

Syphon!

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The official magazine of 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 Parker. He also deals with any enquiries regarding the website and access to the Members Area.



FRONT COVER:

EWS celebrity liveried pair 37411 'Caerphilly Castle' and 37425 'Pride of the Valleys' returned to action together for a while during late 2007, they are pictured in action with 6F67 Dowlow to Arpley Yard, through Chinley on 30th October, 2007. *Paul Scott*

THE NEW (REFRESHED) 'SYPHON!' LOGO ON FRONT COVER:

The new logo featured on front cover was created by Owen Hodgson, who is the moderator of AC Loco Group website and donated the design to C37LG, for which we are grateful to his kind gesture.

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A pictorial feature on 37s at Kingswear, followed by more of these working on the LGV-Med construction line in that country, which is accompanied by the main article in this magazine.

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During 1999/2000, a number of EWS Class 37s had worked infrastructure and construction trains on the LGV-Mediterranee line in southern France and the story is told here, with various pictures of the locos at work on the line, along with supplementary update status of each loco today.

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A review of recent sales of ETH 37s from EWS to their new owners and what may happen to them? With few photographs exclusive to 'Syphon!'

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Caption Contest, submit your photos for LG's new calendar, Sales department, volunteering with our Group and a preview of next issue!

Page 24: BACK COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Time travel: Class 37s were synonymous with the North East England industrial landscape and a rare photograph of immaculate Thornaby pair 37071 and 37077 at head of a coal train at Dawdon Colliery, near Seaham.

CONTRIBUTORS TO ISSUE 132 (articles and photographs):

Colin Dunlop, Mark Grimes, Owen Hodgson, Ian Holmes, Colin Marsden, Mike Millward, Rugby, Solomon Riley, Paul Scott, Andy Stoddon, Peter Robinson, Stuart Watson and James Welham.

DO YOU HAVE A PHOTOGRAPH OR STORY TO TELL?

The 'Syphon!' magazine relies on contributions from fellow enthusiasts, if you have photos that you would like to see printed, and/or have an interesting story to share with us, then please get in touch with Editor! The Editor can't do everything possible to fill the pages in, so please keep them coming in! (We are particularly interested in BR-era stories). Thanks.

So if you have any submissions for 'Syphon!', please send them by email (contact detail on page 2). Articles sent via email should be sent in MS Word format and pictures as JPEG attachments in MB size (more pixels the better for picture quality).

EDITORIAL & NEWS

14th January 2008

Dear members and supporters,

37003 latest - Weardale Railway and the move to NRM Locomotion Shildon

Despite the Committee's best efforts, no regular access or work had been forthcoming for 37003 on the Weardale Railway during the past year. Since the post-administration operations that have been underway from August 2007, circumstances have changed with ECT being majority owner of the railway and as consequence, ECT-owned locos have been arriving at Wolsingham depot and are now given preference on loco-hauled trains whenever they run on selected weekends, which left 37003 with no prospect of regular trains and no income for the Group.

The Committee had tried to maintain dialogue with ECT to resolve the situation and to determine whether 37003 may have a long-term future on the railway, but unfortunately it was not possible. We had remained committed to the fledgling Weardale Railway, as we believe it has so much potential, but the LG wasted much of the year trying to reach a resolution on a number of issues with ECT to determine our long-term base on the railway (which hastened the departure of 37175 and then 37275 by their respective owners, under our custodianship) it ultimately led us to make the decision to seek alternative base for 37003, which culminated with an invitation to the NRM Locomotion at Shildon, ironically 'just down the road' from Wolsingham.

Naturally, everyone is disappointed at how things have turned out with Weardale Railway, but it has been outside our control. What can we do when we are obviously not wanted there, despite pledging total commitment to the railway and moving vehicles there in good faith following some negotiations during early 2006. We believe they are shooting themselves in the foot, by not recognising the contribution our Group can make to the railway and the number of potential extra volunteers coming to the railway arising from connections with our Group (which it did in first place, but it was soon lost when access problems surfaced) and more visitors arising from the prospect of hosting Diesel Galas and LHCS trains on certain days using Class 37 traction.

On positive note, 37003 left Wolsingham depot on Thursday 20th December, 2007, by low loader lorry to the NRM Locomotion Shildon, where we have been made welcome with open arms and we now have regular access, it has lifted the spirits of our volunteers! 37003 is to remain there for time being and take part in their Modern Traction event on 12/13 April, 2008, we are also assisting with their resources and set-up of the forthcoming event.

Bedale Railway Engines Ltd developments

Since the change in direction BRE Ltd has taken, with sale of two locos (37198 and 37905) in order to finance purchase of 37403 from EWS, to drive forward their long-term plans along with 37414 and 37505, the view of the C37LG Committee is that it does not fit in with the Group's aims of preserving and fostering interest in Class 37s, it has led to C37LG and BRE Ltd going their own ways. However, the Committee would like to assure all the members that it *does not affect* the Class 37 Locomotive Group. C37LG carries on with business as usual, which is to foster and maintain interest of Class 37s and with your continued support by being a member that ensures 37003 (owned by LG) and 37175 (privately owned by a LG member, which continue to be under the custodianship of the Group) in preservation.

Committee changes

Phil Lynch, our Technical Officer, has made the decision to step down from his Committee role in the Group and to concentrate on his position as M.D. of BRE Ltd. We would like to thank him for his hard work during the time, indeed Phil (along with others during the time at EARM) were

Committee changes - continued

instrumental in getting 37003 to running condition after purchase from EWS. The LG Committee wishes him all the best in his future endeavours with BRE Ltd. Chris Thorn also has resigned.

Stuart Watson, who is one of our working volunteers, has joined the Committee. He has been heavily involved with looking after 37003 during the past year at Wolsingham to keep it operational. Indeed he is now attending the Shildon base with other working volunteers to prepare 37003 for the 2008 season.

In order to reduce the workload of Mick Parker (Chairman/Membership Secretary/Treasurer/Website Manager - phew!), the role of Membership Secretary has just been taken over by Mark Grimes, with the transfer of administration completed recently.

Mick Sasse also continues on the Committee, without portfolio (as ever!) but provides invaluable advice and support in a number of matters relating to the Group.

Group's plans for 2008

Now that our locomotive 37003 is at new base, the Committee is much more in control of its own affairs concerning the loco and have been busy - we already have a number of plans, which will be announced as soon as details are confirmed. Also with events shaping up for the year ahead, there will be LG's sales and publicity stand on tour during the year. Members will hear about this first with news and updates posted in the yahoo egroup.

1-2 March: Nene Valley Railway Diesel Gala

12-13 April: NRM's Modern Traction event at Locomotion Shildon... with our loco!

New logo for the Group

The LG's loco fleet seem to be evolving as time passes, the logo depicting each of the six Class 37s did not reflect the set-up, so a new, modern and eye-catching logo was needed that would represent the Group and to remain in public eye, we had invited general rail enthusiast public to submit their designs and I am pleased to say such high quality work was received and the winner is Group member Matt Stoddon. He wins a year's free membership as the prize for winning the logo competition. Congratulations Matt! The new logo is, in fact, not the only one - there are several versions of same design and will appear accordingly i.e. for some publicity purposes, all you need to do is keep looking out for them!

Previous Editorial & News correction

In the issue 131, there was a mention of the convoy from ELR to Bo'ness on 21st Sept 2007. It has come to my attention that D5310 was part of the convoy instead of 26024. My apologies!

Syd the Syphon returns!

I am pleased to announce the return of 'Syd the Syphon' cartoon, in 21st Century version! First of the new series for 2008, by the original Syd creator 'Yorkie' (aka Mike Millward). The originals, which appeared in RAIL Enthusiast between 1986 and 1987, will also feature occasionally in future 'Syphon!' issues alongside the new version. This is new feature of the 'Syphon!' magazine this year and should hopefully continue for as long as possible, to inject some humour and make reading of 'Syphon!' enjoyable.

Thank you for your support,

Mark Grimes

'Syphon!' Editor, Publicity Officer and Membership Secretary
Class 37 Locomotive Group

Loco fleet update - 2008

37003: Moved out of Wolsingham on Thursday 20th December, 2007 (see story next page) it is now based at the NRM's Locomotion Shildon, where our working volunteers have been attending to 37003 to prepare it for new 2008 season, starting with the Modern Traction event on April 12/13, 2008. There will be few other dates to be announced when they are confirmed.

Right: 37003 at Wolsingham undergoing winter maintenance on Tuesday 4th December 2007, before it moved to Shildon. *Stuart Watson*



37175: Currently based on the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway, now carrying a version of headlight '175' carried during its West Highland Line days and bogies operating on all 6 TMs, worked Class 37 operating day on Saturday 29th Dec 2007, with classmate 37025 'Inverness TMD' which they took turns during the day (see below). In early 2008, bodywork attention is set to commence, with removal of corroded parts and re-plating before a repaint into new livery - watch this space! The best is yet to come...

Above: 37175 at Birkhill, upon arrival with 10.30 from Bo'ness day on Sat 29th December, 2007. *Andy Stoddon*

Bo'ness Class 37 Day review

The Class 37 operating day at Bo'ness on 29th December 2007, with 37025 'Inverness TMD' and 37175 working trains all day, enabled punters the opportunity to shake off excesses from their Christmas dinners and good reason to escape from visiting relatives staying in house for a day! A fundraising night photo charter took place. Both 37s performed impeccably and credit to everyone involved. C37LG had sales stand in Mk1 RMR all day, we are grateful for their co-operation.

Below: 37175 in civil engineers livery looks at home with 'Turbot' wagons & brake van (left) and 37025/175 (right) during the night photo charter. *Both: Mark Grimes*



37003's move to the Locomotion, Shildon

ECT Ltd, the majority owner of the Weardale Railway, which had no further plans to use 37003 on their hauled stock trains, instead using locos from ECT's own resources. So the Committee had been actively seeking alternative opportunities for 37003, which had culminated with invitation from the NRM's Locomotion Shildon to take part in their Modern Traction event on 12/13 April, 2008, with other events and diesel galas to follow.

Following intense behind-the-scenes efforts by Committee members and in just matter of weeks, arrangements were in place with ECT Ltd, NRM Locomotion and the road haulage company Goodmans in short space of time. 37003 was booked to leave Weardale Railway on Thursday 20th December, 2007. Couple of days earlier, a working party was held with Mark Grimes, Mick Chester, Mick Parker and Stuart Watson, to make preparations for the move and start up 37003 (which resulted in formidable clag over the depot!) to ensure she is ticking over perfectly. Our loco left the Wolsingham on Thursday, from the depot to station spur in order for it to be loaded on to low-loader lorry. LG volunteers Craig Armstrong, Mark Grimes and Stuart Watson assisted the railway staff with slewing of track and during the loading of 37003 on to the lorry.



Left: Stuart keeps a watchful eye on the progress of 37003 being propelled up the non-passenger section of the line by a Sentinel diesel shunter, from the depot to the station at Wolsingham. *Mark Grimes*

Next day, on Friday 21st December, it was unloaded at the Locomotion Shildon first thing in the morning in rather dismal weather, with Group volunteer Mick Chester driving 37003 into the sidings and the running line, it must have been about 20-odd years since Shildon last saw a split-box BR Blue Class 37 in the area! Needless to say, with other Group Committee members Mark Grimes

and Mick Sasse in the cab along with Anthony Coulls (curator of Locomotion) and couple of local volunteers, while our loco ran along the running line for first time beyond museum gates, it attracted attention from the signalman in the Shildon signalbox on the NR side of the tracks (who probably least expected it!) and from passengers waiting for local train to Darlington, as 37003 growled with the sound of distinctive English Electric 12cvst reverberating across. Classic! And then we stopped to alight for obligatory photos of 37003 (well, it just had to be done!) alongside the NR tracks and signalbox, which created a time-warp BR Eastern Region scene of 1970s! And then it had another run, and into sidings alongside the water tower, where it was parked over the Christmas and New Year holiday period, and regular work parties began from January to prepare 37003 for the April event, with number of small jobs to do and smartening up of bodywork.

Right: Just shortly after it had passed Shildon signalbox whilst on museum's running line for the first time, 37003 creates a surreal 'time-warp' scene of 1970s during overcast morning of Friday 21st Dec, 2007. *Mark Grimes*



37's on Rail Head Treatment Trains during 2007

The annual Rail Head Treatment Trains was in full swing during 2007, when Network Rail awarded contracts to freight companies to provide crews and traction over variety of routes across the UK, with DRS, EWS and Seco Rail (the newest entrant to scene). Direct Rail Services used Class 37s on some of their RHTT contracts alongside other traction.

DRS had the same pattern as previous year in parts of the north-west and on the North Wales Coast line, however the Anglia region saw first recorded use of the class with 37038, 37601 and 37603 on some occasions, and appearance of 37218 in Yorkshire, chronicled in this pictorial feature, which hopefully may see a repeat in 2008.



When one of two DRS's newly-acquired Class 57s had given up the ghost (probably suffering from withdrawal symptoms by not working its usual Freightliner trains) the company sent 37038 to cover and worked number of diagrams, which was the first recorded use of a 37 on the RHTTs in this area who has the long association with the class.

Left: 37038 through Ingatestone with 3S60 Stowmarket to Shenfield (57009 trailing at rear) on 18th October, 2007. James Welham

Following the opening of HS1 line, Eurostar UK Ltd no longer required their Class 37/6 locos for empty stock moves and rescue missions, they were sold to DRS and were promptly put to work and provided a traction variety for a short while, until such trains ended for another season when 37601/603/604 were despatched to Brush Loughborough on 18th Dec, for OTMR fitting and repaint into DRS's new 'Compass' blue livery.

Centre: DRS's former Eurostar UK Ltd Class 37/6s nos. 37601 and 37603 forming 3S60 Stowmarket to Shenfield RHTT, passing Kelvedon on 16th Nov, 2007. James Welham



When one of Class 20s had failed in traffic and sent to Brush Loughborough for repairs, DRS sent 37218 to cover, which finally broke the total Class 20 monopoly on both of the York-based RHTTs. It stayed on this circuit until completion of the RHTT programme nearly a week later.

Left: 37218 brings up the rear of 3S21 to Gilberdyke as it leaves Thrall site at York, with 20304 at other end. It would then reverse on the mainline with 37 leading, on Monday 3rd December, 2007. Paul Scott

Tour reviews

The 'Buxton Forester'

Review and photo by Mike Millward

On Saturday 15th Sept, 2007, a privately-promoted crank train was run with classic EE traction around secondary lines and branch lines, mainly in North West England. The train was to have just two locos, CFPS's 40145 in 'ice cream van' livery and WCRC's 37248 top and tail. An on-time departure from Birmingham International with 37248 leading was followed by a trip round the houses at Birmingham, picking up at Stafford and Crewe before heading into Manchester Piccadilly for the change of ends so 40145 could assault the line to Buxton, which it did, loudly. An hour was booked at Buxton, where we found a hellfire pub on the high street with a large photo of Buxton depot (complete with 37's) above the mantelpiece.....dreadful!

37248 provided the shunt release for 40145 to run to Leeds via the Peak Forest, Chinley, Hope Valley and Sheffield. Now looking at the itinerary, 40145 was supposed to have the choice banks to choose from, but the line from Leeds to Bradford via New Pudsey became the highlight of the trip; 37248 on load 9+40145 on a constant 1:50/1:100 gradient - *ten minutes pure thrash!*

37248 was rather warm at Bradford Interchange...the sweet smell of a well-thrashed 37! 40145 took over for the blast via Copy Pit to Morecambe, where the trip to Heysham had been caped, so after caning the Burger King/Morrison's, the train headed south again with 37248 leading, albeit sounding rather sick at times. I diversion via Bolton lost us time and after retracing the route we arrived back at Birmingham about 20 mins down. Hellfire day, Hellfire people... *Mike Millward*

Right: WCRC's 37248 'Loch Arkaig' waits to depart from Birmingham International on 1Z47 06.58 to Buxton, where it worked to Manchester Piccadilly, and then 40145 hauled the train to Buxton.



Youtube Thrash fest...

<http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=xS2SPjw4SbM>

The 'Silverlink Swansong no.1'

Review and photos by Colin Dunlop



Such is my tendency for unusual nature of railtours, when first of two Silverlink TOC farewell trips was due to run on Saturday 3rd Nov, 2007, traversing a number of goods loop lines and through Willesden, Wembley, Bletchley and Northampton depots (in that order!) by Class 37 haulage, with a rural branch line thrown in for good measure, it was just too good to miss. So, my seat was duly booked well in advance. (Continued on next page...)

Left: 37417 'Richard Trevithick' waits to depart from London Euston, with 1Z33 08.21 to Tring.

On the day, I went to London Euston and found 37410 facing the buffer stop on platform 18, and the loco waiting to lead the train out of Euston was 37417 'Richard Trevithick' waiting to form 1Z33 to Tring. These locos seem become a bit over-familiar on railtours these days, but with very small fleet of EWS 37s currently remaining, what can you expect?

Anyway the train departed from Euston on time, and proceeded into Willesden T&RSMD, saw 87002 'The AC Locomotive Group' parked up awaiting a new life in Bulgaria, and then went back onto AC lines at Watford Junction and a quick reversal at Tring, returned to Wembley depot area, instead of passing by the main Carriage depot building, train actually went through it using one of vacant tracks - No.3 road! Proceeding with caution, rakes of Caledonian sleeper stock was being cleaned inside, along with Class 325 mail units, and as we exited the other end of building, were greeted with sight of a Virgin Trains Pendolino unit waiting to get into depot, being flanked by small Home Distant semaphore signal that was rather bizarre sight! As we continued, saw 66725 'Sunderland' stabled and was the first time I saw it with shiny new LNER Footballer style nameplate, replicating the versions carried by B17s during the 1930s. On one side, impressive rebuilt Wembley Stadium was in full view of passengers. First aspect of the highlights over, we simply meandered around the Silverlink operations and visited the delights of Watford Junction, Tring and various northern suburbs of Greater London, which culminated with reversal at Barking.



Left: 'Arty' shot of 37417 being surrounded by lineside vegetation at Barking station in East London.

Once the train was back on west side of suburbs, headed towards our second depot visit – Bletchley TMD, 37417 led us in there, this time we didn't get into the depot building, but ended up on an obscure long headshunt on one side of depot called No.2 DMU Road (I'm sure that went down well with Branch Line Society aficionados) and then 37410 at other end got a helping hand from resident shunter 08874 'Catherine' which piloted train back to Bletchley station, where it was detached. It certainly brought added spice to

the day! Then with 37417 in charge again, we set off to cover the branch line to Bedford, which was unfortunately done in darkness. I noted that the fabled semaphores and signal boxes on the line has disappeared by recent modernisation. Return journey was, just for fun, done via reversal on the Swanbourne siding headshunt! (The BLS track brigade must be having a field day!)

Upon back on the West Coast Main Line, a quick trip north of Bletchley and then into third and final Silverlink depot was made, to Northampton EMD, it was most uninspiring of all three with just rows of brand new Siemens Class 350s parked alongside us. On the way back to London Euston, train was supposed to traverse some little known siding loop somewhere in depths of Kilburn, but was defeated by engineering possession and just went past it, arrived in Euston platform 8, 16 mins early (not often you arrive early with a railtour!). It was certainly something different - full credit to Silverlink TOC for making this trip possible. *Colin Dunlop*

**Syd the
Syphon**

By Mike
Millward



Syphon! Pictorial

EWS 37s at Bristol Temple Meads

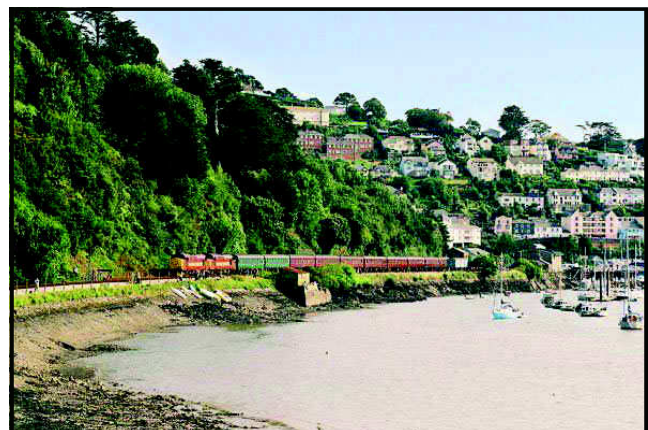
Class 37s nos. 37410 'Aluminium 100' and 37417 'Richard Trevithick' waits to depart from Bristol Temple Meads with 1Z37 10.26 to Kingswear in connection with the Dartmouth Arrow event on Friday 31st August, 2007. All photos: Solomon Riley

Right: Close up of pair of 37s during the layover at Kingswear.

Below left: 37410 and 37417 rests with stock on the headshunt outside Kingswear, whilst couple of Hawk jets of the Red Arrows elite perform one of their very impressive aerobatic flypasts with blue and red trails.



Below right: Postcard scene of the English Riviera is shown to effect with the Dartmouth estuary on the outskirts of Kingswear in Devon, along with yachts. Oh, by the way, train with 37410+37417 complete this scene!



Syphon! Pictorial

On the LGV-Med High Speed Line in France, Class 37s nos. 37683 and 37891 brings up the rear of Train 232E at Les Blaches, with empty ballast wagons returning from Lapalud to Eurre for re-loading. 37010 and 37077 at the other end of this train - see inset photograph below. 13th April, 2000. *BOTH PHOTOS: Colin Marsden*



Syphon! Pictorial



Top left: Pair of Class 37s nos. 37238 and 37250 passes Les Blaches, with Train 231E empty ballast from Lapalud, returning to Eure. 37693+37513 was at rear. On 13th April, 2000.

Upon return to UK, both locos were stored at Tyne Yard, which '238 is still there and '250 just secured for preservation by a well known rail enthusiast EWS driver based at Tyne Yard!

Colin Marsden

Centre right: Eure was the main base in France for Class 37s working the LGV-Med construction line, locos stabled on 13th April, 2000 were: (L) 37796, 37708 and 37894 (R) 37069, 37100 and 37293.

Colin Marsden



Bottom left: Track gang at work on the LGV-Med route (such was their casual approach that they allowed access and a worker on far left is smoking!) at Le Puits de Lignet, just 4km south of Valence TGV station, while 37170+37672 stand on opposite track with trackside equipment train. On 15th October, 1999. *Mark Grimes*

Class 37s at work in France

By Colin Marsden

A total of 42 English Electric Type 3, Class 37s were once very hard at work in Southern France from mid 1999 until late 2000, operating on infrastructure construction trains for the new LGV Mediterranee line under construction between St Marcel-les-Valence near Valence to the outskirts of Marseille together with a spur from near Avignon to south of Nimes to provide a connection with the high speed line to Montpellier. The new lines had opened on June 10, 2001 and, for the first time, provide the ability to operate a high speed train service from the UK via the Channel Tunnel to the South of France and following expansion of the new Spanish high-speed network will, by the end of the decade, allow trains from London travelling via the CTRL and the SNCF network to reach mid-Spain travelling all the way at between 280-300km/h.

The Class 37s were hired to French national rail operator SNCF by EWS as the French operator needed a large number, around 155, locomotives to power engineering works trains during the relatively short time of track laying, ballasting and electrification of the new railway. At an early stage in construction planning, it was foreseen that in no way could SNCF provide the number of locos required, and therefore in early 1999 a contract was struck with EWS, who had a large surplus of suitable locos, to hire 40 machines to SNCF.

Once EWS agreed the terms of the deal, which upon completion of contract should see the locos return to the UK, a trawl of the fleet both stored and operational was made to find initial 40 suitable machines. Little special preparation work was required, the main stipulations being that the blue star multiple control system was functional, the UK Automatic warning system (AWS) receivers were removed from the bogies and that snowploughs, if fitted, were taken off.

Locos were shipped to France through the Channel Tunnel between July and September 1999 mainly in consists of three. Once in France locos were taken to a temporary EWS loco depot formed at Eurre, allocated the code EU which is close to Crest where a major construction base was formed on a spur line off the new LGV route. The depot facility at Eurre, technically a sub-shed of Avignon, was very basic with no covered accommodation for locos and only a converted Freightliner container as an office, mess room and stores for the small resident EWS staff team looking after the fleet.

Many French railwaymen were dubious about using what were seen as old underpowered locos for this important contract, but in reality the locos had more than proved themselves, with many drivers frankly *preferring to operate the Class 37s* than French locos used on the project! The driving of the locos in France were carried out by French crews, seconded to the project, but EWS fitters had been based at Eurre from the summer of 1999 to oversee operations and keep a close watch over their charges.

Most of the route for the new LGV line, including embankments, bridges, cuttings and viaducts were constructed well in advance of the arrival of the Class 37s and other 'foreign' locos, with the physical route being very impressive, undulating over the hilly countryside for much of the route but also with some impressive embankments, viaducts and new bow-arch bridges. The first impression one gets of the new LGV line is that of size and grandure, unlike anything seen in the UK. The undulations and sweeping curves of the new layout literally following the countryside rather than cutting through, make even the casual observer stop and look.

Few major problems had befallen the locos working from Eurre, one loco (37073) had sustained front end collision damage with a hole in one nose end and a 'drop snoop', after being buffer locked in an incident at Eurre. Other problems seem to involve wheelsets, with serious flats being reported, and indeed heard, on many locos. No facilities existed for rectification of such faults at Eurre, but a few complete bogie changes have been undertaken with the aid of a road crane. Few 37s actually made it to Avignon shed to have its tyres turned on the depot lathe, which made interesting sight of 37 alongside SNCF traction! Most drivers seemed to like the 37s, even though the engine rooms tended to be very messy and covered in oil compared to French traction.

The EWS engineers at Eurre on April 13, 2000, said that the locos had operated extremely well during their 'holiday' in France, in reality it is no holiday for the locos are probably worked harder from Eurre than ever in the UK. In April 2000, the only loco of the batch in EWS livery (37298) was sadly laid up after having auxiliary generator failure and never ran again. The operational requirement was for 32 of the 40 locos available each weekday for service, at weekends all locos stabled at the Eurre base. During a visit, 27 locos were on the line each day.

French traction resources also played a major role in construction of the new line, track laying actually commenced from the south end of the new route from another construction base at Cheval Blanc near Cavaillon in May 1999, when, at a rate of around 1.3km per day track was laid south from Cheval Blanc towards Marseille, on this section the UK locos have played no part at all. After completion of the Cheval Blanc-Marseille section, work commenced heading north to eventually meet up with the Eurre-based teams working south. The meeting point was planned to be at Lapalud, but as the north working teams took slightly longer in their work than planned, the Eurre teams, heading south were contracted to progress some 20km south of Lapalud for the meeting of the two assembly teams, which took place in May 2000.

The Class 37 operation which commenced in August 1999 with a few test trains in the Eurre area and from September for full service was centered on Eurre, with usually either 2 or 3 locos working in multiple topping and tailing heavy infrastructure consists. At first the trains ran northwards from Eurre towards St Marcel-les Valence and after this section had been laid, southwards from Eurre to meet track laying gangs working north from Cheval Blanc, to a point south of Lapalud.



Left: At Lapalud, SNCF TGV sets nos. 4506 and 4503 forming 10.48 Paris Lyon to Marseille, passes Class 37s nos. 37685+37800 with one of two ballast trains, along with nos. 058+376, 261+221, 146+037, on 14th April, 2000.
Colin Marsden

By April 14, 2000, the Class 37 powered trains had reached close to the small town of Mondragon, with a triple-powered Class 37 propelled track train laying the southbound line, the northbound track was about 1,000 meters behind. In terms of Class 37 work, by virtue of the type of duties undertaken, all trains set off each day from the Eurre base, being marshalled during the night hours. For reasons of power, bearing in mind the route has some of the steepest gradients on any route (up to 1:28.5), all trains had locos at both ends, except for the track laying trains which are propelled to section as locos on the south end would get in the way of work.

Each weekday, a convoy of trains a suitable distance apart, set off from Eurre between 04.30 and 07.00 and work to the work site, of course as work has progressed south, the journey to/from the work sites has increased, giving less actual work hours per day. After performing track laying work all day, the trains returned empty, or conveying temporary track sections, to Eurre, again in convoy during the late afternoon for overnight reloading and preparation for next days departures. This short overnight layover period is also used to change over any defective locos.



Left: 37683 and 37803 with Train 131E following a ballast drop, await return to Eurre base on 14th October, 1999. Mark Grimes

Typically one or two track laying trains lead the morning procession followed by anything up to six ballast trains working over the tracks laid the previous day. As daily ballast dropping completes, often by mid-morning for the ballast trains, the formations move through the section and stable in preparation for the evening return. Usually, the train crews who work out in the early morning are bussed back to Eurre and a fresh set of men taken out for the afternoon return workings. Apart from

the main track laying and ballast trains, other miscellaneous engineering trains worked within the already-laid sections. In the main there were few movements during the bulk of the day, except for moving out of section or moving up/down as work progresses. It was rare to find a train travelling long distance outside the early morning and late afternoon, principally as the line was usually blocked by other work trains.

Right: Track equipment train (414E) returns to Eurre after day's worksite near Mondragon, led by 37100+37146+37293 with all of its 5,250hp, near Donzere, sweeping curves and gradients of the LGV line can be seen. On 13th April, 2000. Colin Marsden



In addition to the main engineering trains, a number of track machines were based at the two construction sites and usually intermingle with the main construction trains. The detailed planning of the order of the works trains must not be underestimated, for it would be little short of a disaster to find that trains in the wrong order once on a work site, very few crossings between the lines exist and it would be impossible to change the order of trains. By UK terms the gradients of the LGV line are quite steep, with a maximum grade of 1:28.5, this explains why a multiple number of locos are required to shift around 2,000t. Even with 4 locos powering, some ran at just 5mph at the summit of grades.

During the construction of the LGV, no signalling was provided and all moves carried out by radio control. Identification of trains is achieved by a four digit alpha/numeric identity carried on the front and rear of each train on a slat box attached to the lamp irons, numbers suffixed by the letter 'E' are from the Eurre base and those with a letter 'C' from Chevel Blanc. While the new LGV was being constructed, the two tracks were usually deemed as two parallel single lines rather than an up and down railway. However, some crossovers with hand operated points were provided to enable limited flexibility of train running.

When the construction site was visited in mid-April 2000, track laying was complete northwards from Eurre to the new TGV station at St Marcel-les-Valence, with overhead power equipment fully installed and line side security fencing erected. Heading south from Eurre work was still progressing in the section at Allan and south from Lapalud but progress was such that most major track laying and ballast work would be finished within about six weeks. Electrification then followed with minor works bringing up the tail of the contract in the late summer/autumn, this had included signalling and major security fence erection, 37s saw use on some electrification trains. The LGV-Med line fully opened, linking Paris and Montpellier on 10th June, 2001.

Originally the Class 37 hire contract was due to finish at the end of April 2000, but an extension between EWS and SNCF was signed in early April 2000 for the 40 locos to remain on hire from Eurre until around September 2000. As two of the original supplied locos, 37073/298 were out of service, EWS sent out two replacements (37888 and 37896) together with a further supply of spare parts, including complete bogies from scrapped locos disposed of, at the Wigan CRDC.

Interesting facts have emerged during Class 37s' spell in France, apart from visits of few members of the class to Avignon depot for tyre turning, there were at least couple of occasions where 37s have been used as exhibits at SNCF Open Days! 37298 and 37888's wheel rims were painted white, the latter had visited Rambert-d' Albon.

Within a month of arrival in France, 37888 was on display at Rambert-d' Albon, with a BB11000 electric, during a local SNCF Open Day on 12th June 2000. Ian Holmes



Beyond September 2000, only around 70 locos were needed as the construction of TGV-Med line was nearing completion, it was reduced to nearer 33 at the year end, these lower requirements were met from SNCF's own resources, which at this point Class 37s were no longer required and returned to UK, which is detailed on the list in next page and your 'Syphon!' Editor have made additional notes to show when each loco had returned to the UK and the current status of each Class 37 as of early 2008, which shows either being scrapped, stored, preserved and returning to mainline with current owners.



Left: The only EWS-liveried 37 to have worked in France, 37298, leads the line-up with 37073, 662506, 37686, 662418 and 662440 (former NS Class 2200's) as they stand on 'dead neck' at Eurre, on 13th April 2000. Colin Marsden

EWS-SNCF Class 37 fleet list**By Colin Marsden and Mark Grimes**

Loco No.	Livery	Delivery to SNCF	Date returned to UK	Current status (Jan 2008)
37010	Dutch	03/9/99	11/10/00	Cut up in 2007, Booths
37037	Trainload grey	27/8/99	14/8/00	Preserved, South Devon Rly
37046	Dutch	20/9/99	11/8/00	Out of service, EWS Tyne Yard
37058	Dutch	03/8/99	19/8/00	Out of service, EWS Tyne Yard
37069	Dutch	15/7/99	06/10/00	In traffic, with DRS
37071	Dutch	12/7/99	06/10/00	Cut up in 2005, Booths
37073	Transrail TL grey	12/7/99	22/10/00	Cut up in 2003, Bury
37074	Mainline blue	16/9/99	04/8/00	Cut up in 2005, Booths
37077	Mainline blue	20/9/99	19/7/00	Out of service, EWS Barton Hill
37100	Transrail TL grey	20/8/99	19/7/00	To re-enter traffic, with NR
37133	Dutch	28/6/99	14/9/00	Cut up in 2004, Carnforth
37146	Dutch	23/8/99	08/9/00	Preserved, Kirkby Stephen East
37162	Departmental grey	23/7/99	13/9/00	Cut up in 2005, Booths
37170	Transrail Dutch	03/8/99	06/10/00	HNRC (for NR's ETRMS project)
37196	Dutch	09/7/99	08/9/00	Out of service, EWS Tyne Yard
37221	Transrail TL grey	27/8/99	09/8/00	Out of service, EWS Tyne Yard
37238	Trainload grey	02/7/99	14/8/00	Out of service, EWS Tyne Yard
37250	Transrail TL grey	16/7/99	14/9/00	Bought for preservation (Dec '07)
37261	RfD grey	18/8/99	21/7/00	DRS (stored, awaiting OTMR)
37293	Mainline blue	13/7/99	04/8/00	Out of service, EWS Tyne Yard
37294	Dutch	25/8/99	09/8/00	Out of service, EWS Crewe DMD
37298	EWS	26/8/99	11/10/00	Cut up in 2006, Booths
37376	Trainload grey	18/8/99	06/10/00	Cut up in 2005, Booths
37510	InterCity	23/8/99	22/10/00	In traffic, with DRS
37513	Loadhaul	16/9/99	16/7/00	Cut up in 2008, Booths
37515	Trainload Metals	28/6/99	22/10/00	DRS (out of traffic, collision)
37671	Transrail TL grey	25/8/99	04/10/00	Out of service, EWS Tyne Yard
37672	Transrail TL grey	28/6/99	22/10/00	HNRC, Barrow Hill (stored)
37683	Transrail TL grey	16/7/99	22/10/00	HNRC (still at EWS Thornaby)
37685	InterCity	01/9/99	11/8/00	WCRC (possible return to traffic)
37686	TL Construction	09/7/99	16/7/00	Cut up in 2005 at Booths
37693	Transrail TL grey	02/7/99	19/8/00	Out of service, EWS Tyne Yard
37696	Transrail TL grey	27/7/99	19/7/00	Cut up in 2008, EMR Kingsbury
37708	Trainload Petroleum	20/8/99	20/7/00	Out of service, EWS Healey Mills
37796	Trainload Coal	26/8/99	21/7/00	Out of service, EWS Tyne Yard
37800	Mainline TL grey	03/8/99	20/7/00	In traffic, Spain (Vilafranca base)
37803	Mainline blue	01/9/99	08/9/00	Out of service, Spain
37888	Trainload grey	11/5/00	22/10/00	Out of service, Spain (damaged)
37890	Mainline TL grey	13/7/99	10/9/00	Out of service, EWS Margam
37891	Mainline TL grey	03/8/99	04/10/00	Out of service, EWS Tyne Yard
37894	Trainload Coal	03/9/99	19/7/00	Cut up in 2008, EMR Kingsbury
37896	Transrail TL grey	11/5/00	13/9/00	Out of service, EWS Margam

COMING UP IN NEXT ISSUE: Class 37s at work in Spain...

ETH 37's - who's got what?

After many months of speculation, EWS finally decided to put some of their Class 37/4 locos on tender during late 2007. It was not surprising they attracted a lot of interest, such is the versatility of these locos due to their ETH equipment and axle loading of RA5, particularly suitable for charter train operations on routes with no more than RA5, which gives them wider route availability compared to certain other loco classes.

In the past few years, the popular sub-class has been gradually run-down with only up to 5 locos remaining operational in 2007, all with EWS. Loss of the booked passenger diagrams with First ScotRail and Arriva Trains Wales at end of 2006 gave EWS no incentive to overhaul their remaining 37/4's for continued traffic. It goes to say, without a doubt, high demand for these locos on charter train operations and particularly the lucrative contract with VSOE to run few 'Northern Belle' trains to Oban on annual basis (which is barred to heavier locos) meant that EWS have been obliged to keep their small fleet of operational 37/4's in traffic, often spread over several depots all over the UK in order to maintain crew knowledge, which meant they continue to be used on a number of freight trains to this day, particularly on some routes we thought had seen the last of the Tractors, i.e. working into the Peak Forest with Arpley-Dowlow duties (which is emphasised by the front cover of this issue!)

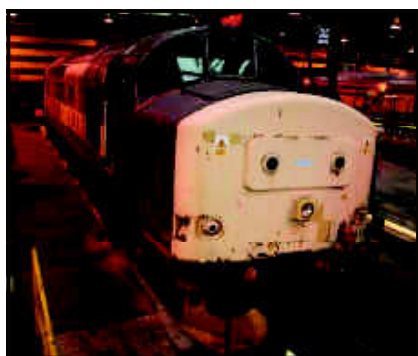
First of the locos up for the grabs was 37403, which appeared on EWS tender list that had no less than 18 Class 37s during September and was then followed up by total of 26 examples, of which at least 10 ETH versions had appeared on next tender list (dated 16th November 2007).

Who's got what?

37403 - Private buyer (for restoration)
 37407 - Private buyer (for restoration)
 37408 - EMR (for scrap)
 37409 - EMR (for scrap)
 37412 - EMR (for scrap)
 37413 - Private buyer (spares for '407)
 37418 - Private buyer (restoration)
 37420 - Ron Hull Jnr (for scrap)
 37424 - Private buyer (for restoration)
 37429 - EMR (for scrap)
 37430 - EMR (for scrap)



Above right: 37429 stands forlornly in the Training Compound at Toton depot on Thursday 6th December, 2007. It had been heavily cannibalised to yield parts. *Michael Ratledge*



With few examples purchased by private individuals, it remains to be seen whether they are entering preservation, as they are owned by individuals rather than loco groups, just as in the past some locos that had been owned by individuals have since sold them on. As time will tell, status of each loco being 'saved' will become more clearer and determine whether for commercial traffic hire or for preservation in heritage scene.

Left: 37418 has been bought by a private individual for use on a heritage railway. Before the sale, it was inside the Toton depot awaiting removal of snowploughs, on Thursday 6th December, 2007. *Michael Ratledge*

A new chapter?

2008 look set to be interesting and varied year for the sub-class, with new owners and their plans. Apart from these who are likely to return to traffic, it goes without saying that 37408, one of the most popular locos, is to be scrapped due to its bent frame after shunting collision at Rhymney on 1st August, 2005. 37420, which was quite heavily robbed of parts and exposed to elements of weather during open storage at Crewe DMD for several years and considered to be virtually beyond redemption has also been sold for scrap. There are still other '37/4s' stored around EWS depots, it remains to be seen whether EWS may decide sell up their remaining 37/4s apart from operational ones.

Whilst it is expected EWS will continue to run their remaining operational ETH 37s, but how long they shall remain in traffic is anyone's guess, but cannot be that long, as their engine hours are high and no works overhauls being planned, 2008 could be their last full year?

Other example is Direct Rail Services-owned 37423, after being out of limelight for *eight* years, (having previously been owned by Ian Riley at Bury and West Coast Railway Company!) but after extensive overhaul at Brush Traction in Loughborough, finally returned to traffic in December 2007. Bearing in mind of DRS's recent entry into charter train market and having taken over Hertfordshire Railtours programme (now owned by Stobart Group, following the demise of Victa Westlink Rail), it may be possible to see 37423 working such trains, particularly on RA5 routes, due to its ETH equipment. Railcruise charters on Kyle and Oban lines? Interesting times ahead...

The ones that got away (so far...)

At least 2 had got away earlier, 37404 having been cut up at Booth's by HNRC in Jan 2002, and 37431 was despatched to EWS Wigan CRDC for component recovery in Nov 1999 and disposed of by August 2000.

Right: 37404 departs from Fort William Jct, in wet conditions, with freight carrying loaded aluminium flats from Alcan plant in Lochaber and covered wagons from nearby Corpach paper mill, to Mossend Yard, on 30th March, 1995. *Mark Grimes*



Left: 37431 pictured at Aberdeen after arriving on 1A52 12.20 ScotRail service from Inverness, on 11th August, 1993.

Penultimate member of the sub-class, it was the only example of the class to carry Petroleum freight logo on second mans side in this livery, just one of a number of livery oddities to appear over the years. *Mark Grimes*



Caption Contest (just for the fun of it!)

Why is a canine sitting on the driver's seat of 37175?

Send your witty comments by email to Mark and it will be printed!

Photo: Michael Ratledge

Entries to previous Caption Contest

From Barry Wetherell:

'Blast ! I've dropped that small split pin and down here it's like looking for a NEEDLE in a haystack!'

'Go away Rug, I am trying to have a kip'

Photo: Michael Ratledge



<http://www.27000electra.co.uk/>

Publicity Exchange **EM2 Locomotive Society**

The EM2 Locomotive Society, registered in the UK as an Educational Charity, was formed in 1983 with the aim of repatriating a Netherlands Railways (NS) Class 1500 / Ex BR Class EM2 electric locomotive. No. 1502 was selected for preservation and brought back to the UK in 1986 as it was the first member of the class, originally E27000 'ELECTRA' and holds a significant role in the history of Britain's railways, as it was the first purpose-built express mainline electric locomotive in the UK. Currently, the EM2 is based at Midland Railway Butterley. You can check their website (see link under photo).

Submit your photos for C37LG's own calendar!

The Committee is to launch new 2009 C37LG calendar, to be on sale from mid-2008. We would like you to submit your high quality photographs. What's in it for you? *Free copy of calendar* if your photo is included! We require 12 and they have to meet this criteria:

- 1). Early BR 1960s period through to present day scene (including heritage railways).
- 2). Scenic locations and creative shots (such as close-up and silhouette views etc).
- 3). Featuring Type 3 / Class 37 locos only, with any train (passenger, freight, engineers).

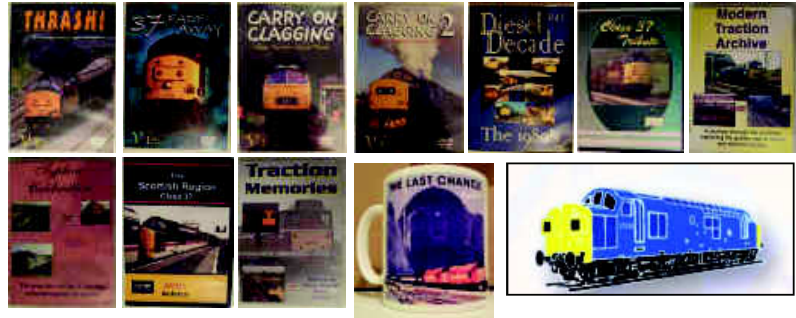
Please submit your photographs to the Editor by JPEG email attachment, the deadline for submissions is on Friday 29th February, 2007. The Committee is to shortlist photographs to be included in the calendar and no further correspondence will be entered into. More information will be announced in next issue. Good luck!

C37LG items for sale

The Group still have a stock DVD's for sale (all the proceeds go to the restoration fund) if you would like to purchase any of these DVDs, please drop a line to Mick Parker with your request and send a cheque payable to 'The Class 37 Locomotive Group' (address on page 2) and there is **no charge for P&P with all orders. Thanks for your support.**

DVDs: (RRP reduced!)

'Thrash' **£19.00**
'37 Fade Away' **£19.00**
'Carry on Clagging' **£19.00**
'Carry on Clagging 2' **£19.00**
'Diesel Decade the 1980s' **£19.00**
'Class 37 Tribute' Vol 2 **£19.00**
'Modern Traction Archive' **£14.00**
'Syphon Celebration' **£12.00**
'The Scottish Region Class 37' **£9.90**
'Traction Memories' **£6.95**



Mugs: Original 'The Last Chance' 37 tour **£2.00**

Books: 'Preserved Heritage Traction' **£12.50**
(Now updated with July 2007 insert)

Model train set: Brand new Hornby 'Local Freight' set
(ideal for young kids) **RRP £39.99, LG price only £32!**



Badges: BR Blue 37003 (2" width size) **£4.50**

Volunteering with the C37LG



Would you like to get involved on the other side of the fence? There are plenty of jobs for you to help the C37LG!

37003 is currently residing at the Locomotion Shildon, in County Durham, where regular work parties are taking place to get it ready and looking presentable in readiness for the Modern Traction event in April.

37175 also needs volunteers to help out at the Bo'ness & Kinneil Railway in Scotland, you need to be a member of SRPS first, for insurance purposes.

Maintaining the locos is an ongoing job and so there is always something to do. Don't worry if you are not technically minded, there's always plenty to do, we'll find one for you!

Please contact any Committee member by email (details on page 2).

Coming up in next issue...

With review of Modern Traction event at Shildon 'hot off the press', updates in the preservation scene, pictorial feature of latest & past Buffer Puffer tours, Class 37s at work in Spain with some photographs, insight into the restoration story of 37254, 'Syd the Syphon' to keep you amused and all the other Group news with progress on our locos and the LG's publicity and sales tour to visit forthcoming events in Spring and Summer 2008.

Class 37s were synonymous with the North East England coal and steel industrial landscapes, as Dawdon Colliery (near Seaham) is the setting for pair of immaculately turned-out Thornaby examples nos. 37071 'British Steel Skinningrove' and 37077 'British Steel Shelton' waiting whilst coal is being loaded onto rake of HAA hoppers, on 4th October, 1985. There is now no trace of industrial landscape at this location. *Peter Robinson*



Syphon!