

# C37LG



## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2004 by Michael Ratledge

The Class 37 Locomotive Group. 74 Lakeview Way, Hampton Hargate, Peterborough. PE7 8DQ.

Dear Members,

Welcome to our first monthly newsletter. You will not have received any news from the Group (by post) since the last edition of 'SYPHON!' Magazine was published back in January 2004. Several factors have led to us replacing the magazine with this newsletter. Firstly, our deal with a local printer has now ceased due to problems beyond our control. This means the magazine would cost almost 7 times as much to produce. Secondly, all of the other commercial printers that we made enquiries with use software incompatible with that which we were using. The Group has yet to see any income from The Wensleydale Railway. This would easily cover the cost of the magazine and hopefully soon after our locos are in use, we should be able to begin producing 'SYPHON!' again. Several other avenues have been explored to produce the magazine but sadly none have come to fruition.

That's the bad news. The good news is that this newsletter will enable us to provide you with information on a regular basis. To bring costs down even further and enable more of your membership fee to be ploughed into the restoration and upkeep of 37003, we would like to give online members the opportunity to receive this letter in the form of an email. Hopefully we will work out the logistics of this in the new year. We hope to do this through the online C37LG Members Forum, an e-group set up for you to discuss Group matters and really get more involved with Group activities. If you have internet access and wish to join the members forum, email the Chairman at [rugbytown@tesco.net](mailto:rugbytown@tesco.net), asking to join. Make sure you include your membership number, name and address. Once subscribed to the Forum, you will be able to ask the committee and other members questions about the Group and Class 37 trivia. If you have any enquiries about your membership details you can email Mick Parker at [mick@c37lg.co.uk](mailto:mick@c37lg.co.uk).

### GROUP NEWS

Here is a brief summary of events to bring you up to date since January 2004 in no particular order.

#### And then there were three

By far the biggest and most exciting development for the C37LG is the addition to our ranks of two more Class 37's. Our Technical Officer Phil Lynch has purchased 37198 and 37275 from EWS. The sale went through on 29th June and both locomotives had been moved from Toton, where they had both been in store for over four years, to Leeming Bar on the Wensleydale Railway just 7 days later. The C37LG will restore and run the locos alongside '003. We will 'manage' the locos on behalf of the owner. The cost of the restoration will be met by Phil himself and no Group funds will be used. More details of our agreement with the owner appear later in this issue.

The WR has asked Phil to consider painting 37198 in the railways house colours of Red & White. The railway has not provided us with an exact specification for this livery as yet but when they do we will show you. 37198 is currently painted in Mainline Blue livery. Phil would like to paint the loco in Railfreight Distribution livery at some point in the future.

We suspect that 37275 will be a real crowd-puller when it is reunited with its 'Oor Wullie' nameplates, a name previously worn by 37402. '275 was named on 15th October 1993 after 37402 had been transferred to Crewe from Scotland. 37275 still carries the BR Blue livery it received when it was named 'Oor Wullie' but will be fully repainted. It previously wore Trainload Freight Metals colours and was named 'Stainless Pioneer'.

The 'Oor Wullie' plates have already been produced by Procast. They have been donated to the Group by long time members Bill and Sheena Berridge in memory of their son Colin, who sadly passed away in 1991. Colin was an avid Class 37 enthusiast. The Group also plan to add a plaque along with the plates to mark this dedication.

37275 & 37248 at Abergavenny on 5th May 1991.  
John Dawson



#### The BIG Plan

If someone were to ask me how to go about buying a locomotive the first thing I would advise them to do before spending any money is to secure a home and regular work for it. Phil Lynch has been forging a relationship with The Wensleydale Railway for several years now so that when the opportunity arose, the door would already be open for us.

The WR is not a heritage line in the conventional sense. It is run by a PLC and currently runs ten timetabled services between Leeming Bar and Redmire on a daily basis using a DMU (five in each direction).

When the line reopened to passengers in July 2003 the infrastructure consisted of 22 miles of single line with small yards at Leeming Bar and Redmire. Since then passing loops have been installed at Leyburn, Constable Burton, Bedale, Leeming Bar and Castlehills just prior to the connection with the East Coast Main Line near Northallerton. Signalling and line side equipment has been installed and examined by the Railway Inspectorate and very soon a two-train service will be introduced. One diagram will be covered by a DMU, the other train will be loco-hauled. We understand that there will be capacity for a third set but initially only two will be used.

Although the Railway is operated to Network Rail Rules and Regulations, RESCO Mainline Certificates are not required for

37198 at Gloucester on 1st July 1990. Al Pulford



locos which run on the line.

The WR have told us that four locos will be required to cover passenger and civil engineers trains. 31166, 31188 and 37003 will each share a quarter of the work. The remaining 25% will be covered by 37198 & 37275 collectively. Of course, this is subject to maintenance and availability.

A Class 20 is also based on the WR but this will be used on special occasions.

**37003 at Redmire on test on 27th March 2004.**

*Michael Ratledge*



#### **Top(s) man**

Mick Parker is currently setting up a database for managing maintenance of the 37's including a detailed history of each loco's workings. It will work much in the same way as TOPS does in the wider rail industry. All locos and stock on the line will eventually be added if their owners so wish.

#### **Its about time**

Before the service begins we aim to run our 'Launch Day Special' for current members and invited guests. This will include other Class 37 owners, former C37G/LG committee members and local dignitaries.

We intend to hold an AGM on the same day. The last AGM was held way back in January 2001. I was not on the committee then and as I understand it, when most of the groups committee resigned in early 2002 there were not enough active committee members to hold one.

#### **A balancing act**

The committee cannot concentrate fully on the Groups future prospects until we can close an unfortunate chapter from our past. Our debt to the EARM, where 37003 was based for 5 years, currently stands at over £2600 according to their records. However this figure does not tally with our own records.

The situation regarding this debt is currently as follows - some of this information appeared in SYPHON 118. Sorry if this is long-winded. In mid 2003 we expressed our intention to move 37003 to a new home as we would never be able to cover our costs at the museum. The EARM made it clear that this was not an option. We made a settlement offer to the museum that was rejected. We included some questions about breaches of our agreement by the EARM with the offer. None of the questions were answered or even acknowledged. Events culminated in the removal of the loco from the museum by us without permission of the EARM Board.

When we moved 37003 on January 27th 2004, we left a letter explaining our actions. A week later I rang Peter Thompson, Financial Director of the EARM, to get a response. He conceded that we had to do what was good for our group and acknowledged our genuine intention to settle our debt. I re-iterated the fact the group would be unable to pay ANY of the debt until -

- 37003 was earning money at the WR,
- both parties agreed on the actual amount of the debt.

I also told him that we intended to dispose of our spare generator,

which is still on their site, to a third party to raise cash to pay the debt. This was to be donated to the Renown Repulse Restoration Group who own 50029 & 50030 at Peak Rail.

Phil Lynch would liaise with Peter Martin, a museum volunteer and friend of the C37LG, with regard to moving the generator.

An EARM Board meeting was held on 17th February where the situation was discussed. Peter responded on behalf of the Board in writing. Unfortunately he sent his response to my old address despite the museum being informed of my new address by email and by post.

As far as the Group was aware, the EARM had yet to respond to our January letter. Then in June the museum re-sent their letter dated 20th February to Phil Lynch. In it the Board accepted our intent to pay but once again failed to acknowledge our previous questions. This letter was attached to another dated 17th June 2004. It said that due to lack of communication, Peter Martin had been told not to assist in moving the generator and that the museum were offering it for sale to recover part of the debt. The museum cannot legally sell what is not theirs and we are currently preparing a reply which will state this fact.

So there you have it. Unfortunately this situation continues to plague the Group. We feel that our cash flow problems are mainly down to the fact that when we moved the WR told us they would be running loco hauled passenger trains by May 2004. This launch date was a factor in the business plan we set out before moving '003 north. Track upgrades have taken longer than expected for various reasons, some beyond the WR's control.

You may be thinking to yourself, "why didn't we use any available funds to pay the EARM before spending anything on 37003?". All membership fees have gone towards getting '003 ready for service. If we gave all our money to the museum, we would not have a running loco to offer another railway and therefore create an income for the Group. Whilst we would have had no debt, we would still be stuck in Essex with a derelict loco and no money to get it running. We had to make restoration a priority to rescue the Group, so to speak.

Now we have a running loco with a decent home with great potential. Once the Group is bringing in money for loco hire I'm sure we will clear this up very quickly.

#### **Accounts**

We have to admit that the Groups accounts in general are not in a very good state. As the Group was dormant for a period, our VAT returns were not completed by the previous treasurer at all. The VAT office has been very understanding regarding our situation and our current Treasurer handed everything over to them by the end of September. We believe we may be able to produce accurate accounts for the last three financial years at the AGM which, as I mentioned, we would like to hold in the Leeming Bar area when the WR service is launched. Obviously we do not have a date as yet.

#### **An appeal - please help**

At this time our only income is through membership fees and kind donations. We would like to appeal to you to help raise the extra cash to gather spares. Please help if you can by sending your donations, no matter how small, to Mick Parker (see page 2). Make cheques payable to 'The Class 37 Locomotive Group'.

Once the railway is up and running loco hauled trains we expect the Groups finances to really take off. The Group is happy to accept money on a short term loan basis. If you want to feel that your donation is really helping the Group in a particular way you can sponsor - in part - a specific job that needs addressing. Below is a list of spare parts that we would like to obtain.

- complete electrical cubicle (series 1)
- complete power unit and generator
- radiator fan clutch and drive shafts
- M8 units (train brake valves)

This is just a small list but many more items will be needed in the coming years.

The cubicle and power unit we will overhaul and swap out with '003's when complete. Then we will overhaul the power unit we take out.

Our VAT claim should be processed in a few weeks. We expect this to bring around £1000 into the Group's account.

We hope you can help. Thank you in advance.



### **37198 & 37275 Agreement**

Something else that will provide income for the Group will be Phil's - sorry, 'our' - 37's. The Group's volunteers will restore and maintain these locos and the Group will take a percentage of the running fees. The C37LG will also handle administration and publicity for the pair. Some aspects of this agreement have not yet been finalised. As is the case with '003, each loco will have a separate agreement with the WR. Remember, not only will we receive income from 37003's use, but that of 37198 & 37275 as well.

Phil is a modest chap who believes that for publicity purposes the locos should be known as 'The C37LG's locos' as opposed to his own.

### **Jimmy Shand**

An article appeared in RAIL issue 491 stating that the C37LG owns 37188. This is not true. The loco, currently under restoration at Carnforth is owned by four private individuals. The C37LG was instrumental in securing 37188 for the purchasers from Harry Needle Railroad Company in August 2003. The loco was to be moved to the Wensleydale and restored by its owners assisted by the C37LG volunteers but an agreement was not forthcoming. Unfortunately, that is where the partnership ended. 37188's owners are in the process of finding a home and the loco is still a long way from becoming a runner as they have opted to 'go to town' on the power unit. I look forward to seeing this loco appear in Large Logo Blue livery with Scottie Dogs and 'Jimmy Shand' nameplates!

### **Restoration Report**

#### **37003**

First up is our own loco, 37003. Its been almost 12 months since she arrived at Leeming and we are happy to say this loco is mechanically complete. Painting the loco has not been made a priority so work in that area is progressing slower than anticipated. We were not entirely happy with our own work on one side of the loco so it was done again with assistance from Paul Prest Engineering, a firm located next door to Leeming Bar Yard. Paul has done a lot of metalwork on '003 and will likely be asked to assist with '198 & '275 too. The thing is, we are still not entirely happy with the results of this second attempt. As our attentions have now turned to the other two locos, ourselves and the WR decided to apply numbers and logos to the loco and deal with the poorly painted areas in the future.

On 7th February 37003 was allowed to spread its wings for the first time in almost ten years. A light engine test run was planned to Constable Burton and back in order to assess any faults that might occur in service and try the generator under power, something which shunting around a yard doesn't allow us to do to any great effect.

The outward journey was pretty uneventful but on the return 37003 shut down near the village of Newton-le-Willows. Fortunately, the fault was quickly traced to a burnt out engine run relay in the electrical cubicle. This allows the engine to run once the driver takes his finger off the start button. As our spares were at Leeming, assistance was sent in the form of resident shunter 03144. The fault was not a worry and was inexpensive to rectify.

A further test run was undertaken on 27th March. This time we took a loaded engineers train to Redmire and back. This went very well and full power was attained at several points along the line although for very short periods. The line speed at the time was 15mph! The only problem we had was a split circlip on a water hose which was rectified at Redmire. The climb up the bank from Redmire to Wensley Crossing was awesome.

At the end of the day these were test runs and we expected faults to occur. In a way we are thankful they did as each fault will be one less thing to deal with when they are in passenger service.

37003 has seen use on the line on a couple of overnight civil engineers trains. The loco performed faultlessly on both occasions. It worked in top n' tail mode with 03144.

A fitness-to-run exam was carried out by a professional rolling stock examiner on behalf of the WR recently to assess the loco for passenger use. We expected that it would fail the exam and it did. Several items cropped up on the defect list and all but one were subsequently sorted out by Phil and the lads to the railways satisfaction.

On 23rd October 2004, 37003 worked an empty test train to Castlehills Junction (Northallerton) and back to Leeming Bar. Once the DMU service finished at 1800hrs, '003 made her first appearance on a passenger train since July 1994 and was pressed into service on a return trip to Redmire. It was originally intended to be just a test run but the WR decided to allow volunteers and members of the railway and the C37LG on board.



Though we had plenty of fuel on board for the days events, 37003 shut down when it went round a canted curve on the line, in both directions. We traced this fault to a float switch but still topped up the fuel, water and oil for good measure.

From an enthusiasts point of view it was a great success and everyone who was able to attend (at very short notice) thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Photos of the event have been posted online at [www.c37lg.co.uk](http://www.c37lg.co.uk) and <http://rugbytown.fotopic.net> for you to peruse at your pleasure. The WR's red coaching stock makes for good viewing as well.

A further passenger carrying run to Redmire was planned for the evening of 13th November but this had to be cancelled due to staff shortages. We did manage to take '003 to Castlehills with empty stock that day though. 37003 has been officially handed over to the railway and is ready for service but further tests will take place to enable fault free mileage to be accumulated. With track upgrades being undertaken in the coming weeks we have put off test runs until January at the earliest.

### **Our new babies**

Both 37198 and 37275 were assessed at Toton Training Compound by the volunteers on 25th June. Both locos were found to have mostly complete power units and only minor parts missing from the cabs. The main problem with 37275 was that all air tanks, inside and out, had been removed. 37275's engine was barred over and one sticking turbo was freed whilst still in the compound.

A low-loader was booked to retrieve 37275 from the Nottinghamshire depot on Wednesday 30th June. It arrived at Leeming Bar on 1st July and was offloaded that evening. On arrival we discovered that several items that had been placed inside the loco had gone missing and that one cab window had been smashed, evidently from inside the cab. Thankfully, the would-be vandal and thief left behind evidence of his identity!

37198 was also inspected for damage on arrival at Leeming on 6th July and was also missing several parts which were intact when we assessed her. Both drivers gauge panels had been cut out and all door locks removed amongst other items. Recovery of these parts is underway and prosecution is being considered. If any action is taken, it will be for Phil to decide.

I can say that the alleged perpetrator is a diesel preservationist who we will not name. When the majority of Class 37 preservation groups are talking and working together to a common goal it is quite shameful that this sort of thing is going on. Apparently, other 37 groups have been targeted by this individual.

We have advised EWS of the situation and were told that our locos were not the only ones affected and that British Transport Police were now involved. We have provided EWS with a list of missing parts. They assured us that these would be made available to us soon.

I'll start with 37275 because she arrived at Leeming Bar first. On 3rd July, Phil and myself got to work on 37275 and were helped by first time volunteer Paul Jarman, a work mate of mine. We cleaned out the loco thoroughly from end to end including the nose end compartments and engine room. You'd be amazed how much rubbish accumulates inside a loco over the years. I found an old BR2973/1 'exceptional loads form' dated 1992 underneath one of the cab heaters - not quite a historical railway document but interesting nonetheless.

Paul and I stripped the cabs of paint. Some of the paint was so thick that an angle grinder had to be used. Red oxide or primer was applied where appropriate in both ends. Phil went round the whole loco and compiled a list of work that needed to be done to get the loco running.

The following day, Phil was joined by Stuart, John and Adrian. New batteries arrived and were fitted. Amazingly, every single light bulb in the loco was found to be working. The electrical cubicle will now be tested. All cam drip trays were removed and cleaned. Thankfully, even after four years storage, no water was found. The generator was cleaned and brushes found to be moving freely. This is in contrast with 37003 which had a few sticking brushes. Again, the engine was manually barred all the way round very easily.

Phil and Stuart spent the next few days working continuously with occasional assistance from John and/or Adrian. A new engine run solenoid was fitted and two complete instrument panels were made up but not fitted. On Friday 9th July, 37275 was fired up for the first time in preservation. As there are no air tanks and neither cab was complete at the time, 37275 was multied-up with 37003 from which both locos were started. As there is still work to do on the generator, which needs heating to bring up the resistance of components, '275 was shut down after a minute or so but this is a huge step forward in a very short space of time. When you think about it, the lads worked about two months worth of working parties in a week and the power unit itself is 100% complete so its pretty understandable how a start up was possible so soon.

On Saturday 10th July, John lifted the floor at no.1 end to free up the seized handbrake mechanism at that end. Parts still missing from 37275 include the aforementioned air tanks, one multiple working cable, one M8 brake valve, one straight air valve and one slack adjuster (brake rigging).

The air tanks were sourced from Ian Riley & Sons of Heywood on the East Lancashire Railway in late August. They were retrieved from 37073, the same loco which gave up its power unit to '003 in 2002. On 21st August, the tanks were lowered into 37275 and the replacement of pipework was completed soon after. All the aforementioned parts needed to complete the loco, bar the multiple working cables were fitted during September and the generator was attended to. Both cabs have since been extensively refitted too, although this is not quite complete. Once all air leaks had been cured, 37275 was able to move under her own power on 23rd September 2004. One popular preservation website reported this as a test run but I don't believe 6 feet qualifies as such!

Cosmetic work will continue including cutting out all four cabside panels beneath the droplight windows and around radiator grills and air intakes. Both number panel cut outs will be offered for sale.

### 37198

Not a lot of work has been carried out on 37198 since it arrived. It was shunted into the yard alongside 37003 & 37275 but was moved to a less accessible area the following day. Phil has done a full assessment on the loco and compiled a job sheet for the volunteers.

Work that has been done includes fitting the batteries and manually barring the engine over. It bars over almost fully apart from one sticking point.

Now that 37003's test runs have been put off until the new year, our team of volunteers will commence cosmetic work on 37198 alongside that on 37275. As I mentioned previously, the exact specification of the Wensleydale Red livery for '198 is yet to be finalised so we will complete all metalwork and paint her in undercoat.

**MICHAEL RATLEDGE  
CHAIRMAN**

## A Volunteers Tale

By Trevor Martin

Its not only donations in the form of money on which the C37LG depends. One of the Group's most precious commodities is your spare time. Thanks to people like Trevor Martin, 37003 is now ready for service. Trevor joined the group quite recently and was very eager to do his bit. Here is his tale.



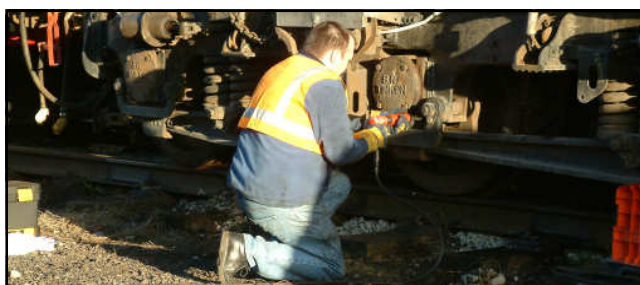
I've always been interested in railways for as long as I can remember, especially Class 37's. So, at the start of this year I joined the C37LG. I only found out about it when we got our first computer and that's where it all started. As I live near the Chairman in Peterborough, I was more than willing to help out when Michael said he was going up to The Wensleydale Railway. On Saturday 6th March I joined up with him and John Pinion. We picked up Phil Lynch on our way up the A1 to Leeming Bar.

This was the first time that I had been so close to a Class 37. We started the day by putting on parts that had been sourced from 37225 which some of the lads visited the day before at CF Booths scrap merchants of Rotherham. This included a guard iron which we fitted to the no.1 end bogie. I then helped Michael put on a main reservoir pipe at the same end. After that I joined John in the engine room to help put in some engine mounting bolts which secure the locos power unit to the bed plate. At the same time other things were being carried out by other volunteers. Two of the regulars, Mick Parker and Adrian Walby were trying to get the engine room lights on the B side. Phil Lynch and Stuart Gray were also working on the radiator fan.

As every hour passed the loco was getting that little bit nearer to completion. This gave a great sense of achievement.

Then came my initiation test, which was to start the loco with Phil. First we checked the water and oil, which then began to prime the engine. When the oil pump stopped running all I had to do was press and hold the start button and 37003 burst into life! she started running it was as if the whole of Wensleydale stopped to look.

I would like to thank all the lads that were there on the day for being so friendly - and yes - I will definitely be going back to help again. When she does start running on the line I will be thinking to myself that I helped in a little way to put her back in service where she belongs. I can't wait! I hope when you read this that you will be inspired to come along yourselves and muck in. You really don't know what you're missing. I hope to see you there. **TREV**



Trevor has since become one of our regular volunteers. If you are interested in helping out, call Michael on 07736 469013 or Phil on 07903120136. Until next month, have a good 'un!