



B1 NEWS

Newsletter of the Thompson B1 Locomotive Trust

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With the first signs of autumn appearing, 1264 climbs past Beck Hole on 28th September 2018. At the time the loco was masquerading as Oliver Bury to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Locomotive Exchanges. Photo taken by the late Ken Snowdon.

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Chairman's update

Mike Cobley

My dear friends and fellow supporters of our B1, it was a hard decision to step down from my long association with the Trust, formerly the Thompson B1 Loco Society and for those long-standing members our original title, the Rolling Stock Society.

It started in 1972 when I worked for a local estate agency and we had negotiated a lease of a shop opposite our office, which was to open as a hi-fi shop also selling records - vinyl nowadays.

The new owner, Peter Aylett, came over to say thanks for our help and offered to buy a drink after work, the first of many over the following months. We found we both had an ongoing enthusiasm for railways, especially from 60s trips to loco sheds and railway works and comparing photos, we had both taken similar photos of the same loco at Doncaster on the same day, but different groups.

From there, Peter and his brother Robin were helping with fund raising for the Stour Valley RPS and their suburban coach. We joined up with several of their members, including a very young Steve Andrews, for a day trip to Barry to look at the locos in Woodham's yard, as the rumours were flying that cutting was due to start. Discussions during the day resulted in making a decision that we could raise the money to buy a loco from the shortlist of a 4F, S&D 2-8-0 and a B1. John Standing wrote a letter to Woodhams asking for a price, which was simply returned with £4,500 scribbled on the bottom.

Our first minuted meeting was January 1973, where we formally founded the Rolling Stock Society, Peter as Chairman, John as Secretary, Robin as membership officer and me as Treasurer. It was 2 years of fund raising before we bought the loco, by then it was £6,325 and then a further year to raise the finance to move 61264 to the Great Central at Loughborough in 1976, our home for a further 21 years before the loco moved under its own power.

The more recent history has been well documented as we became a national preservation group, running our popular railtours in the late 70s, getting Heritage Lottery funding for the final main line certification, appearing at 'Steam on the Met' resulting in more boiler work and more test runs to Carlisle before the first summer season running the Jacobite with West Coast Railways under the wing of Brian Cooke and Bert Hitchen as Heritage Traction.

The broken cylinder was a sad end to a great time out on the mainline, visits to other preserved railways and for me the highlight was our run to Parkeston Quay. Dick Hardy had arranged a reunion with many of the 30F drivers and firemen, including George Maryan. He rode the footplate back to the Manningtree triangle to turn the loco and as he stepped down from the footplate, with a tear in his eye he said that if he died that night, he would die a happy man...

Following the 10-year overhaul at Crewe we started our long association with the NYMR and the first 5 years went very well. NYMR Trust had helped out with a substantial loan to get the loco there.

The long saga of repairs to the cracked wheels, followed by the pandemic, really affected everybody in every aspect of life and we have not really recovered 4 years later. In society in general there seems to be apathy amongst workers, people have short tempers, nothing seems to be done properly and now the current cost of living increase is making fund raising more and more difficult. Our last colliery has closed today (30th November) and the ORR seems determined to get Mk 1 coaches off the network which is going to have long reaching effects on mainline steam operations. The operation of slam door trains worked well for years, but it was the reduction of station staff that caused the quick condemning of older vehicles as passengers would happily open the doors, but no one bothered to close them so one member of the station staff or more often the guard had to run up and down the platform to ensure all doors were shut.

The next few years are going to be very difficult for heritage railways and loco preservation groups. It may now be time to consider forming an association with another larger group, another registered charity, to take over the Trust and our assets.

We set out to rescue the loco, which we did, we then set out to restore the loco to mainline standards, which we did and we offered to make the loco available around the country as part of the Lottery funding, which we did - West Somerset, North Norfolk, Churnet Valley, Keighley & Worth Valley, Great Central North and South, many rail tours and eight summers in Scotland. Happy days!

We have made many long term friendships within our group and I must remember all those who have passed away - Peter Aylett, John Standing, Dermot Reynolds, Bob Mitchell, Gerald Thorpe, Dave Fowler, plus long-term supporters Dick Hardy, Peter Townend, Bill Harvey, Chris Parrish, Bert Hitchen, support crew members from our Scotland team and we now have to look after the other 'oldtimer' - our engineer, Steve Andrews, who despite recent diagnosis with Great Western disease has worked tirelessly keeping the loco working.

I wish everyone the best of luck with the third overhaul and look forward to seeing you in the not-too-distant future.



Mike seen helping prepare 1264, then appearing as 1003 Impala, for an open day event at Barrow Hill on 27th September 2013. Photo courtesy of Alf Bousie.

The 1264 fundraising stand

Alf Bousie

After an absence of around 12 years, we are back on the road with our fund-raising stand. I don't think we will ever do sales stands comparable to those at Barrow Hill Roundhouse where we did literally sell the kitchen sink, but we have made a start.

As our loco is currently located only 10 miles away at Ruddington, being present at Great Central Railway events makes sense. So, over the weekend of 17th and 18th June we had our first fundraising stand at Quorn & Woodhouse station.

Adding to the appearance of our stand were a couple of pop-up display panels Dave Horton had commissioned along with a B1-themed table covering. The main event was held to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the return of steam trains to the Great Central Railway. Whilst it's very helpful to raise much needed money to help restore 1264 at such events, it's also important to have a 'presence' to keep the loco very much in people's minds.

We received plenty of visitors to the stand over the weekend, including existing Trust members as well as prospective new members, and raised £546 in donations/sales. Being based in a gazebo in the station yard we were 'treated' to frequent run pasts by *Colin McAndrew*, the Andrew Barclay 0-4-0 saddle tank, doing 'driver for a tenner' runs past the rear of our stand. The GCR put on a fine display over the whole weekend using mostly their extensive home fleet of locos.

We were indebted to Trust members Brenda Mitchell, Dave and Yvette Horton, Dave Wellington and Joshua Peace for their help in manning the stand.



The TBLT stand at the GCR 50th Anniversary event complete with new promotional banners. Photo courtesy of Dave Horton.



One of the 'perks' of being on the stand at Quorn & Woodhouse goods yard when there are special events on is to see a regular procession of trains passing through the station. Complete with its 50th Anniversary headboard is 9F No 92214 with a train bound for Leicester North on 18th June 2023. Photo courtesy of Alf Bousie.

On one of the warmest early Octobers that there has been for some time, we were back again at the GCR, this time in a marquee at Quorn & Woodhouse station yard for the Autumn Steam Gala. The whole event was held over four days, but we were in attendance just for the weekend.

For this event we were privileged to have David Lewis's superb 5" gauge model of B1 No 61003 *Gazelle* complete with miniature TBLT headboard. It was a real draw for both young and old throughout the weekend with David only too happy to answer the numerous questions about his model. It was also great to have Wendy and Lee Ibbotson and Helen Bousie also helping out on the stand.

As expected, the GCR produced another fine selection of locos for the main event with the home fleet supplemented by ex-GWR 5700 Class pannier tank No 7714 and new build Saint Class No 2999 *Lady of Legend*.

We were again pleased to see current members of the Trust visit the stand along with a good number of people interested in joining the Trust. We were also indebted to members who donated items to sell on the stand.

We now have a bit of a break and a chance to reflect on both events, to consider what went well and what wasn't quite so good and to see what we might do in the future.

Thanks again to all the members that assisted at each event as we couldn't have done it without you.



Star of the show on the TBLT stand at the GCR Autumn Steam Gala was David Lewis's superb 5 inch gauge model of B1 No 61003 Gazelle. Photo courtesy of Alf Bousie.



Manning the stand for the Autumn Steam Gala event were from L to R; Alf Bousie, David Lewis, Wendy and Lee Ibbotson plus Helen Bousie behind the camera.



Very much the centre of attention during the whole of the GCR Autumn Steam Gala was new build Saint Class No 2999 Lady of Legend, seen here waiting for the off at Quorn & Woodhouse on 7th October 2023. Photo courtesy of Alf Bousie.



Passing through Quorn & Woodhouse early on 8th October 2023 in readiness for their day's respective duties are members of the GCR home fleet. BR Standard 2 No 78019 and 8F No 48305. Photo courtesy Alf Bousie.

Bagging the Bongos (amongst others)

Dave Wellington

I was a spotter at an early age. Born in 1949 in a South Leicester suburb on the A426 to Rugby, the GC mainline at Aylestone Fields was only about half a mile away; a nice family walk through the woods.

Consequently in 1959, the first five numbers logged in the book referred to the GC line. The first was 92093, suggesting the 9Fs were just replacing the O1 2-8-0s on the Annesley-Woodford "runners". 27 9Fs were by now allocated to Annesley whilst the O1s still numbered 22. Three B1s followed. 61085 (2F Woodford), 61187 (14D Neasden) and 61281 (40E Colwick). V2 60911 on the Bournemouth – York completed the quintet.

The next pages comprised sightings at Rugby Midland, including the prototype "Deltic" on the Manxman, then copious notes from the Southern region (Swanage), and the Western region after the ultimate summer holiday: Teignmouth and that sea wall....

After that there were pages of notes from Leicester Midland, including Jubilees and Trafford Park Britannias, but a B1 could be seen here on the early local arrival from Peterborough – such as 61096; this service later rostered for a March (31B) Britannia.

In 1960 we moved to Lutterworth – 13 miles from Leicester, but only 8 from Rugby. Soon 61192 (2F) and 61077 (14D) were logged, but somehow I missed out on the line's two namers: - Woodford's 61008 *Kudu* and 61028 *Umseke*.

However, apart from weekends, the GC could be rather predictable, so Rugby Midland was the bigger attraction. Prime location for spotters was in a field south of the station where the GC crossed the West Coast mainline on a giant girder bridge, but together with friend Mick, we preferred a wall at the north end where we could witness the departures of long trains close up. This did backfire one Saturday however, when we missed five southern-powered football excursions traveling from Southampton to Forest on the GC.

Sometimes we preferred the luxury of the station itself; a huge island platform with bays at each end and a cafeteria in the middle. The problem was that spotters with platform tickets were excluded, so we would cycle five miles to either Ullesthorpe, on the Leicester Midland line, or Kilworth, on the Market Harborough line, and cruise in – unbanished. Once in situ, we could get up close and personal to departing locos: “can I cab your engine mister?”

Sometimes my brother would tag along; his interest was in the new diesels and eventual electrics (we've always had issues) so he used to avoid the mainly diesel-free GC line even when the Bournemouth-York switched to a Darnall 37, and a Hymek stopped at Lutterworth after dusk on the 19.15 FSO Swindon-Sheffield.

Whilst Leicester, Neasden and Woodford B1s were common on the GC, there was a need to travel further, and in particular, to the new horizon of the East Coast mainline. First up was a family picnic outing to Holme, south of Peterborough. Lots of speeding pacifics but only one B1 – 61379 *Mayflower* (40B) on the Kings Cross – Cleethorpes.

Next, a rail trip to Edinburgh and a trio of namers observed en route; *Jairou* (51L) *Nyala* (51A) and significantly 61246 *Lord Balfour* (64A). Then a car journey to Ilkley, the ancestral home to visit relatives; stopping off at Bawtry for a break where 61124 (36A) was noted on a pick-up freight.

I considered the Eastern side of the UK to be the holy grail, but there was a long gap until the next visit when on 26/7/1961 my mother yielded to pressure and took us by rail to Peterborough, to pitch camp at the north end of the station on a luggage trolley. This was the place to view the glamorous ex-LNER pacifics; even those not booked to stop had to observe a restrictive speed limit through the station. My brother was in his element too, as newly introduced Deltics took centre stage in the shape of D9001/3 and D9004. Only one B1 was logged; however, 61365 (36A) on a Doncaster – Peterborough local.

Back home, amongst all the 9Fs and a Hall on the Bournemouth-York, 61033 *Dibatag* (41A) was a welcome visitor because, by now, the preference for all things Eastern was in place, reinforced by a visit to York where an aunt resided – and actually worked on the railways – in an office at the famous signal box. After a long tour of her work premises, dominated by a modern big screen and with no view outside, I was let loose on to the platforms, at last feeling like the cat amongst the canaries.

My aunt's terraced house overlooked the Scarborough line from the top floor, but not well enough to log the numbers of passing B1s and B16s. Nevertheless, two days' spotting at the station filled the notebook with Pacifics, V2s, the odd K3 and O4, together with a flurry of Bongos including York's own 61021 *Reitbok* and Wakefield's 61024 *Addax*.

Looking back though, why no mention of the J94 and J72 0-6-0 tanks common to York?

Obviously, these engines were on duty away from the station: shunting the yards or goods sheds.

Mentioning sheds, loco depots would become the obvious future targets to spot B1s and colleagues. These visits would come later – and how.....

Colwick Shed

Alf Bousie

The arrival of 61264 at Ruddington for its overhaul feels almost like the loco is returning home.

Just over 6 miles away as the crow flies is the site of Colwick engine shed where 61264 spent 5 years in active service from November 1960 until November 1965. Even after that it remained at the shed on stationary boiler duties until July 1967.

Colwick shed was the largest of all the Great Northern Railway's engine sheds and its existence owes much to the emergence and rapid growth of the coal industry in the East Midlands.

The Great Northern Railway wanted a share of the lucrative trade generated from this business and the Derbyshire & Staffordshire Extension Act of 1872 saw it gain access to an area previously dominated by the Midland Railway. Colwick, up till then a hamlet of six houses and two farms near Nottingham, was deemed the ideal place to locate an engine shed and sidings and by 1876 the first shed was built. Initially this was the GNR standard design of a dead-end brick building capable of housing 12 locos.

However just six years later the shed had to be extended because the continued growth of the coal trade required more locos and more sidings. Then 15 years later it had to be extended yet again with extra sidings also being added to accommodate more goods wagons.

The importance of Colwick shed can be seen by it receiving the BR Eastern Region shed code 38A in April 1950 and remaining a Locomotive District Centre with several subordinate sheds around the East Midlands for some time. Nevertheless, as the Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire coalfield started to decline so did the importance of Colwick Shed. By 1958 it had become a subordinate shed itself and was downgraded to 40E, a shed code that 61264 carried for many years.

The final blow for Colwick Shed came in January 1965 when it was transferred to the Midland Region and all the ex LNER locos were moved out in haste and replaced by LMR types.

So, from having an allocation of 12 B1s in November 1963, Colwick shed had by November 1966 11 ex LMS Black 5s and 44 8Fs instead. However, closure to steam followed shortly afterwards in December 1966 but with 61264 retained along with Standard Class 4, 4-6-0 No 75016 for stationary boiler duties. Colwick shed survived another four years as a diesel depot before final closure on 18th April 1970, with demolition the following year. Today the site is occupied by factory units along a road called Great Northern Way.



Judging by the well-filled tender, 61264 must have just passed under the coaling stage at Colwick shed. The photograph was taken on 20th January 1965, so the loco had just ten months in revenue earning service remaining. After this it would remain at Colwick for a further three years serving as a stationary boiler. Photo courtesy of Raymond Soper.

AGM 2023 report

Dave Horton

The 41st AGM of the Thompson B1 Locomotive Trust (TBLT) and Thompson B1 Locomotive Ltd (TBLL) was held in the marquee in the goods yard of Quorn and Woodhouse Station on 21st October 2023.

The day started at 10:00 when the first of two groups were given a guided tour of the shed at Loughborough, seeing some of the ongoing restoration and overhaul projects being undertaken there. Both tours were fascinating and informative and our thanks go to the GCR for facilitating them.

It was then a quick dash down to platform 1 of Loughborough station for those of us who'd been on the 11:00 shed tour to catch the 12:00 departure to Leicester North. Our group travelled as far as Quorn and Woodhouse riding in the Lounge Car attached to the rear of the train. We then joined others in the marquee for the AGM together with a buffet lunch.

Following all the business of the AGM being concluded we once again boarded the Lounge Car and travelled the rest of the line up to Leicester North and back to Loughborough, hauled by BR Standard 5 No 73156.

(Our thanks go to Chris Singleton and Dave Horton for organising the event - Ed)



*Members of the Trust in the Lounge Car on their way to Quorn & Woodhouse for the AGM.
Photo courtesy of Alf Bousie.*

Minutes of the Meeting

Attendees (22):

Dave Horton, Yvette Horton, Alf Bousie, David Lewis, Steve Andrews, Andrew Green, Elaine Green, Nigel Ridgeon, Irene Ridgeon, Wendy Ibbotson, Lee Ibbotson, Steve Blakemore, Bill Sellwood, Bill Higson, Philomenah Holladay, Jonathan Johnson, Chris Singleton, Dean Collier, Len Muir, Anthony Naylor, John Davis, Alison Nuzum.

Apologies (25):

Mike Coble, Dave Wellington, Brenda Mitchell, Bill Wilson, Roger and Irene Goldthorpe, James Tawse, Alan Hartford, Helen Aylett, Alan Camp, Peter Goodwin, John Gliddon, Robin Aylett, Paul Hassall, John Pearse, Stephen Harris, Eric Oates, Michael Newman, Robin Langford, Neil Young, Michael Carey, Chris Lindley, Stuart Ackley, Peter Commons, John Whitfield.

At the start of the meeting, Dave Horton read out a statement on behalf of Mike Coble, Chairman, who had sent his apologies:

Good morning all

It is with some regret that I have decided to step down from my roles in the B1 Group after such a long association, from the very earliest days in 1972 following a wet visit to Barry scrapyard and then through work meeting up with Peter Aylett, who along with his brother Robin were fund raising for the Stour Valley Railway Preservation Society. We quickly became friends and went to one of the SVRPS meetings in Ponders End with several of their stalwarts, Tony Corbin, Chris Mayer, John Standing, Gordon Maslin and a youthful Steve Andrews.

With rumours that Dai Woodham was due to start cutting up the locos, a minibus trip was organised to revisit Barry scrapyard, and a decision was made that we could rescue a loco from our shortlist; an LMS 4F, the S&D 2-8-0 or the B1 Dept. No 29.

With early offers to finance the purchase outright, we were full of confidence, and even looked at setting up our own preservation base using the Hemelite branch line from Harpenden to Hemel Hempstead to start the renovation and to restore the railway. On this basis we formed our group - the Rolling Stock Society, but we had to borrow £4,500 from Midland Bank to secure the B1 in 1975, then fundraise the transport costs to take the loco to Loughborough in 1976, where we embarked on our 21-year restoration, steaming in 1997.

We had formed our Limited Co and our charitable Trust under the guidance of our hardworking Secretary, Jim Gurnett, by that time. We then embarked on what was probably the best of times learning about operating a steam loco out on the main line, working with Brian Cooke and Bert Hitchen at 'Steam on the Met', getting money from the Heritage Lottery Fund to complete our mainline certification, thanks to Gerald Thorpe (then our Company Secretary) and then to Scotland to work the Jacobite over 8 summers. Here we had our week of support crew duties working with West Coast Railway crews Frank Santrian and Tony 'Brasso' Brassington, Lackie and Florence. One week there we were introduced to a youthful Dave Horton.

There followed some super railtours around the country, with a highlight in November 2001 when Dick Hardy had organised a reunion of Parkeston drivers when the loco returned on 'The Scandinavian' and George Maryan had a footplate ride to turn the loco at Manningtree. When he stepped down from the footplate with tears in his eyes he said, 'If I die tonight I'll die a happy man'.

We have lost so many of those early day members; Peter Aylett, Dermot Reynolds, John Standing, John Kiefer, Murray Pearson, Chris Parrish, Richard Chambers, Gerald Thorpe, Bob Mitchell and of course Dave Fowler and many more everyday members, most recently Eddie Savage.

Reluctantly I leave the group in the hands of the current management team and wish you all my best wishes in the daunting task of fund raising, for this, the third major overhaul of the locomotive. In the long term we may have to seek co-operation within another Charity group to ensure the B1 is saved for many years to come. Even some of our prestige preserved railways are struggling for funds and the costs of travel are increasing, with most railtours starting at around £120 a ticket, £35 - £45 for a gala day ticket.

You will also need to look after our hardest working engineer, Steve Andrews, who has spent all his working life maintaining our loco.

Good luck in the future and in the motto of the Great Central; 'FORWARD'.

A spontaneous round of applause was given and Dave Horton placed on record the group's thanks to Mike Cobley for his many years of service and commitment to the group.

Minutes of the previous AGM (TBLL and TBLT)

The Minutes of the 40th AGM of the TBLL and of the TBLT, which was held on 30th October 2022, were unanimously approved by show of hands.

Statement of Accounts (TBLL and TBLT)

The Statement of Accounts of the TBLL and the TBLT for the year ended 30th June 2023 were unanimously approved by show of hands.

Election of Directors (TBLL)

Mike Cobley retired as a Director of TBLL and nobody stood for re-election or election. The Directors of TBLL are now as follows: Alan Camp, Dave Horton.

Dave Horton issued an appeal for people to step forward to become Directors of TBLL because having only two Directors is not healthy for an organisation. Co-option of Directors can be done outside of the AGM, to be ratified at next year's AGM.

Note: a couple of people tentatively offered their services after the AGM. Dave Horton to follow this up with the individuals.

Election of Trustees (TBLT)

Mike Cobley retired as a Trustee / Director of the TBLT.

In accordance with the Articles of Association (Rules 34 - 35), Dave Wellington and Alan Camp retired by rotation and being eligible, offered themselves for re-election as Trustees / Directors of the TBLT. This was approved.

Philomenah Holladay and Jonathan Johnson offered themselves for election. This was also approved, and both were welcomed by Dave Horton on to the Council of Management.

Note that the Trustees / Directors of TBLT are now as follows: Alan Camp, Dave Horton, Steve Andrews, Dave Wellington, Philomenah Holladay and Jonathan Johnson.

In addition, the following sit on the Council of Management (though not formally as Trustees): Steve Robb, Alf Bousie, Yvette Horton.

Appointment of Accountant:

It was recommended that Anthony Rickman should be re-appointed as Company and Trust Accountant. Agreed unanimously.

Directors' Reports – 1) Dave Horton (Secretary)

The following is the text of the 'Council of Management Report for AGM 2023' which was circulated to members in advance of the AGM:

Since last year's AGM on 22nd October 2022, it may seem that not a lot has been happening to progress the overhaul, with the loco still dormant in the shed at Ruddington. However there has been a lot happening behind the scenes to prepare us for the time when we start taking her apart.

First and most importantly we must always consider our cash position. During the last overhaul between 2008-2012 we came perilously close to running out of money on several occasions when bills for the boiler work were seemingly arriving every other week. Our late Secretary, Dave Fowler, and Yvette Horton (who was Treasurer at the time) walked a tightrope between money coming in from donations and loans and paying LNWRH invoices for the boiler work. We don't want to find ourselves in that stressful situation ever again, and that is one of the reasons why we have not rushed to start the overhaul.

The good news is that our cash reserves are stable; we are covering our predictable recurring costs. At the start of September there was around £135k in total across three bank accounts (two for Thompson B1 Locomotive Trust and one for Thompson B1 Locomotive Ltd). Regular income from membership subscriptions, donations and share purchase is currently running at £18,275 p.a., enough to cover the main outgoings which is basically just insurance at £9235 p.a. and storage of the loco at Ruddington at £5200 p.a., with a little left over for things like postage costs and occasional engineering-related expenses.

The biggest single spend this year, although it won't appear in the audited accounts for year ending June 2023, because it was paid in July, was £46,408 for a complete set of new tyres for the loco (including tender), which have now been delivered to Carnforth. Nonetheless we launched the 'Wheel Deal' appeal to refill the coffers for those tyres (and to pay for their eventual fitment); but unfortunately, uptake of the Wheel Deal has so far been rather poor so we need to do more to promote it.

The fact that financially we can now hold water is largely due to the success of the '6-12-64' membership scheme which was launched in December 2022. This has almost doubled our monthly income. Had we not done this, you can see from the figures above that we would gradually be losing money simply on insurance and storage costs alone.

But the stark truth of the matter is that we are still an order of magnitude away from being able to afford the complete overhaul, which we estimate will cost around £750k. It's certainly not impossible, but a lot more time, effort and imagination is going to have to be put into finding the money over the coming years.

On the basis that 'every little helps', we have started attending events with a sales stand again, over a decade since we last did this at Barrow Hill. The first one was at the Great Central Railway 50th Anniversary Gala in June, when we raised £546 from the sale of donated items. We'll be back at the GCR on 7th and 8th October for their Autumn Gala. I would like to pay tribute to the small band of volunteers who have been supporting these events; Dave Wellington, Alf Bousie, Yvette Horton, Brenda Mitchell, Josh Peace, Paul Kaufmann, Wendy and Lee Ibbotson, and David Lewis.

We will do more and more of this; not only does it raise a bit of money but it helps to maintain

the all-important 'profile' of the group, and it's just nice to talk to people about who we are and what we're aiming to achieve. Another 'every little helps' initiative has been the opening of our online shop, where we are currently selling replica wooden B1 nameplates, replica aluminium shedplates, and a couple of genuine antique cast iron signs. Please do get in touch if you have something to donate; we can sell it either through the online shop or on the sales stand, or both.

Membership of the Trust stands at a respectable 202, of which 149 (73%) of those are now 'online only' members. This has helped us to significantly reduce the cost of postage, and also helps us to communicate frequently and easily with a majority of the membership.

The website <https://www.thompsonb1.org/> continues to be a useful and attractive resource and has been updated this year to bring it up to date, removing some outdated content. To keep things 'fresh' we aim to produce one or two blog posts per month via the website which are typically linked directly to our social media accounts on Facebook, Twitter (sorry, "X"!) and Instagram. These blog posts also serve to provide a useful online record of what we've been getting up to. This again helps to keep us relevant; the worst thing is for somebody to discover a website which appears to have been dormant for several years.

Back to the loco, and again some excellent progress is being made in the background by Tony Stockman and Alistair Leach on the design of a new tender tank. Tony has nearly completed modelling the tender tank in his 3D CAD (Computer Aided Design) package, the model being derived from original North British drawings, with some minor allowances for modern material thicknesses. Once this 'baseline' is established, Tony will begin work on the modifications required to sympathetically accommodate the future fitment of European Train Control System (ETCS) equipment.

We're not actually anticipating the need to fit the loco with ETCS any time soon, and if and when the time comes that it's mandatory to do so, the costs of the electronic kit, installation and commissioning would thankfully be paid for by Network Rail. All we are doing at this stage is to make provision in the metalwork for the physical space required for the additional kit. More on this in future newsletters. Alistair is providing the all-important design assurance and ensuring that the design changes are fully traceable, justified and 'evidenced', because that's the way it has to be if we want to take the locomotive back out on the mainline.

Our preferred fabricator for the new tender tank is Hill & Webster of Ashbourne, Derbyshire, and it won't be long until we are ready to place the order for the new tank. Starting the overhaul with the tender is considered to be sensible because we have the funds available to finish the job (around £60k is the quoted cost). Volunteer labour will be used to salvage the original parts of the tender that we wish to re-use. The old tank will go off to Hill & Webster to be used partially as a template before it eventually gets scrapped or sold (know any group that wants a life expired ex-B1 tender tank?!). We will then be able to deploy more volunteer labour to clean the tender frames and wheelsets, following which the tender frames will go off for professional sandblasting and repainting.

This 'tender first' approach also means that we keep the business end of the locomotive (the engine) in one piece for as long as possible; thus avoiding the risk of removed parts being mixed up, lost or even worse stolen. And from a simple storage perspective it means that we don't clutter up containers with parts unnecessarily soon. It also means that we can drag the engine out of the shed from time to time for fundraising purposes or publicity photos. So, it is likely that we won't take the engine apart until we have got enough funds in hand to start the boiler work; that doesn't necessarily mean that we have to raise all the money before we

start but we certainly need more than we've got in the bank at the moment. The biggest reason not to start the boiler work until 'last' is of course that as soon as it's done, the clock is ticking on the boiler certificate, so it is sensible to overhaul the rest of the locomotive first to get maximum usage from the freshly-overhauled boiler.

Meanwhile Steve Andrews and Steve Robb have been amassing and consolidating our pattern collection from various locations around the country. For the non-technically minded, patterns are the things from which castings are made. Many metal parts on the loco, particularly non-ferrous items (made from bronze or brass), are formed by casting. Patterns are made by very skilled craftspeople and once lost they are potentially very expensive and difficult to replicate, and hence the castings themselves would also be very difficult and expensive to replicate. So, this is all work which will ultimately save the Trust time and money.

After 'money' our second and third biggest challenges are 'people' and 'time'. Your Council of Management keeps things ticking over in terms of the accounts, attending to new membership requests and renewals, statutory duties such as the Charity Commission and Companies House returns, arranging and minuting meetings, stuffing envelopes and doing mailouts, and looking after general correspondence – amongst a seemingly endless list of admin required just to stand still!

The Council of Management is fortunate to be assisted from time-to-time by 'satellite' helpers who look after the social media (with special thanks this year to Wendy Ibbotson) or help to organise events (with thanks to Chris Singleton).

But generally speaking, those carrying the heaviest burden for administering the Trust also have full-time jobs, family and a busy life outside of the Trust and so it is imperative that we find more people to help share the load and give us the 'bandwidth' to move forward.

To this end I am delighted to report that new members Philomenah (Phil) Holladay and Jonny Johnson, both practical hands-on engineers who are very much already involved at the GCR, are putting themselves forward to join the Council of Management at the AGM, and I commend them both to you wholeheartedly!

We expect that Phil and Jonny will play a central role in assisting Steve Andrews with the planning and execution of the overhaul, and will provide the leadership, organisational and supervisory skills to bring in volunteers to assist. In addition to Phil and Jonny, we have had a couple more new members who are already making a practical contribution. We hope that once the overhaul gets going and progress is more visible, that this trickle of 'new talent' will become more of a torrent. Any members wanting to get more actively involved with the running of the Trust, please do feel free to get in touch.

Finally, it just remains for me to thank all members for their continued support; financially, practically and emotionally. We hope that those who are able to attend the Members Day / AGM on 21st October will enjoy the day that we have put together for you, and for those that are unable to attend, hopefully we will see you at next year's event, for which we will endeavour to give more notice of the date than we did this year. And please keep your donations coming!

Directors' Reports – 2) Steve Andrews (Engineering)

We have purchased two of the 20ft containers at Ruddington which just need to be cleared of S160 parts and separated slightly for better ventilation before we can move in. A third container will be brought down from Grosmont and sited near to the other two.

Tender wheelsets and flanging blocks have now been brought down to Ruddington from Grosmont.

The loco may be temporarily moved into the new carriage shed at Ruddington so that repairs to the 'No. 1 shed' (where it currently lives) can be undertaken. Ultimately we hope to move the loco to a different road in the shed so that it's more visible to the public, then we also need to put up an information board adjacent to the loco to publicise our existence.

Directors' Reports – 3) Alan Camp (Finances)

The following is the text of the 'Report of Treasurer for AGM 2023' which was circulated to members in advance of the AGM:

Not much has changed since our last AGM. We continue this last year as previously, unable to generate any income as the locomotive has been stored awaiting the start of repairs.

We will, hopefully, be making a start soon on preparing for the engine's main overhaul and other work, including replacement of the loco's and tender's tyres. We have secured and paid for these tyres already so these will be available when required. We still have sufficient funds to make a start on the work but a major boiler re-work will require more so we will be looking to raise additional money to enable this work to be completed in time.

As per last year, we have paid our insurance requirements, continued to pay for undercover storage at Ruddington, and paid for the tyres, but apart from that not much has been taken from our Trust account for this past year.

Social Media report – Wendy Ibbotson

Wendy Ibbotson gave an update on publicity initiatives this year, and in particular how our following has grown on social media channels. Wendy reported:

Our Facebook page now has 1245 followers. We gained 125 since the recent GCR Autumn Steam Gala; 105 of those whilst the gala was actually going on and I was posting from it. I know that doesn't sound big but that's 1000+ people who didn't 'listen' before.

During the gala our posts 'reached' a high volume of people through 'shares'. Our best one 'reached' 7600 people and we actually 'engaged with' 1800. 'Reach' measures how many unique individuals saw the content which we posted. 'Engagement' measures the individual interactions of your content such as reactions, comments and shares.

A year or so ago we talked about sharing the passion and getting more people to believe in the importance of keeping 61264 going... and this shows that we're beginning to do our job! Interestingly, 90.5% of our audience come from 'non-page followers' so we have some real potential to grow followers and interest with some good 'minute to minute' content.

Dave Horton added that for 2024 there is a plan to be more organised about attending railway events with a fundraising / publicity stand, getting them into the diary sooner rather

than later. These events may not generate a huge amount in donations or sales, but they raise our profile and 'keep the conversation going' which is truly the only way we'll ever reach our fundraising target and attract new members.

Any Other Business

Dave Horton explained that the Thompson B1 Locomotive 'Group' actually consists of two limited companies (company numbers 01722150 and 01681263) plus the Charity (charity number 326367) and suggested that consideration should be given to merging everything into a single legal entity; most likely one of the five different types of Charity that were introduced in 2013.

The reasons for founding the group as two limited companies plus a charity in 1983 may have been valid then, but things have moved on.

By merging everything into a single Charity, with a new Constitution conforming to the modern requirements of the Charity Commission, the administrative burden of needing to have two sets of accounts, officially two AGMs and the separate notices / minutes they entail, plus the ongoing need to manage the shareholdings, could be dispensed with.

Obviously, any such proposals will need to be proposed to members / shareholders through the proper consultation processes and any decisions will have to be taken at an EGM or AGM.

Thanks was given to Alf Bousie for his continued excellent work on producing the 'B1 News'; this year it has been shrunk to A5 booklet size to reduce postage costs, but the quality has actually improved; a win-win situation!

It was noted that the date for next year's AGM has already been decided; 12th October 2024, and it will take place again at the GCR. By advertising the date so far in advance, it is hoped to maximum attendance and engagement with members.



On the second tour of the day Trust members are shown work currently being carried out on O4 No 63601. Photo courtesy of Alf Bousie.



Haulage for the day was provided by BR Standard 5 No 73156. The loco is seen at Leicester North preparing to run round its train. Photo courtesy of Alf Bousie.

Dates for the diary 2024 - Restoration working parties to commence.

Dave Horton

We are delighted to announce the commencement, at long last, of restoration working parties in 2024. These will take place at Ruddington and will initially focus on stripping the tender ready for the replacement of the tank.

Working parties are scheduled to take place on the following dates:

- Saturday 9th March
- Saturday 11th May
- Saturday 13th July
- Saturday 14th September
- Saturday 9th November

In addition, please note that our **AGM and Members' Day** will take place on:

Saturday 12th October 2024

Anybody is welcome to come along for the working parties providing they are relatively fit and able since this will obviously involve manual tasks.

Working parties will be organised and supervised by Jonny Johnson and Philomenah Holladay but in the first instance, if you're interested in attending, please contact Dave Horton:

Mobile: 07739 023316

E-mail: dave_horton@btinternet.com

Enjoy a 'Wheel Deal'

Don't forget it's not too late to support this appeal to help us get 61264 back in running order ready for her 80th birthday in December 2027. The existing tyres on the loco's driving and bogie wheels have worn out and need replacing.

Our appeal has various options for sponsorship including one off payments or monthly contributions spread over up to 36 months. Sponsors will also be rewarded with a range of benefits acknowledging their contributions.

More details are included in the appeal flyer accompanying this newsletter.

TBLT 150 Club

Stephen Harris

Prizewinners July to December 2023

	Special	£50	£30	£30
July		162 A Naylor	159 W Redmond	125 S Ackley
August		29 D Wellington*	162 R Goldthorpe*	61 F Carter
September	£100 167 D Westbury		91 J Moore	159 W Redmond
October		24 F Carter	79 J Whitfield	80 R Goldthorpe*
November		123 S Ackley	22 S Saltmarsh	129 A Hartford*
December	£200 107 J Whitfield £100 64 R Flintoft	61 F Carter	122 S Ackley	164 A Naylor

- Denotes prize donated to TBLT

Come and win up to £200 and support your B1 at the same time!

Subscribe to the 150 Club and have a chance to win one of three cash prizes each month, with an extra two prizes in December.

You can subscribe £2 each month for each number, by standing order or annually by cheque for £24 for each number.

Please contact Stephen Harris at 7 Church Lea, Tavistock, Devon PL19 9PS or on 01822 618395 or by email at stephencharris@hotmail.com to subscribe or increase your subscription.