

SYPHON!

The official magazine of the Class 37 Locomotive Group

**Restoration Progress
C37LG 2005 AGM Minutes
Fleet Reshuffle**

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The Class 37 Locomotive Group

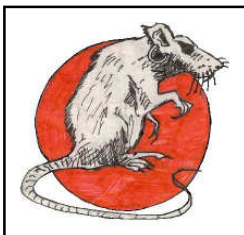
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If you supplied us with your email address when you joined the group, you will have been invited to join the Members Forum. Feel free to contact the Committee via the forum. If you are not a member of the forum **IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT YOU JOIN** as forum members receive group news before anyone else. Email Mick Parker directly, giving him your name, address and membership number and he will add you to the forum.

Subscriptions, general enquiries and any 'gen' for inclusion on our website www.c37lg.co.uk should also be sent to Mick. He also deals with any enquiries regarding the website and access to the Members Area.

If you have any submissions for 'SYPHON!', send them to Michael Ratledge. Articles sent via email should be sent in MS Word format and pictures as JPEG's. Bigger files of 2Mb or higher should be copied onto CD and sent in the post (I'm stuck with a dial-up internet connection!). Include a S.A.E. if you would like your submissions returned.



COVER PHOTO:
Taken from Westwood Road bridge, 37057 is seen shunting civil engineers wagons in Westwood Yard, Peterborough prior to working the Tallington Trip on 21st January 2003. INSET: 37905 at Booths, Rotherham.
Michael Ratledge (both)



EDITORIAL & NEWS

Well, we've hardly taken a rest in the last few months. Hot on the heels of BRE Ltd's acquisition of virtual shell - 37414 - comes the successful purchase of a complete locomotive - 37905.

BRE Ltd's shareholders spend the first half of November sweating it out and on several occasions it didn't look like they were going to get it. At one point, 37198 was tendered to several buyers, including DRS and West Coast Railway Company in order to fund the purchase of 37905 but in order to keep all the locos together, a benefactor was found who has now become a stakeholder in BREL, so 37198 remains part of the C37LG fleet.

Adding a new loco to the fleet will result in a few movements. 37003 will stay at the Wensleydale Railway for the time being. 37198 is scheduled to move to Meldon Quarry on the Dartmoor Railway in March to join 37905 which is already on site. Work is already at a vital stage on 37905. See the progress reports for more details. 37275 is set to move from Leeming Bar in April, along with the volunteers Mk1 brake coach and Mk3 Sleeper. The latter is stored in Hearnor Haulages yard at present. All three of these vehicles will be joining 37414 at Wolsingham on the Weardale Railway. The railway came out of administration on 27th January 2006 and the Ealing Community Transport Group (ECT) took control of a majority share of the Weardale Railway Company on March 1st 2006. ECT also run the Dartmoor Railway. I hope to be able to write an article on ECT in a future issue.

Aside from our coverage of the above changes, this issue of SYPHON! includes the minutes of our recent 2005 AGM, held at the Black Swan in Bedale, just a stones throw from Leeming Bar. The AGM was quite a success and the landlord made us feel very welcome. Things are certainly hotting up for the C37LG at the moment.

Now onto the subject of this magazine. As you may have noticed, I have failed miserably in getting the magazine out to you on the scheduled date on January 1st. Aside from problems outside the Group, I have struggled to fill the magazine with appropriate material this time round. This is because I have had no submissions of articles from members. Without your input, this magazine will just end up full of photos, most of which will have been taken by me! So, come on, volunteers and members alike. Have you got a 37 related tale to tell? What are your top ten haulages behind 37's? Do you have any technical information you could share with the Group? If so, get writing and submit your article to the address/email address on page 2. **MICHAEL RATLEDGE**



Progress - 37198 & 37275 at Leeming Bar

37003 is to remain at the Wensleydale Railway for the time being. The railway have indicated that they will have work for it during the summer. However, such work has not been forthcoming to justify keeping 37198 & 37275 at Leeming. A team of volunteers, headed by Mick Chester, is currently busy preparing these two locos for movement to Dartmoor and Weardale respectively.

37198 is essentially complete and just needs a few little outstanding jobs to be completed before moving to Meldon Quarry. We have discovered a leaking radiator and a couple of leaking brake cylinders but other than that there are no problems with this loco. We are expecting it to be pressed into service on the Dartmoor Railway almost as soon as it rolls off the lorry.



37198 seen here on the station loop at Leeming Bar along with Martin Nixons 31166. '198 is having its bogies painted black and its impending departure will see its Wensleydale Railway logos removed.

Michael Ratledge

Most of our time at Leeming is spent on finishing the bodywork on 37275. Again, Mick Chester is leading the team to refit all the cabs on this loco as the floor and interior cabsides have all been removed and replaced. Mechanically, 37275 has been fully operational for almost 18 months but has never had a fitness to run exam. We are aiming to complete all outstanding tasks on this loco prior to its movement north to the Weardale Railway to join 37414.

Showing off its bare metal no2 end nose, 37275 awaits a coat of fresh red oxide at Leeming Bar on 11th February 2006.

Michael Ratledge



Progress - 37414 at Wolsingham

Although progress on 37414 itself may appear to have been slow, much has happened behind the scenes with this locomotive. A vast amount of volunteer hours over the last few months have been spent acquiring parts for '414. BRE Ltd has spent £1000's on parts from Booths scrap yard in Rotherham (and even managed to buy a whole other loco while they were at it!).

37414 inside the new shed at Wolsingham on 26th November 2005.

Michael Ratledge



Some time has also been spent on the loco too though. Mick Chester and Phil Broadbent spent a few weekends stripping the top end of the power unit and disconnecting it ready for removal at a later date. It is now very likely that we will be fitting a fresh power unit in '414 rather than rebuilding the one we have. Phil and the bodywork team have also started to prepare the loco for repainting.

Other than the power unit, we now have almost all the parts we need for the loco including replacement CP7 bogies, traction motor blowers, exhausters, compressors, a radiator fan assembly, all traction cables, all cab equipment, internal pipework, windows and even a roof. Once 37198, 37275 and 37905 have all been prepared for work at their new homes, all efforts will move to 37414 and the hard work can really be in earnest.

Progress - 37905 at Meldon Quarry



37905 and friends at Workshop Open Day on 5th September 1993.

Mark Grimes

Lets bring this story right up to date. One cold November evening on the way back from Leeming Bar to The South, three of our volunteers decided to go and have a look at 37905 with permission from its (then) owner. The loco was situated on the dockside in Immingham, next to a public road. The Editor remembers receiving a frantic phone call from Chris Thorn that went something like this:- "Rug, we have *got to* have this engine! You can see your face in it!"

If you've seen pictures of 37905's current exterior condition, you will know that Chris was not referring to the bodywork. But bodywork is just about all that is wrong with 37905.



This close up picture (*left*) clearly shows the extremely good condition of the crank. 37905's engine hours count at the date of withdrawal over 9 years ago was a lowly 2473hrs. As a comparison, EWS's limit on engine hours before withdrawal was 10800hrs.



In a standard Class 37 engine bay, you can barely squeeze past the power unit. 37905's 6 cylinder, in-line RK270 experimental power unit affords the fitter enough room to swing a cat. Phil Lynch was clearly very tired when this picture was taken.

37905's no1 end cab, although a tad grubby, is essentially complete, as is the rest of the locomotive. Picture taken at Booths scrapyard on 21st January 2006. *Michael Ratledge*



The lads at BRE Ltd pondered whether to make an offer for the locomotive and the owners, CF Booths, transported the loco by road to their scrapyard in Rotherham. Despite the rise in price of the loco to cover the transport, BRE Ltd still considered it worth the extra cash. An offer was made and accepted on 14th November 2005. Phil Lynch and the team then spent the following week-end securing the loco at Booths until a suitable home for the loco could be found. This didn't take too long to sort out as the Dartmoor Railway were happy to have such an unusual and powerful 37 based at Meldon Quarry to tackle the constant 1 in 77 incline that constitutes almost the entire length of the railway.

37905 rolled off the Heanors' lowloader on Friday 24th February 2006. Phil spent the next day making arrangements for the appropriate equipment to be moved south to aid '905's refit and over the next weekend, all missing parts were bolted on, all of which you could easily fit on a small table. The original batteries appeared to be holding their voltage but had been on charge throughout the week anyway. With fluids topped up and a quick shunt



NEW HOME: BRE Ltd's latest addition to its fleet, 37905 a.k.a. 'Slug 5' is put back together at Meldon Quarry on 5th March 2006.



across the yard for fuel (courtesy of the Dutch 08) everything was good to go for '905's first start up in preservation. Unfortunately, the oil primer pump was found to be faulty. Without oil circulating around the system, a start up was not possible. The batteries were to remain on charge for another week whilst Phil arranged for our spare pump to be brought down from the Weardale Railway, a 500 miles trip! A further attempt to start 37905 will be made on Saturday 18th March. Hopefully, by the time this magazine drops through your letterbox, we will have another runner in our fleet! More details, and hopefully a spectacular fire-up photo shoot will appear in the next edition of SYPHON!



Some of our more liberal members might find one of the Groups other acquisitions of some interest. As part of the agreement for running 37198 & 37905 on the Dartmoor Railway, the C37LG have taken custody of 31465. Our volunteers will be restoring the 31 to provide train heat on the Dartmoor's winter services, allowing our 37's to see regular use throughout the year. Dartmoor's services will operate in top and tail mode. So as you can see, having this 'non-37' in our fleet, helps keep the money coming in for our 'bonneted' locos!

Regional Railways liveried 31465 awaits a refit at Meldon Quarry on 5th March 2006.

Michael Ratledge



Game Over

As a considerable amount of volunteer hours has been spent at Booths over the last few months, here is a homage to one of the donor locomotives - 37797. This loc is one of only ten refurbished 37's fitted with GEC electrical equipment, 37905 being another. '797 has been vital in providing spares for '905 and '414 in particular. It is seen here being cut up on 30th January 2006.



Michael Ratledge (both)

Mike Millward is one of the founders of the original East Anglian Class 37 Group, which was formed in 1984. Now, 22 years later, it has evolved into the Class 37 Locomotive Group. We've come a long way and a lot of it is down to Mike.

Here is his short anecdotal tale.

A Christmas Gift

By Mike Millward

It was one of those things that drift into your head when things go quiet. Christmas Eve, 2005 was the usual round of final prezzies for forgotten relations, kids 'best mates' and wrapping everything up and finally at about 11 pm, I was alone, downstairs slumped across the settee with a bottle of 'Old Speckled Hen' for company. Not totally alone, as the cat was snoring in the corner and the sounds of rested sleep drifted downstairs from the family. I had just finished watching '37 Fade Away' on DVD when a thought struck me. It was Christmas Eve, 2005. A couple of weeks earlier, the Valleys had finished leaving only the Fort Bill sleeper booked Class 37.....45 years on from the first EVER Class 37 run. My mind wandered (I know, its too small to be let out on its own.....) back to Liverpool Street Station and how this event would have been seen.....

I should think the stock for the additional train to Gt Yarmouth was already in whatever platform it was allocated when out of the dingy distance, a clean, green beast of a machine approached and coupled to the first carriage. What would the kettle spotters have made of this mongrel of a diesel locomotive; sort of a short Type 4 with Deltic bogies and styling by a blind man with a shotgun (it was said these locos didn't just fall out of the ugly tree, they took most of the branches with them....)? Plain British Railways loco Green , with red bufferbeams and bogie fronts and black running gear, not very colourful. And what would they have made of the eruption from the exhausts when the handle was opened to move the train on its journey for the first time, up the bank out of Liverpool St and past its home shed of Stratford where classmates D6701 and D6702 waited their turns. Brentwood Bank would hear the cacophony of the 12CSVT for the first time in real anger, howling as it dragged the loaded coaches further north, burning off the new, shiny paint from round the turbos.

Further north, Colchester would receive its first EE wake-up call when the train passed and then Ipswich, hearing a sound that for several decades became the soundtrack for the Station and yards for the first time. Up the East Suffolk, thrashing up Westerfield Bank as many pairs would do in years to come, hauling thousands of tons of freight to the burgeoning port of Felixstowe and along the switchback line, awaking the sleepy hamlet of Beccles and finally on to Lowestoft, where it would leave its train to whatever loco would take the train forward, via the Norfolk and Suffolk Joint to Gt Yarmouth and make a centrepiece for the engine shed for a few days.

We are so accustomed to them now, 45 years on, that it is difficult to imagine the shock of this loud, brutal engine would have. And, of course, our own beast, 37003 joined its classmates before the fall of the old year, arriving at Stratford on December 28th 1960.

MIKE MILLWARD

SYPHON! PICTORIAL



Recently repainted into Large Logo Blue livery, 37425 hauled a Cardiff to Bleanau Festiniog special train on 10th September 2005. It is pictured here at its destination.

Dave Bramley



37212 is looped at Berwick-upon-Tweed with a northbound coal train in 1987.

Paul

During early September 2005, 37261 worked West Coast Railway Company's Jacobite coaching stock between Glasgow and Fort William after it was used on a mainline steam railtour. The ECS is seen during a radio token exchange stop at Crianlarich on 9th of the month. *Grant Fleming*



On 12th March 1997, 37890 passes Wandsworth Road station with a loaded ballast train. *Tim Easter*



REVIEWS

By Mick Sasse

Power Hour 1,2 and 3 DVD

by Locomaster Profiles

www.locomaster.co.uk

priced £24.95

25 quid for another “heritage traction” DVD? Nope – this is one of the best bargains about: your £24.95 buys you about three hours of the most impressive footage available of classic BR diesels being worked to the limit.

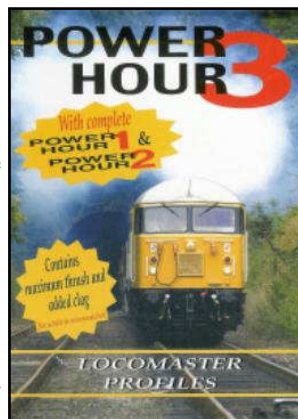
Anyone familiar with Locomaster’s other video and DVD offerings (such as their “Wired For Sound” series) will know to expect professional quality filming and sound quality calculated to capture the essence of thrash at its finest: this is certainly one to test the limits of your sound system’s performance – and your neighbours’ patience. The Power Hour series has as its theme quite simply the art of thrash itself: the most spectacular scenes of diesels working hard – in some cases overworked to the point of sadism. This DVD compilation includes the full 3-part set of the Power Hour series, a series which, as the narrator rather depressingly says at the end, is unlikely to run to any further instalments because of the lack of inspiring traction on today’s rail network.

Unlike some recent compilations, all of the footage on the DVD was filmed on the mainline, rather than at preserved lines’ events – so the viewer is treated to locos doing “proper work”, on freight, passenger, P-way, railtours, light engine – and even some remarkable footage of a ‘56 on a load-bank (going nowhere but producing some impressive sound effects). As well as shots on well-known “thrash hotspots” like the Lickey incline, the Devon Banks and the Highland main line, the venues range from the Folkestone Harbour branch (with a pair of EDs struggling up the bank with the Orient Express after someone switched the current off), via Slug action on the Ebbw Vale branch and the last Grid from Westoe Colliery, to somewhere near Rogart as 37418 destroys the tranquillity with the Kinbrace timber – and further afield: the sequence of 37683 with a construction train on the Lyon-Marseille high-speed line is unforgettable, as it slips to a stand, backs up a mile or two, and has another go, taking a run at the bank with assistance from two more tractors on the back!

A theme throughout the series is that, to get the best from first-generation diesels, it’s not just a question of releasing the brakes and seeing how far you can pull the throttle back: when confronted with adverse rail conditions and trains heavier than they were designed to tackle, it takes real skill from a driver (and sometimes secondman too!) to, for example, get 37107 and 37520 on the move from Peak Forest with 2,000 tonnes of ICI hoppers.

The sheer variety of motive power featured means that pretty much everyone’s favourite type is likely to be featured (unless you are a fan of North British Type 2s or Baby Deltics, I’m afraid!), as every class which has seen main-line action over the last decade or so is presented to good advantage: 20, 31, 33, 37 (of course!), 40, 45, 47, 50, 52, 55, 56, 58, 60 and 73 all feature. However, you won’t see any 59s, 66s or 67s – as I’m sure you’ll be devastated to learn (although I have to say I seem to recall a 57 creeping in somewhere, so the claim to be 100% GM-free is not quite accurate!).

With so many gems to choose from, it’s hard to pick a short list of highlights, but here are a few:



37906 (liberated of its silencer system) performing a standing start at the Ebbw Vale stop board; D9000 obliterating the landscape while working the infamous Virgin Birmingham-Ramsgate service; 20308 and 20311 staggering up Llanvihangel bank with a 1,600 tonne Freightliner working; a stirring shot of 37895 making very heavy weather of getting under way with the Cardiff Tidal – Aberthaw tanks; 56107 pounding up Lickey with a dead Virgin 47 and its Cross-Country service in tow; the surreal site of D1015 in the Luxulyan valley with china clay; 37516+37421 starting from a stand at Cwmbargoed – on wet rails and filmed from the cab.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given the wide-ranging duties of class 37s and their tendency to provide a vocal accompaniment to all their work, tractor fans are particularly well catered for by this DVD, and it's only partly my bias that makes them figure disproportionately in my selection, with all sub-classes (including Mirrlees and Ruston!) well represented. A particular favourite of mine is a fairly "ordinary" shot of 37203 starting an engineer's train at Wilnecote in typically throaty style – simply because it sums up the character of EE's finest.

The commentary provided by the entertaining David Maxey is just about right: enough to show you what you're looking at, without (usually) intruding on the action you're wanting to hear – that said, about my only criticism of this DVD is that it would have been a bonus to be able to switch off the commentary, as it's a compilation you're likely to want to watch again and again.

In short, I can't imagine any admirer of classic diesels failing to enjoy this DVD, which, to me, is the definitive thrash compilation: hook your DVD up to your stereo, turn up the volume, and just ignore the hammering on the walls from next door.

Back to 1981 with Hellfire!

I'm going to start this with a warning: if you look back fondly to those long summers when Saturdays meant an endless procession of Mark 1s making their way to Britain's premier seaside resorts (and Skegness) behind grimy blue NB choppers, rats, tractors and whistlers, then don't read on if you plan on doing anything in your free time for the foreseeable future other than sitting in front of your PC rejoicing at finally clearing your March 37s – or cursing at being bowled by yet another EH duff.

So what does Hellfire do? In short, it recreates summer 1981 in your PC: the authentic and complete timetable (other than a few bog-cart workings which we really don't care about), your Needs List, your Moves Book, and sets you free... having issued you with a nice all-line rover ticket so you don't have to hide in the bog to avoid getting gripped.

You can play the game in two ways (though you'll probably combine them): for points or to fill your needs book. You can either have a randomly computer-generated needs list (you can set different levels of requirements, and so difficulty, according to whether you're an Insect or a Top Man) – or you can make up and save your own needs list (so that each new game can start where the last one left off). You get bonus points for each required haulage, ranging from 10 for a rancid EH duff right up to 95 for the truly massive beasts, with extra points for clearing classes or sub-classes, and of course points for mileage according to the rateability of the traction.

So how do you get the gen, beyond just festering at the station with your greasy copy of 1H81 until something good turns up? Just the way we all had to in those pre-mobile phone and e-mail days: by asking people (who may or may not feed you duff gen), working out the diagrams, and, if you're very lucky and the staff are in a good mood (and don't think you're a Ned), by checking out the TOPS terminal at the station. Of course, just as in reality, you can't predict what's going to happen: locos come onto and off their diagrams, things blow up, and naturally they don't always run on time... so you certainly need a bit of luck as well as just tactical skill and an aversion to personal hygiene.

Just as in reality, the more experienced you are, the harder it gets to score required traction, and so to get higher points – but at least you've got more chance of getting at the TOPS machine.

You can play single-player, or (via the internet) multi-player – I haven't tried that but it should be a laugh abusing your mates for their Sulzer-powered moves to oblivion.

Don't expect this to be a high-res graphics-rich feast for the eyes, although there are pictures of all the various loco types, which makes it *slightly* less easy to get on the wrong train and end up accelerating rapidly away from a pair of no-heat IM beasts on an HST with first stop Plymouth. There's also some sound, which takes the form of atmospheric recordings of various locos doing their thing, or alternatively you can set it to pass comment about your performance – while the comments maybe get a bit repetitive after a while, remembering most basher conversations that's pretty realistic really...

You've probably already worked out by now that this game comes strongly recommended, as hugely frustrating as it frequently is – it's amazing how well this primarily text-based game can evoke the questionable joys of this now almost extinct pastime, and major respect is due to Mike Wright!

So where can you get it from and what does it cost? It's a download from <http://www.railrover.co.uk> and weighs in at an eye-watering 51MB – so one to do overnight if you're a dial-up insect like me. You can use it straight away in unregistered (i.e. free) mode – the only problem is that you're travelling without a ticket and sooner or later you're going to be picked up by the British Transport Police and thrown off the train (ending the game). To avoid lengthening your criminal record, you need to register the game. This costs £25 (payable by PayPal) – a bit on the steep side, but I'd definitely say it was worth it (it's only slightly more than Wensleydale charged for the first trip to Redmire and back behind '003 [oops!]), and the amount of work that Mike has put in definitely deserves some kind of reward.

Overall rating: Absolutely Dreadful!

MICK SASSE

37401 (left) failed at Dumbarton Central with the 0450 Edinburgh - Fort William on 23rd April 2005 and was rescued by 37427 (right). *Grant Fleming*



Minutes of C37LG Annual General Meeting held at 15:00 on Saturday 15 October 2005 at the Black Swan public house, Bedale, North Yorkshire

Present:

Committee members: Michael Parker ("MP" – Chair, Membership Secretary, Treasurer and Website Manager)
Michael Ratledge ("MR" – Magazine Editor and Publicity Officer)
John Pinion ("JP" – Technical Assistant and Stores Manager)
Andrew Blakeley ("AB" – Member without portfolio)
Michael Sasse ("MS" – Member without portfolio)

Also in attendance were 10 other LG members (Michael Chester, Phillip Broadbent, Craig Armstrong, Stuart Watson, David Lugg, Michael Gibson, Mark Grimes, Barry Wetherall, David Butler and Christopher Wilson).

1. Apologies for absence:

These were received from:

Committee member: Philip Lynch ("PL" – Technical and Procurement Officer) – his absence was due to a car breakdown and he gave his report in e-mailed written form, read by MR.

2. Chairman's address (delivered by MP)

MP gave an account of the main events since the last AGM had taken place (which was in January 2001). On 12 October 2003, MP, MR and PL had met at the Nene Valley Railway, and had decided that the LG was at that date effectively dead, in that it was receiving no subscriptions, and was publishing no Magazines. While some work parties were taking place on the LG's locomotive, 37003, nothing else was happening. Together, they decided to rejuvenate the LG.

As a result, MR co-opted MP and PL onto the committee. MR was, at this point, the only active committee member remaining.

The possibilities for 37003 at the East Anglian Railway Museum ("EARM") were severely limited, in particular by the fact that they only had ¼ mile of track. Rent was continuing to be charged, but the LG was without income – this meant that the locomotive had to move to a new site.

In the meantime, PL had been in negotiations with the Wensleydale Railway ("WR") as to the possibility of bringing a locomotive there (not necessarily 37003), and ultimately agreement was reached, and so the LG moved 37003 to Leeming in January 2004. Shortly after this, in March 2004, 37003 worked her first train, a goods (engineer's) train, and in October 2004 it worked its first passenger service.

37003 has now run 520 miles in service on the WR. However, the WR had been somewhat over-optimistic in the predictions at the time when the LG was discussing bringing 37003 to the line, and had not delivered all that the LG had hoped for, such as all-day locomotive-hauled trains – but the situation was nonetheless better than at the EARM.

In July 2004, PL bought 37198 and 37275, now owned by Bedale Railway Engines Limited ("BREL"). 37275 was started some eight days after arrival, but the initial focus switched to 37198, whose engine was started in March 2005 before operating its first train in May 2005. 37198 is now believed to have covered 478 miles in service on the WR.

To complete the picture, recently BREL bought 37414, the first class 37/4 to be secured for preservation, and this locomotive was taken to the Weardale Railway ("Weardale"), where an extensive restoration programme will now begin.

3. Treasurer's Report (also delivered by MP)

The LG bank account contains approximately £2,700 at present, although £2,000 is outstanding in loans made by LG members.

Whilst the WR paid for the transport of 37003 to Leeming from the EARM site, this was in effect a loan, and it was agreed that the LG would pay these costs back to the WR by means of the hire charges which would otherwise be payable by WR to the LG: instead of the cash being paid to

the LG, the balance owed to the WR would be reduced by the hire charge incurred. No cash would be paid by the LG to the WR as an alternative to usage of the locomotive. The cost of the transport was £3,700 plus VAT.

The Treasurer cannot yet confirm the current position on the above debt, as the correct number of hours worked by 37003 in WR service has yet to be confirmed; the WR believe that only 30 hours have been run in service, out of a total of 180 hours during which 37003's has been recorded as having operated. Some of the WR's recording of 37003's usage has not been recorded as stipulated in our agreement and an 'hours used' log has not been forthcoming..

AB pointed out that, in practical terms, this means that the WR have in fact already paid for the hire costs of using 37003, but are not taking advantage of it. The WR/LG agreement lapses in January 2006, and it is not clear whether the above arrangement lapses – the Committee consider that this is a matter for commercial negotiation between the two parties. Specifically (MR added), by 28 November 2005, the existing agreement provides that the WR should inform the WR whether it wishes to renew or extend the agreement, and the position as regards 37003's transport costs is likely to form an important part of the terms of any follow-on agreement.

Barry Wetherell commented that the question of the renewal of the WR/LG agreement was largely out of the hands of the LG – and to an extent out of the hands of the WR as well: the WR has not been able to reach its potential, and, given the difficulty of obtaining staff and the problems with equipment reliability, it has been difficult to maintain one-train operation, meaning that two-train operation is likely to be difficult to achieve. He added that that the WR has lost £500,000 in a year, a decision will have to be taken shortly as to whether the railway will continue running through the winter; he considers that it would be "silly" to seek to run seven days a week throughout the winter season.

AB responded that the LG *may* have to concede a "roll-over" of the repayment agreement (meaning that the WR would continue to enjoy "free" use of 37003 [other than costs of fuel and consumables]). Barry Wetherell emphasised that the LG should not be too optimistic.

Continuing his Treasurer's Report, MP indicated that the LG had spent £1,000 on welding on 37003 (carried out by Prest Engineering in Leeming Bar), plus a further £1,500 on miscellaneous items.

To complete the picture, recently a Mark 3 sleeper coach has been bought, although strictly speaking this is not the property of the LG as such: it has been sold by the compartment to various individual members, each of whom will pay the relevant proportion of the purchase price and transport charges. The intention is that those members owning compartments would be able to use the coach, which is to be permanently sited, as accommodation whilst working on LG/BREL locomotives. While it is intended that the LG will buy any compartments not sold to individual members, the LG may ultimately not own any part of the coach, if all the compartments should be sold to members. To date, in any event, the LG has only spent £240 on the coach. The coach is at present at the yard of Heanor's (haulage contractors), as due to a communications difficulty the coach was refused access to the yard in Leeming when they attempted delivery in August.

MR added that, now that the LG's volunteer force has been joined by Chris Thorn and Stuart Watson, both of whom are or will be qualified welders, it is likely that future welding costs will be saved.

David Butler asked how much had been received and paid out by the LG. While MP did not have a full breakdown of the payments in and out of the bank account during the last year, he could confirm that the bank balance a year ago was £1,500, and there has therefore been a net increase of £1,200 to the current position of £2,700 in credit. A major factor had been a VAT refund of £900.

David also asked whether the LG had produced a financial forecast. MR indicated that one had been produced prior to the move of 37003 to the WR, but he and AB explained that it is difficult to make meaningful plans for the future because it has been difficult to obtain clear confirmation of the WR's own plans.

MS and AB also confirmed that, as a concession to the WR (with a view to encouraging the operation of class 37-hauled trains), BREL had agreed that hire charges accruing for the use of 37198 could also be treated in the same way as those for the use of 37003, that is, set off against 37003's transport costs rather than being paid to BREL in cash.

The total miles run by 37003 and 37198 since their arrival on the WR is 950, although the amount in revenue-earning service will be considerably less than this, with the correct figure still to be confirmed.

David Butler asked where the sleeper coach would ultimately be sited, and for clarification as to who owns it now and who will in future. MP stated that the coach was most likely to be sited in Weardale; AB added that no one individual owns the coach, and, whilst the LG *may* own part of it, this will only be necessary if not all of its 13 compartments are sold to individuals. David asked whether it might be possible for an individual to buy a compartment not for his own use but for the LG as a whole, so that any member volunteering at the site could use it. Whilst MR and MS acknowledged the generosity of this potential offer, but added that this would need to be discussed by the current individual owners before a decision is taken; JP added that, in particular, the issue of maintaining the carriage in good condition and keeping it clean could become a problem if access should be allowed more freely than only to compartment owners. In any event, there will be a clear (and enforced!) set of "house rules" applicable to those using the sleeping car. Running costs of the coach (which is to have permanent water and electricity supplies) will be divided between compartment owners.

JP also explained that it is planned that the Brake-Guard coach currently at Leeming Bar (which he owns personally) will be coupled to the sleeper and will provide further facilities for those staying in the sleeper.

4. Membership Secretary's Report (also MP)

The LG membership now stands at 103. This can be compared with a high point in 1992 of (ironically!) 309 members; after this, it dropped to 177 at the date of the last AGM in January 2001, and the low point was only 46 members. By late 2004, it had recovered to 144, although has since fallen somewhat.

In order to increase numbers, MP considered it important to revive the Magazine (which is now happening), and to get trains running behind 37003 (which is unfortunately largely beyond the LG's control).

Stuart Watson asked how this compared with other similar locomotive preservation groups. AB suggested that the most comparable one is the Growler Group, which owns 37215 and has custody of 37099; this has a membership, he believes, of several hundred.

5. Magazine Editor's Report (delivered by MR)

The LG has for some time been having major difficulties in having the Magazine printed, since the last which was printed and distributed to members, no. 119 - which was to be the first of the monthly newsletters but was superseded by a return to the quarterly magazine format. MR had, however, continued to produce Magazines pending resolution of the printing problems, and the LG recently decided to make copies of these available on the members-only section of the LG website. MR acknowledged, however, that this was of no use to those without internet access, and indeed, realistically, for those without broadband access.

Three Magazines have now been produced, nos. 120-122 inclusive, with 122 having been printed and distributed to members in October 2005 (and incorporating notice of this AGM), a temporary printer having been located. MR confirmed that issues 120 and 121, plus a new no. 123, *will* be printed and distributed to members shortly (other than to any members who have indicated that they are content to receive future Magazines in electronic format only). A new printer, a friend of MP's, has been located, and it is hoped that this should drastically cut printing costs.

MR referred to the three proposals put to the LG recently in a letter by Michael Gibson and responded as follows:

Will issues 119-121 of the newsletter/magazine be made available in hard copy? – Yes, as above.

Will members continue to have the choice of receiving the Magazine by post or by e-mail? – Yes. *If the cost of printing and distributing the Magazine is too high, will the LG consider increasing the cost of membership subscription to cover this?* – This was further discussed; see below.

Phillip Broadbent suggested that members could opt in or out of receiving hard copies, perhaps with a discount on the subscription rate for receiving by e-mail only (or an increase for those wanting a hard copy).

MP questioned whether, with the subscription currently at £15.00, an increase could be justified. Phillip Broadbent concurred, suggesting a risk of the LG “pricing itself out of the market”. MS and AB also pointed to the limited benefits that the LG is at present able to offer its members, in particular in the absence of regular operation of 37003. David Butler also suggested it may be too complicated if there are two levels of membership. MP considered that it would be sensible to revisit this question once the printing costs have been verified, which should be shortly.

A discussion took place as to what content members would like to see in the Magazine. Suggestions which interested those present included:

bashing stories (including “My Top Ten” [or “My Bottom Ten”!] type stories)

feature articles (Paul Andrews’ recent articles about class 37s at the London termini was especially well received)

stories about our (and BREL’s) locomotives – both on the mainline and reports of their recent activities in preservation

articles on other preserved lines with class 37s

technical articles, including not only updates on the work carried out on LG and BREL locos, but also technical introductions for those less well-versed (such as “How does a brake regulator work?”)

MR and AB emphasised that there is a standing invitation to all members to contribute material.

6. Technical Officer’s Report (delivered in writing by Philip Lynch and read by Michael Ratledge)

“In the approximately 5 years since I became Technical officer, we have procured and installed a power unit into 37003, restored 37003 to full working order; and further built up our existing ranks of volunteers.

“The restoration of 37003 was particularly difficult, as a lot of relatively minor tasks had already been undertaken, but due to lack of drawings and power on board the loco, some were done incorrectly. The strip-out by EWS and then MC Metals (in search of non-existent asbestos), also made things difficult owing to the sheer number of missing items, mainly hidden away behind larger intact items. The power unit purchased from EWS at Wigan from 37073 was also not without its problems. In Wigan’s infinite wisdom they decided to remove the roof from 073 and put the loco back outside for over a year in the snow and pouring rain. This caused some items to seize; add to this the further insult of chopping through steel and copper pipes on the engine instead of through the easy to cut and replace rubber hoses. Several months were lost trying to rebuild and replace the damage done.

“With the purchase by BREL of 37198 and 37275 last year, the volunteers have been hard at work returning first 37198 then 37275 back to full working order. The restoration of 37275 is nearly at an end, with a little more paint removal to be completed, before red oxidising, fillering and painting. It is planned to have 275 completed and ready for a naming ceremony around Easter 2006.

“Our friends at BREL have purchased 37414, now resting at Wolsingham before work begins on its rebuild. The current plan (subject to funds) is to replace the damaged and stripped bogies, assess the repairs required to the engine for getting it to run again or replace it with an engine from a soon-to-be-scrapped loco, strip out the nose ends and rebuild the damaged pipework and wiring, rebuild the cabs and radiator fan drive system and fully repaint the loco inside and out.

"In order to control and make better use of the volunteers and the experience they have gained over the years, several teams have been set up, to concentrate on bodywork, mechanics, electric and general fitting tasks. The hope is that team leaders can be assigned to each team who will discuss and work out the priority jobs and the best way of tackling them.

"We hope to have 37414 ready for traffic sometime in 2006, again reliant on funding, manpower and access to facilities.

"I cannot stress enough how important it is for us to be actively seeking funds to purchase spares for the long term future of the group's locos. The programme of scrapping is such that we may be out in the cold and reliant on other loco owners if we don't start purchasing stocks of spares within the next few months."

The timescale for the restoration of 37414 was discussed further in light of Phil's indication that it may be possible to complete the locomotive by the end of 2006. MR replied that it certainly could be possible, given the large volunteer pool now at the LG's disposal (including the new volunteers based at Weardale) – but ultimately it depends on the availability of finance and labour.

7. Election of Committee Members

There were no nominations for new members to join the Committee, but all the existing members were standing for re-election. Mark Grimes proposed that they should all be re-elected en bloc, and this was seconded by David Butler. The re-election was unanimous.

8. Any other business

MR informed the meeting that PL had suggested by e-mail some suggested discussion points. The first was that BREL currently have an unserviceable (but probably restorable) class 37 steam-heating boiler in storage on the premises of Prest Engineering at Leeming Bar. The LG could consider buying it for fitting into 37003 or a BREL loco (37198 being the most suitable due to the arrangement of its equipment) – or alternatively it may be possible to buy a new boiler, produced in the USA. However, the question is whether it is worth the money, and in particular certification of any boiler could be expensive.

David Butler questioned whether certification was in fact necessary.

MR stated that he was aware that the Weardale are interested in steam heating, and that Martin Nixon was interested in getting a steam-heat class 31 to the WR.

Craig Armstrong suggested that it would be better to have a steam-heat generator coach rather than a locomotive, as this could be used with any train, and, if owned by the LG, would bring in valuable revenue even when 37003 is not in use. He suggested one could be constructed, but AB pointed out that there is the possibility of purchasing such a coach from Eire, which is withdrawing them from service.

AB reminded the meeting that a steam-heat class 37 could be regarded as one in "original" condition, but JP pointed out that any such investment needed to be cost-effective. AB supported this, indicating that the current passenger numbers on the WR are not enough to justify the costs which would be involved.

JP stated that no-heat diesels often see use on preserved railways' Santa Specials, commonly in "top-and-tail" formation with a steam loco which merely provides heat for the train (this is done at the Nene Valley Railway).

Craig Armstrong pointed out that 37414 will, when complete, be able to provide electric train heat ("ETH") – but a generator *coach* could provide this to any train.

This raises the question, AB considered, as to whether the Class 37 Locomotive Group should be involving itself in owning coaches. Craig acknowledged this, but considered that it could be worth doing so if it led to profits being made which could be spent on preserving class 37s.

MS asked what was known as to the costs of the options discussed. MR and JP stated that the Irish coaches are available at their scrap value, namely €1,000; the standard gauge bogies could be sourced at no cost, but transport would cost £3-5,000.

AB reminded the meeting that, if such an investment were to be made, it would need to be decided whether the LG should undertake it, or whether it should be individual members, or possi-

bly BREL. The LG does not at present have the funds. This is clearly an issue for further discussion by the committee and by BREL. Clearly, if a boiler were to be purchased by BREL and fitted into 37198, this would not be an LG issue.

By way of information, MR informed the meeting that Ealing Community Transport ("ECT" – who are to become the majority shareholder in Weardale once the company is reconstituted and leaves administration) have indicated that the plan is to use 37414 on 30 dining trains, plus at least 20 other runs, per year. ECT run similar trains on the Dartmoor Railway, and the cost is £25.00 per passenger, meaning a substantial income if trains are reasonably filled. MR confirmed that the ETH index of 37414 would be sufficient for the planned trains, which are proposed to be 7-8 coaches.

Another issue raised by PL by e-mail was whether the "37/4und" should be promoted with a view to the LG eventually purchasing its own class 37/4, or should it seek to become a part-owner of 37414? It is likely that other groups (such as the Growler Group) will sooner or later go for a 37/4 themselves, when more are made available by EWS.

MS queried whether, if the LG were to acquire its own 37/4, this would dilute the attention (including volunteer labour and other finite resources) given to each of what would now be a fleet of five locos in the LG's care. MR and AB felt that if the LG were to consider acquiring another loco, this would only be done when 37414 is complete. MR stated that the Committee was happy with the principle of the LG (specifically the 37/4und) buying shares in BREL, although he and MP added that at present this is a somewhat academic discussion, because the 37/4und has not yet raised any money.

Michael Chester and Craig Armstrong suggested that the 37/4und could be used to purchase parts for 37414; MS felt that if the 37/4und were to buy shares in BREL, and BREL used these funds to support 37414, this could in turn help the 37/4und itself in that it would be able to show a tangible result to its fundraising.

Phillip Broadbent pointed out that, given that the LG only owns one locomotive (37003), maintaining interest could become a problem, and perhaps this could be an argument for the LG buying shares in BREL.

On the subject of the LG's relationship with BREL, MP confirmed that a formal agreement is shortly to be put in place.

Michael Chester asked whether it would not be preferable to replace the bogies on 37003 (a standard class 37) with standard bogies, to replace the CP7 bogies on which it is currently running (which are intended for refurbished class 37s, i.e. 37/4 and higher-numbered subclasses). He pointed out that good-quality standard bogies (with good tyres) are available now at Booth's scrapyards from 37298. AB agreed that CP7 bogies would, for example, be desirable under 37414 – but the issue of who would pay (as between the LG and BREL) would need to be agreed. He floated the suggestion (although ultimately this was as much BREL as LG business and agreement would be needed) that if BREL paid for the standard bogies from Booth's, a straight swap could be carried out: 37003's CP7 bogies would go under 37414, and the "new" standard bogies would go under 37414 (which needs new bogies in any event). This would also solve 37003's brake-block problem.

The position as regards the LG's sales stock was also discussed; it is currently at a fairly low level, MP confirmed, and possibilities to increase turnover include increasing the amount (and variety) of items stocked, obtaining a sales stand (which could be pitched at suitable railway events or on trains), and operating an on-line shop (and/or using E-Bay to make sales of specific items). MR pointed out that the Class Forty Preservation Society runs a successful sales-stand and merchandising operation, and the meeting acknowledged that a similar operation could, run correctly, be a useful generator of cash. MR and MS confirmed that they are intending to man an LG sales stand at the model railway exhibition in Spalding on 12-13 November, and would take

the existing sales stock with them.

MR stated that the LG was in need of a volunteer to take on responsibility for sales & merchandising, and he agreed to put an advertisement into the next LG Magazine seeking to recruit a volunteer.

JP indicated that he had a connection who could produce T-shirts. Other items which could be relatively easily sourced include small items such as key-rings and similar.

It was agreed that it would be worth adding a sales page to the LG website.

Mark Grimes suggested distributing fliers on class 37-hauled railtours and regular passenger trains. The Committee agreed that, subject to permission from the operators concerned, this was an option worth considering.

There followed a brief discussion of the varying attitudes of preserved railways towards the use of diesel (as opposed to steam) traction, as it had been noted by many that some lines appear to have a much more positive attitude towards preserved diesel locomotive than others; many felt that the issue is as much one of how the use of heritage diesels is presented to the general, non-enthusiast, public, as one of any real public preference for steam.

Subject to receiving confirmation from JP that he was happy to assume the formal role, AB proposed, and MS seconded, that JP should be appointed as Compliance and Standards Officer (with a view to ensuring the LG's continued compliance with all applicable standards, especially to maintain its health and safety record). The motion was carried unanimously. [Immediately after the meeting, JP confirmed that he was willing to assume the role].

AB reminded the meeting that he had recently stepped down from having responsibility for all liaison between the LG and the WR. It was agreed that the position should remain unfilled for the present, in particular until the position of the WR itself could be clarified (the Wensleydale Railway PLC meeting is to take place on Monday 17 October 2005, which may provide some indication of the railway's immediate plans). Whilst the position remains unfilled, communication with the WR would continue to be carried out by the Committee, primarily via the Chair, MP.

David Butler informed the meeting that the Weardale Railway are currently seeking a Chief Mechanical Engineer, an unpaid position, on the departure of David Fawcett. MR agreed to place an advertisement in the LG Magazine.

Chris Wilson reminded the LG that it is necessary for LG volunteers also to be members of the Weardale Railway Trust and distributed forms to those wanting them.

David Butler gave a brief introduction to the NEHDG, which currently has around 20 members, and has been looking to purchase a locomotive for the Weardale Railway, probably in the first instance a class 08 shunter; the longer-term ambition is to acquire an ETH-fitted class 47. The NEHDG already owns a BR standard 20-ton brake van, which is on the Weardale Railway. In addition, one of the NEHDG members personally owns a "Thumper" DEMU, although this had been rejected from the Weardale Railway on advice from the then Chief Mechanical Engineer. David confirmed that NEHDG members may well be interested in volunteering to assist LG members with the restoration of 37414.

Stuart Watson stated that he has a collection of historic photographs and videos of class 37s at work on the Weardale line, which he was willing to make available for LG use.

The meeting ended at 17:10 with a vote of thanks.

Now that our locomotives are spread further afield, it is likely that we will arrange for our 2006 AGM to take place in a more central location.

C37LG COMMITTEE

British Steel Blue liveried 37501 awaits its next duty at Thornaby in 1988. *Jon Sharkey*



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