useful in my future career with the railway.

As a premium apprentice one had certain privileges over the ordinary trade apprentices and we were expected to more or less follow a career plan of some sort in the mechanical engineering side of the railway. There were two options open after apprenticeship. One was to remain in the Chief Mechanical Engineer's department in the works, drawing offices or works management and the other was to move to the operational side of the business and work in running sheds on the maintenance and operation of locomotives in traffic, together with all the trappings that went with that - and there were plenty of them, I can assure you.

On the completion of my apprenticeship when 21, I was lucky enough to be appointed to the permanent staff within months and remained with the CME dept. for the next two years as a material inspector before I made the translation to the operational side of locomotive engineering. Again this was two years of valuable experience in the manufacture of materials, subsequently purchased by the



No. 60130 Kestrel - drifting down thru' Saltersford Cutting near Grantham.

railway, at the contractor's works. What a wonderful chance, for instance, watching on the rolling floor at Dorman Long's, in the winding room of Hood, Haggies at Willington Quay, winding wire ropes or on the casting floor in one of the Teesside foundries.

However before I left the works in September 1948, my 'swan song' in the works was being one of the construction gang on No. 60130 Kestrel being built new, on the new engine pits. The first 'proper' Pacific built at Darlington for twenty years or so. I left the works on 14th September 1948 never to return except in social or 'old pals act' circumstances.

It is perhaps worth mentioning here that my wife's father was a locomotive erector in Darlington works and was engaged on construction of new engines all through the 1920s and '30s. So he would have had his hands on K3s, D49s and B17s, to name but a few classes built during that period in Darlington Works. Most notably he was one of the six fitters who were chosen to work exclusively on the construction of No. 10,000 the 'Hush-Hush'. Here I make my perpetual comment that there were more engines built at Darlington to Gresley's designs than at any other works of the LNER!

During my two years with the CME dept. at Stoopdale Offices in the materials testing and inspection dept. I became semi-affiliated with the dynamometer car staff (them sharing the same chief with me) and naturally, I used this affiliation to my advantage. However,

I made my change to the locomotive running dept. and I started my long and happy career in that at Darlington Motive Power depot in April 1951. My new designation in the 'oily rag department' was Mechanical Foreman (learner) which was like being a midshipman on board a ship, and was neither 'nowt nor summat'. But you were an official trainee in the responsibilities and practices of the Motive Power Department of the railway, now British Railways. The dept. had just been reorganised on LMS lines by Colonel Harold Rudgard, a force to be reckoned with, rather like the great Leslie Parker at Liverpool Street who many of my older colleagues will remember with either hate or admiration.

I was ambitious and the field of promotion lay open to the positions of mechanical foreman, shed master, district supt. or even the chief officer of motive power. Promotions were far more available than in the works side of affairs which tended to be rather limited - waiting for dead men's shoes as it were. However, since the running dept. and shed work was scattered over the whole compass of the railway's geography, so then was the likelihood of one's subsequent appointments.

Having moved up through the grades successfully, in August 1965 I was appointed locomotive shed master York, having been shed master at such places as Kirkby Stephen, Northallerton, Botanic Gardens, Darlington and asst. district motive power supt. at Hull, before a

confounded re-organisation 'reorganized' me out of the a job. The grade of LSM York was the same as my post at Hull as the assistant superintendent technically overseeing York. The district was designated as York and Hull. There was an assistant superintendent at York but I deputised for him on many occasions - just one of the strange anomalies of differentials in railway grading, it's very different now with little variety of work, traction and route knowledge. York men worked any type of train, steam or diesel, from loose coupled goods to top express passenger.

Now, I am one of those men who joined the railway because of a passionate interest in railways and of course particularly my love of steam locomotives. A fleet of class 40s had taken over a lot of the front line steam work at the depot but I did perpetuate as much as I dared in keeping steam in traffic, as it were, leading to some rather strange happenings during that period. For instance V2, No. 60886 was the last LNER steam engine to work a Royal Train [for British Railways] and LMS Jubilee class No. 45562 Alberta (which I had on loan from Holbeck) was the last steam engine of all to work a Royal Train. I would hasten to add that these arrangements were strictly legitimate because of basic economics of the operation, particularly in the case of Alberta but what a splendid sight she was, working the Royal Train back from the night halt at Nidd Bridge, to York the following morning. The Duke was not too pleased, enquiring from my driver,

"Where did you get this bloody thing?" "It's our boss, he's blah, blah, blah...." I won't say that I had no hand in it because I did! I always enjoyed Royal Train work of which there were many involving York and I always took on personal direction of the proceedings. I was the officer responsible.

I was aware there was a V2 extant in Scotland but so was No. 60831 at York and I was determined that one of 'my' V2s would be the last one. I am not sure how much my counterpart in Scotland was emotionally involved in the fate of his last V2 but I certainly was with mine and as we all know No. 60831 was the last one to be withdrawn.

Before leaving the tale of the V2s, I remember that I had kept back the inside connecting rod of No. 60886. That locomotive was under repair and the rod had been removed in order to do some work on the middle engine which in the event was overtaken by the engine being scrapped. When the engine left the depot for scrap the con rod remained in the workshop pit. Later I decided to retrieve it and transfer it into my office in Leeman Road, York and there it remained until I was appointed to the post of Divisional Traction Engineer (Running) at Doncaster in April 1980. The question then arose as to what to do with the con rod. I could not take it with me and, feeling that my successor may not have the same sympathies towards it as me, I decided to bequeath it to the National Railway Museum (NRM).

Being 1980, the NRM had been

established for five years and was, of course, the owner of Green Arrow. I thought that the con rod may come in useful one rainy day in event of a mishap with Green Arrow and as we all know it did after the disastrous failure of her middle big end on a return trip from Scarborough (when the inside connecting rod was virtually destroyed due to the strap failure) the middle con-rod was subsequently replaced by mine and to this day Geoff Bird's con-rod sits between the frames of Green Arrow.

A York driver, Syd Winfield, held the speed record of 143mph on the prototype HST when braking trials were being undertaken on the Main Line between York and Darlington. Now, Syd had the knack of making light of all circumstances, when one day he was involved in the derailment of a class 40 and every vehicle on a down freightliner. When I arrived on the scene (with the breakdown train and crane), Syd was sitting in a cabin, chewing the fat with all and sundry. He saw me and came up to me very confidentially and whispered in my ear, "It's all right Mr. Bird, I've squared it wi' t' ganger!". Fortunately the whole train had remained upright and coupled and no one was hurt but it was a very laborious job to re-rail, having to make two lifts to every vehicle with the crane between gaps in traffic on the up main. But we were all cleared up within hours. Could that happen now?

Footplate staff - the salt of the earth (although some might argue otherwise)! They made steam locomotives come alive!" **TCC**

A LATHE FROM ALDI! by David Elliott

I am not a great fan of shopping, however the Aldi supermarket chain does have some interesting offers from time to time on tools in what I have heard described as the 'man creche' - the area devoted to hardware where us chaps tend to gravitate to during family visits. This range of interesting tools and gadgets does not normally extend to lathes.

We have been looking out for a smaller lathe to complement the excellent Harrison machine installed at DLW and we now have one. Faverdale North trading estate in Darlington is home to a major Aldi distribution centre. Our stalwart volunteer fitter/machinist Steve Wood happened to meet one of the senior Aldi maintenance staff, who let it be known that they had a lathe which was surplus to requirements. It had originally been

used to true up the wheels on the tall trolleys used for distributing goods to the supermarkets, however developments in design of trolley wheels has eliminated the need for this work. During summer we were invited to view the lathe which is a 'Colchester Student' (a nostalgic moment for me as I spent some time on this model learning machining as a pupil at Gravesend Technical School in the late 1960s). It was complete with fittings and generally in reasonable condition. We were invited to make an offer for it. Steve subsequently went back to them explaining that we are an educational charity and could they donate it to us? I am pleased to report that the answer was favourable, and subsequently Aldi kindly disconnected it and placed it on a pallet enabling us to collect it in the Trust's van.

The lathe is now set up at DLW and



following some tender loving care from our volunteers is fully operational. Our sincere thanks are due to Aldi for this generous and useful donation. **TCC**

'THE RED ROSE' by Huw Parker

Tornado and her support coach moved to Southall immediately following the 'Belmond British Pullman' on 6th February, albeit using a circuitous route via Wembley, Staines and Bracknell to Reading and then tender first up the GWR Mainline to Southall due to engineering works at Acton. So it was at Southall that 'The Red Rose' support crew gathered to begin preparations for the run to Worcester on Valentines' Day. The morning of the preparation day dawned cloudy and damp, but this did not curb the enthusiastic efforts of the team! In light rain, they set to cleaning wheels and frames, assisted by two members from RAF Marham, who had joined us for the weekend; they quickly learned the ropes and proved surprisingly adept at brass cleaning – must be a military thing!! At the same time, Colin Green, our Fitness To Run Inspector completed his examination and functional checks, passing the locomotive 'Fit to Run', much to the relief of everyone present.

The locomotive was coaled the previous evening as the class 67 diesel, resplendent in 'Caledonian Sleeper' livery, had arrived with the coaching stock the night before. The afternoon cleared slightly, allowing the team to wash and wax the tender and cab sides and polish the smoke deflectors and nameplates and as darkness came, the engine was as clean as it could be, given the prevailing conditions.

The day of the run arrived and there were some final preparations to complete; the fire was livened up and prepared for the hand over to the DB Schenker crew. Before they arrived, *Tornado* and the support coach were attached to the train and all was ready in plenty of time to meet our booked time off shed. Unfortunately, the class 67 diesel had other ideas and following the brake test, the locomotive brakes could not be released. After much head scratching and more than a little cursing and swearing, the brakes were eventually released and the train left Southall some 58 minutes late, making some time up before reaching Paddington. The waiting passengers were quickly boarded and *Tornado* finally headed out west. The DB Schenker crew of Traction Inspector Bob Hart, Driver Graham Ward, Fireman Dave Proctor and Trainee James Cooper quickly got *Tornado* into her stride and settled into the task of making up time.



Two support crew members from RAF Marham who helped prepare the locomotive for 'The Red Rose'.

They had already made up 10 minutes by the second stop at Reading and were just 15 minutes late arriving at Charlbury for water. A quick fill in just 12 minutes and we were away again in good time, passing Evesham right time and arriving at Worcester Shrub Hill just three minutes late.

Worcester Depot was not available to us for servicing, so we took coal and water on the goods lines behind the station before heading off to turn the engine and support coach around the triangle. A combination of fitting the move around service trains and a brief delay reforming the train, saw a slightly delayed departure from Worcester, but in the skilful hands of Driver Fred Lewis we were soon back on time before passing Yate right time and arriving for our first water stop at Bristol Parkway. Unlike the day before, the weather was kind to us all day, although the clear skies and winter sunshine masked a cold wind for most of the trip and the light was already fading as we passed through Yate. At Parkway, the yard was full of coal hoppers which prevented an easy hose route and the tanker had to be re-located before we could take on enough water to reach Wantage Road (where we would fill again). Getting away from Parkway, Driver Lewis eased *Tornado* down Filton Bank before heading round through Bristol East and off towards Bath. This was to be his last official mainline steam driving turn before his retirement later in the week and colleagues Geoff Ewans, Vince Henderson, Rob Binstead and

Matt Hunt shared the footplate on his last run down the GWR mainline to Paddington. Perhaps as a result of this significant occasion, the chime whistle saw extensive use on the run home. Swindon received a particularly long salute as we passed the works and rocketed through the station, but many other locations received similar treatment. Most notably the arrival back into Paddington, where halfway down Platform 1, the whistle valve gave up and stuck open marking Fred's final arrival into Paddington in proper style!!

After a brief pause to say farewell to our passengers, the same 67 diesel that had caused us such grief that morning arrived at the other end of the train. Fortunately, this was to take the formation back to Southall without further incident, where *Tornado* and her support coach were detached and run back into the depot, the 67 and empty coaching stock returning to Eastleigh. The next morning a smaller support crew prepared the engine for the short run round to Stewarts Lane in readiness for the next Belmond British Pullman on 12th March. Driver Paul Major gave Fred Lewis the regulator for his very last turn and Gareth Jones as TI completed the team, marking the start of Fred's final week before retirement. I know that The AI Steam Locomotive Trust, our support crews and regular supporters of mainline steam will join me in wishing Fred a very long and happy retirement!

TCC



Fireman Paul Major, Driver Fred Lewis (on his last steam turn before retirement) and Traction Inspector Gareth Jones at Stewarts Lane. Huw Parker looks on from the cab.

Huw Parker

PRESENTATIONS REPORT by Chris Ardy

The talks about *Tornado* and *Prince of Wales* continue to be popular with talks on the P2 increasing and A1 talks gradually declining since the launch of the P2 project. During 2015 we did 33 talks, eight on *Tornado*, fifteen on *Prince of Wales* and eight joint presentations. For 2016 we already have seventeen confirmed bookings, three for *Tornado*, nine for *Prince of Wales* and five joint.

We give talks to a variety of organisations, mainly Railway Clubs and Societies but also Rotary and Probus clubs. Recently we have given talks to a lot of IMechE groups around the country. We have also spoken at groups whose main interests

are in other forms of transport, even Motor Transport! One of the more unusual talks was a recent one to the Leicester Clock Society.

Since the convention in October we have had a number of people volunteering to join the panel of speakers, but we are still a bit thin on the ground in parts of the country, particularly Scotland, Wales, London (and south of London) and Lancashire and Yorkshire. If anyone is interested in giving talks please get in touch with me at chris.ardy@a1steam.com and I will let them know what is involved. TCC

TTTE COTTESMORE by Neil Whitaker

Anyone who visited last year's Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire and saw the stunning tail decorations on three Panavia Tornado aircraft may not have automatically put two and two together and guessed that here was a link with our own Peppercorn class A1 No. 60163 *Tornado*.

The special tail-designs were applied to three examples of the venerable swing-wing Tornado jets to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the type's arrival at the newly formed Tri-National Tornado Training Establishment (TTTE) at RAF Cottesmore in Leicestershire. TTTE was a unique collaboration between the UK, Germany and Italy, the three nations that made up the Panavia consortium, and it was responsible for training over 3,400 Tornado crew members from those country's air forces until the unit's disbandment in 1999.

The name *Tornado* was selected for No. 60163 in 1991 to honour the type's aircrew that flew Operation Granby combat missions in Kuwait and Iraq during the first Gulf War. All these *Tornado* crews had passed through TTTE Cottesmore before joining their front line squadrons.



Neil Whitaker

In 1995 The AI Steam Locomotive Trust was presented with two nameplates for *Tornado* - one displaying the station crest of RAF Cottesmore and the other sporting the unit crest of the Tri-national Tornado Training Establishment – by the joint RAF, German and Italian Air Force commanders of TTTE in a ceremony at Tyseley.

The RAF Cottesmore crest is still on *Tornado* but the 'Triple T E' crest has been replaced by RAF Leeming's, another air force station well known

for its *Tornado* connections, and the closest unit to No. 60163's birthplace in Darlington.

Though they remain highly capable combat aircraft, the RAF's 'Tonkas' are now in the twilight of their years and, sadly, the skies over RAF Cottesmore have not heard the roar of their twin Rolls Royce jet engines for many years. However it's apt that our very own *Tornado* commemorates this unique multinational unit, a spectacular aircraft and its brave crews both past and present. TCC

Valentines! 'The Red Rose' fulfilled its role in fostering romance on the rails. Stephen Rees proposed to Diane Lyne using the on-train intercom, and she said "Yes"! The couple celebrated with bottle of champagne provided by the Trust.



Rob Morland

The Reverend Awdry once wrote that *Gordon* became jealous because *Henry* had been rebuilt and was whistling too much. Ironically *Gordon's* whistle then stuck open and the joke was on him. Any similarity between this story, a certain Doncaster product's recent overhaul and events on the night of 'The Red Rose' are entirely coincidental...

Bathed in evening sunshine, *Tornado* is seen at Ashchurch with the returning 'Red Rose'.



David Chandler