

Syphon!

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The official magazine of the Class 37 Locomotive Group

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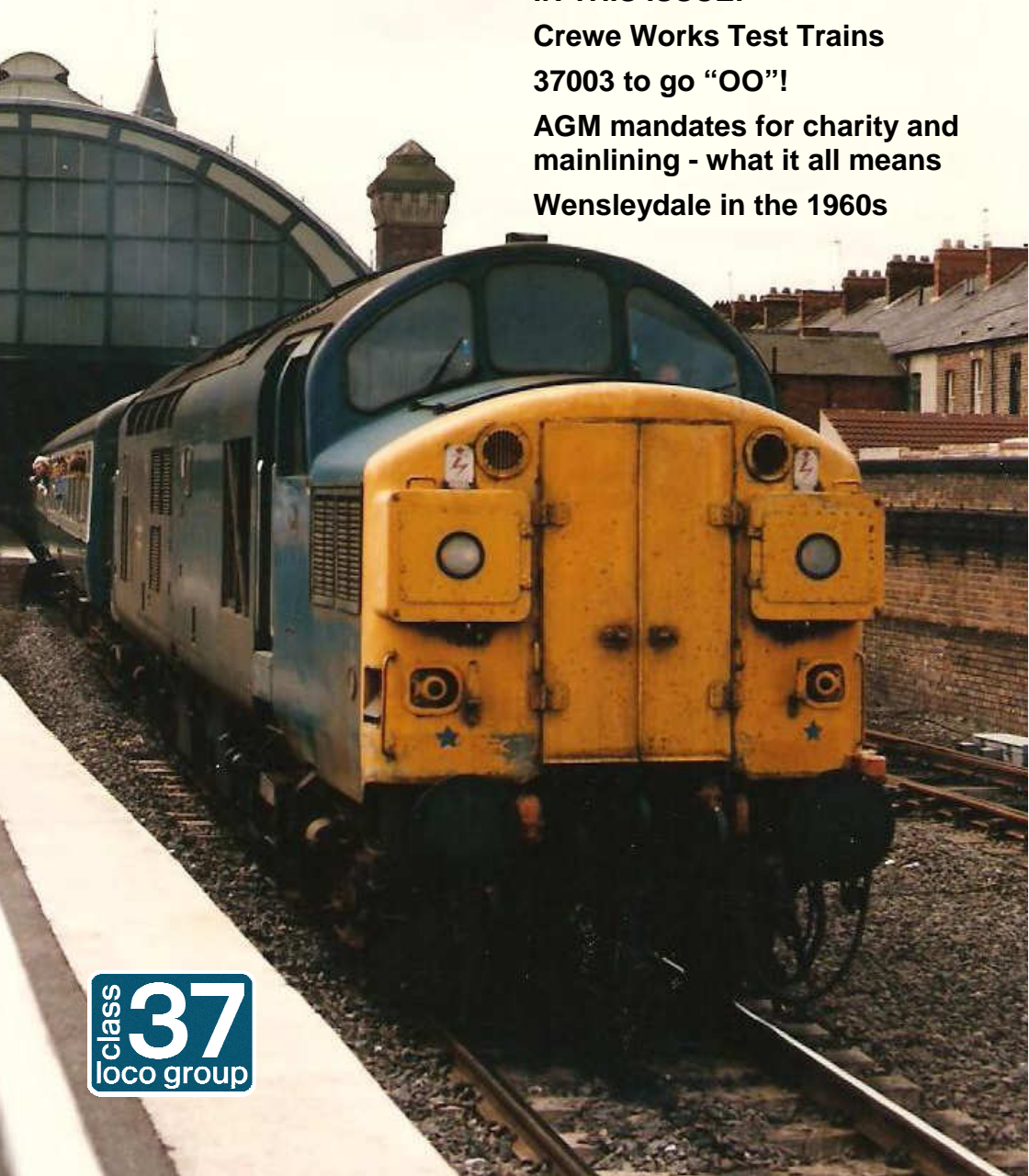
Crewe Works Test Trains

37003 to go "OO"!

**AGM mandates for charity and
mainlining - what it all means**

Wensleydale in the 1960s

class **37**
loco 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.

General enquiries and any 'gen' for inclusion on our website can also be sent to the Editor (Mick Sasse) or to Mick Parker. Mick also deals with any enquiries regarding the website.



FRONT COVER:

You can almost hear Tinsley's 37047 blast away from Darlington on 24 May 1986 with 1N35, the 10:18 Scarborough-Newcastle - a classic summer Saturday chuck-out train! 37047, for most of its life an Eastern Region machine, was withdrawn in 2004, before a lengthy spell in reserve and final scrapping in 2008.

Steve Hollis

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CONTRIBUTORS TO ISSUE 138 (articles and photographs):

Steve Hollis, Mike Millward, Barry Wetherell, Philip Cole Wallace, Nigel Holden,

HELP TO MAKE IT YOUR MAGAZINE?

Syphon! depends on contributions from members, supporters and fellow enthusiasts. Did you work on 37s "back in the day"? Were you on those classic railtours in the 1980s? Did those summer Saturdays form a critical part of your misspent youth? Or are you one of the newly converted tractor devotees? Just what is it for you about 37s anyway?... You can help by sharing with us your memories, photos, gen, observations, railtour reports (including those classics from the 1980s!), random thoughts, surrealist art... in fact pretty much anything on a Class 37 theme. If you have anything to share, just get in touch with the Editor. Without you there's no *Syphon!*.

I can accept articles in pretty much any standard format - same goes for pictures, though always the more pixels the better! Thanks a lot!

EDITORIAL & NEWS

Dear members and supporters,

The more observant will have noticed a new name at the foot of the page - I've been granted the great honour of assuming the mantle of editing this august journal. I haven't made many changes to *Syphon!*, on the principle that if it ain't broke... However, I'd be delighted to receive suggestions and requests for things you'd like to see more (or less!) of in future editions - just drop me an e-mail or note. One thing I've done this time is to include "edited highlights" of the recent AGM - obviously all members are entitled to a copy of the full minutes, but printing them separately and sending them out to all members would be a significant extra cost; on the other hand, when I tried to incorporate them into the magazine, they filled a full 12 pages and even I lost the will to live. So I do hope this is a good compromise giving you the most important gen. Note that any member who'd the minutes in full can download them from the members' Yahoo group site webpage, or let us know if you'd like a hard copy.

It's slightly tedious to have to start with an apology... but I'm conscious that this edition is a little, let's say, "chronologically challenged" - all was going well until in mid-July my hard disc exploded. I rescued the data eventually and got restarted, but only after fitting two (!) new keyboards, reformatting my hard drive, and getting a brief stay in Wythenshawe Hospital behind me!

Anyway, this last quarter has seen some very positive developments, reported in more detail elsewhere in this issue, including progress on bringing 37003 back to serviceable condition, a very encouraging endorsement by the membership of our plans for the future of the Group in the recent postal vote and AGM, plus some exciting new initiatives from the sales department!

We're particularly pleased our plans to reform the constitution and seek charitable status have received such a vote of confidence, as has our proposal that 37003 should be restored to a standard such that, if we can be sure it is in the loco's and the Group's best interests, we can have her registered for mainline running - for a strictly limited number of railtours.

The progress we've made so far with '003, and the further progress we're expecting to make over the next year, don't come cheap, but we have plenty of plans to meet this. As well as the ongoing proceeds from "Buy Your Own Tractor", subscriptions (the change in the rates has made a real difference), and our gala sales stands, we've started doing raffles and sales stands on railtours (thanks to Spitfire!), and these are proving a very valuable source of funds. We've also sold a good few Chains in the "Sponsor A Chain" appeal, and we're already seeing healthy demand for our exclusive Bachmann model of 37003 - even before it officially goes on public sale! However, we're conscious that our ambitions will need even more than this - so please keep supporting us, and watch this space for more "wheezes" to help keep the funds coming in!

Finally, on a personal note, living as I do in the North-West, the Dereham AGM was only my third visit to the MNR. Again I was struck by the attractiveness of the railway: not only over 10 miles of well-maintained line, active work on the extension from Dereham to Hoe and County School, and a passing loop now almost fully installed near the halfway point - but a friendly, constructive atmosphere among the staff and volunteers who welcomed us to the railway. And another thing: I realised as I enjoyed the first leg of my trip home - in the form of a rather entertaining blue '20 with a matching rake of very blue/grey Mark 2s to take me to Wymondham for my 158 onwards - that my northern assumptions about the "Flatlands" are quite wrong: not only is the line far from flat, but the scenery is extremely pleasant! If you haven't been yet, you have a pleasure in store!

Sincere thanks to you all for your support,

Mick Sasse - *Syphon!* Editor
Email: editor@c37lg.co.uk

Loco update - Summer 2009

Text: Mike Millward and Mick Sasse - Pictures: Mike Millward

Restoration work has continued through the summer on 37003 under Mike's able leadership - sometimes in less than comfortable conditions, as the combination of strong sunlight, dark rail-blue paint, and an enclosed engine-room could put many a sauna to shame...

As we reported in the last issue, an inspection carried out shortly after her arrival at Dereham, to the EE manual using calibrated equipment with assistance from Chris Cheney (who plays with 50019!), revealed no issues with crankshaft deflection, and the turbochargers were also within normal tolerances - so the main generator bearing needed closer examination in our hunt for the cause of the "rumble" from that end of the power unit. This revealed that there was indeed an issue with the generator bearing: it was fairly worn and needed replacement.



Left: 37003 gently absorbing sunlight in the bay platform at Dereham, sporting domino headcode boxes - and could that be a nameplate hiding on her body-side...?

To replace a main generator bearing you have to remove the auxiliary generator from the engine. This is rather easier said than done: in BR days works would generally have "simply" used a very large crane to lift out the entire engine + generator unit, but sadly we don't have the facilities of March or Toton! Basically, we need a specially-fashioned extractor (puller) which can be attached to the relevant points on the generator, and then to pull... and pull... very, very hard: basically we're trying to separate a happy union which has been in place between engine and generator since installation in 37073 after a heavy general overhaul in 1991 - some 14-15,000 hours ago; the engine hours on 37073 were zeroed before its stint in France, but the generator bearing has been around the block a couple of times. We have now acquired a 20-tonne jack and are hopeful that this will do the trick! We already have the required bearing, and, while the auxiliary generator is off, we're going to take the opportunity of checking the electrical integrity of both the main and auxiliary generators.

We also intend dealing with the leaking cylinder liners and changing the oil before testing and, hopefully, readying '003 for her first trials on the MNR. An oil test showed low levels of metals and contaminants, but underlined the wisdom of this as water levels were on the high side.

In terms of bodywork, she is basically in sound condition but will receive a little tidying up before her initial return to service on the MNR. We've already removed those rather improvised-looking nose-end headlights and are working on restoring fully functioning headcode blinds...

Finally, next year - in time for her 50th birthday! - we propose fully repainting 37003 into

Brunswick Green, which should match rather nicely with the maroon rake of vacuum-braked stock the MNR are now finishing off - perhaps even sporting a nameplate... Watch this space!



Left & right: Headcode boxes... "Before" and "After"!



Report of Annual General Meeting

Note: To save Group funds, and avoid filling most of this Syphon! with AGM minutes, the following is a summary of the key points. The full set is available from the members' Yahoo site (<http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/c37lgmembersforum/files/>). Alternatively, if you'd like a hard copy (free of charge), just drop us a line (e-mail or post).

The AGM was held at The King's Head Hotel, Dereham on 20 June 2009, attended by 4 committee officers (apologies from Ian Simpson, away on urgent business) and 3 members.

Mick Parker as **Chair** summed up the main events of the last year, including the move to the Mid-Norfolk Railway (and the linked "decoupling" from 37175 which now has close links to the Bo'ness diesel group and SRPS), some changes to the committee, and fundraising progress. He also noted the change to the membership subscription rates, which it was hoped the membership will understand as it was designed to ensure that some of the proceeds went towards preserving our loco. Finally, he summarised the plans for the coming year, including returning 37003 to traffic on the MNR (and then at other railways' galas), and, subject to membership approval, update the group's constitution, seek registration as a charity, and also restore the 37003 up to a standard where mainline registration could take place. To support this, the imperatives are to ensure our fundraising efforts continue, that we continue to build up a comprehensive stock of spares for 37003, and that our volunteer base (both working on the loco and help us raise funds through helping out on sales stands and railtour raffles) continues to support us. Finally, it is also intended to acquire for the group a railway vehicle which could be used for the secure storage of our parts stock, as soon as an appropriate van can be sourced at a reasonable price.

In his capacity as **Treasurer**, Mick gave a financial report. Over the past year, the Group has repaid £270 of a £1,270 loan to a member, and as at the end of March 2009 the Group current account held £2,993; adding in the value of sales stock held, this gives a net position of £3,630, an improvement on the previous year. During the year ended 31 March 2009 the Group had an income of £14,615.12 and outgoings of £12,801.31. Items of significance were the cost of moving 37003 from NRM Locomotion Shildon to the Mid-Norfolk Railway, the Fitness to Run exam, and the air tank certification. Sales activity gave an income of £5,775, with donations of £5,679. The Group also received an interim dividend amounting to £554 from the liquidation of Bedale Railway Engines (BRE) Limited. The committee also wished to record the group's thanks to all those who had made donations to the group, and especially Ian Simpson for having donated the funds required to move 37003 to Dereham. Responding to a question, Mick confirmed that any participation by 37003 in galas away from the MNR would only happen on such a basis that the Group was not incurring the financial risk of the transport costs involved - that is, it would not be right (and should be unnecessary anyway) for the Group to subsidise any "gala tour".

Finally, Mick also gave his last report as **Membership Secretary**, this role now having been taken over by Philip Cole Wallace. Membership remains constant at 105, though there has been a shift with some members in the North East not renewing, but being replaced by new joiners in East Anglia. While membership rates have changed, hopefully this will not have a detrimental effect on the number of members, and they will agree that their membership fees should be set at a level that not only covers the cost of membership but also contributes to the upkeep of 37003. (Under the previous membership rates, once Syphon! printing and distribution had been subtracted, only around £3 of the subscription actually went to support the group's work.)

Ian Simpson's report as **Archivist, Sales and Fundraising Officer** (prepared in advance) underlined the plans to develop the Group's "educational" function in support of the proposed bid for charitable status - this would support the existing website and public information database.

While the area of sales will develop more in the coming year, the number and variety of DVDs on offer has grown, and other new items have been added, including exclusive items such as the Group calendar for 2010 and the specially commissioned Bachmann model of 37003. In addition, the outlets have expanded with the adoption of PayPal on the website, further attendances at preserved railways' diesel galas, and Spitfire railtours allowing us to hold sales stands and raffles on several of their 37-hauled railtours. The galas and tours have netted the Group around £3,000 in profit over the year. The main limiting factor is how many volunteers can be mustered to man the sales stands and travel on the railtours - *we'd really like more help with this!*

Long-term fundraising will clearly assume greater importance as work to restore 37003 to top condition - and ensure she stays there - continues (especially if mainline running is sanctioned by the membership). A long-term plan has been drafted and will be finalised shortly - its form will depend critically on whether the proposal to seek charitable status is supported by members: both fund-raising and the tax-efficiency of existing financial support will be aided significantly if we do become a charity. Aside from the proceeds of the Bachmann model [*See separate article on this!-Ed.*], other fundraising initiatives include the Sponsor A Chain Appeal and the ongoing monthly Buy Your Own Tractor lottery.

As **Vice-Chair, BYOT Co-ordinator** and newly appointed **Magazine Editor, Mick Sasse** underlined the rationale behind the three measures on which the Group was seeking the membership's support: the reform of the constitution needed for the Group to make progress and to enable it to become a charity, application for charitable status (with very substantial financial and status advantages), and restoring 37003 to a mainline standard - emphasising that the Group's plans for 37003, while reasonably ambitious, are costed, fundable and achievable.

Since its launch in September 2008, the BYOT lottery has grown to a reasonable size, with 71 locos now "allocated", a monthly income of £71. The prize fund is 45% of monthly income (overheads being negligible), but net proceeds were slightly more than this, as a number of winners kindly donated their prizes back to the Group. The support of all BYOT members is very gratefully acknowledged. Whilst the sums concerned may not appear massive, the proceeds so far represent around £500 which the Group would not otherwise have had. Mick urged all Group members to consider supporting their loco with a regular "flutter" of only £1 per loco every month.

Mick also recorded the Group's thanks to Mark Grimes for his efforts in consolidating Michael Ratledge's (Rugby's) success in re-establishing *Syphon!* as a regular feature of the Group, and hoped he would maintain the high standards. It is likely that more members will choose to receive *Syphon!* in electronic form in future, and we will ensure its format "works" in both media.

As **Technical Officer** (and previously Membership Officer), **Mike Millward** summarised the history of the move to Dereham (as already covered in these pages). He also gave a technical update on the condition of the loco (however, the latest technical information is summarised in the "*Loco Update*" article above and so this is not repeated here). Mike also addressed the question of mainline running. The bogies under 37003 are CP7 bogies that were under 50149 for approx 2000 miles back in the 1980s, and are in extremely good condition, fit for many hours' work. The rest of the loco was overhauled in 1992 and taken out of service in 1994 after a generator flashover (not the present one fitted) so overall the non-traction equipment hasn't done many hours' work. There are some issues that will need attending to, mainly spurious wiring and older 'repairs' (or lack of them). We do not intend to have her as a week-in week-out mainline runner, but used for a few select tours, haulage of stock/CCE equipment onto and off of the MNR, possible local trip workings and visits to other railways.

Mike underlined the need for volunteers to continue to come forward, and for the Group to continue building up a sizable stock of spares while most are still fairly readily available - again much will depend on our skill at fundraising and the support of our members.

Votes were then taken, as follows (the numbers include proxies and postal votes):

- Re-election of the full committee: 36 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions
- Amendment of constitution: 36 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions
- Seeking charitable status: 34 for, 0 against, 2 abstentions
- Restoration of 37003 to mainline condition: 33 for, 2 against, 1 abstention

Finally, in other business, it was confirmed that the Bachmann model would shortly be announced to the general public [*It now has been.* - Ed.]. Also a mock-up of the new Group calendar was unveiled, and Mick Sasse announced plans to celebrate 37003's return to traffic by producing a special commemorative real ale!

On board the Wessexman - Railtour Report

Story and photo by Philip Cole Wallace

Having missed out on the Celtic Growler due to a last-minute hitch, I needed my railtour fix. With so many to choose from these days, I plumped for the Wessexman (23 May), because unlike most 37 enthusiasts I have never been to Weymouth. After a quick phone call to Jo Ford of Spitfire on the Friday I found out that 37069 and 37602 were the traction for the tour, both winners for me!

So an early start from home to Birmingham International and then a unit to New Street put me in place for the main event. Even though New Street is not the nicest place to be it's a great venue to hear a bit of tractor noise!

Having got my seat in coach B a quite uneventful but enjoyable trip was had to Eastleigh. Here most of my coach disembarked to have a look around the open day. So now I had a chance to hear what the pair sounded like! We left Eastleigh with a nice bit of clag, and noise to match, with 37069 sounding the better of the two.

Below: "Sorry, no real-time train information"... not much need as 37602 and 37069, make their presence felt after arrival at Weymouth!



A good run was then had to Weymouth - now wished I had a run on a service train back in the 80's or 90's, but I'm afraid I've got so many regrets already, too many to mention here. [*Don't we all! -Ed.*]

Having reached Weymouth a few pictures were taken, then I headed into town for fish and chips, ice cream and a pint - and of course a trip down to the beach!

After boarding the train home I had to do my membership duties of handing out flyers (which take ages to fold!). When handing these out I found out I had won a prize on the raffle: a year's subscription to Railways Illustrated! Pity I had just renewed mine... oh well, a prize for the group's raffle on the Cumbrian Crusader, then!

So all in all a great day out as usual. Thanks to the Spitfire team and my very understanding wife!

C37LG FAQs...

Mick Sasse answers some questions about the Group's plans

This article is based on questions which have been discussed in the run-up to the AGM on the members' e-mail list, in correspondence, and in correspondence. We thought the topics relevant to all our members, so we've summarised them below.

Charitable status

1. If we become a charity, will this place any restrictions on what we can do? Can 37003 still visit other railways' galas? Could the Charity Commission overrule the members?

The overriding principle is that a charity's trustees (who would be the committee) have a legal duty to safeguard the group's assets - and a group can only retain charitable status if it abides by these (and other) rules, and acts in accordance with the group's charitable objects, which are its overriding principles. In our case the objects would be preserving historic class 37 locomotives for the public good and education of the public. The Charity Commission would only be likely to intervene (by withdrawing charitable status rather than by overturning a decision) if the group's membership for example passed a resolution changing the constitution in some way that required the trustees to act in some way contrary to the group's charitable purposes, that is, undermined its basic objects. It is very hard to imagine this arising in practice: the committee cannot act contrary to the constitution; the constitution can only be changed with a referendum of the membership; and it seems hard to envisage a situation where the membership would want the group to be empowered to act in a way contrary to its own best interests.

Provided the constitution, objectives and overriding duties, are not compromised, there are no real limits on what we do in terms of where the loco operates. Many diesel groups have charitable status (including the Deltic, Class 40 and Class 15 preservation societies) – indeed locos belonging to the National Railway Museum are also frequent performers on preserved railways.

The committee's view is that the overriding duties placed on us by charities law add no restrictions to the group's activities which we would wish to assume anyway - to protect 37003's best interests. Certainly there are some additional administrative burdens, but we believe the benefits outweigh these, in terms of the Group's image, status and (perhaps critically) financially.

2. If another group preserving class 37s already has charitable status, does this mean it will be more difficult for us to obtain it?

No. If anything the opposite, as it means there is a precedent for us - though we must still ensure that our objects, constitution and supporting documents are right. We believe that an application from us will have a strong chance of success.

Mainline restoration

3. Do we have the resources, both financially and in terms of manpower to keep 37003 maintained to main line standards?

We have a costed plan to return 37003 to mainline condition, which includes contingencies for unexpected items which may emerge during overhaul and certification. We have some funding already in place, and plans to provide the rest by a mix of fund-raising and quasi-commercial activities, including continued sales activities at galas and on railtours, sales of the exclusive Bachmann 37003, the "Buy a chain" scheme, and we are also seriously examining sponsorship with one or more commercial organisations – though under no circumstances would any such arrangement prejudice our commitment to the sole priority of the loco's long-term wellbeing. We are in the business of preserving 37003 for future generations to enjoy – and this is to be

reflected in our proposed charitable purposes. As an order of magnitude, our estimate on current information is that approximately £24k to £36k will be likely to be required to have 37003 mainline registered. Under no circumstances will we spend money we do not have.

What we propose is, in continuing the work already being undertaken on 37003 to return her to service on the MNR, to carry out all work to a standard which would be appropriate to mainline running. We believe that this (as opposed to a “good enough to get her going” standard) is what is in 37003’s best interests long-term anyway – and that this applies regardless of whether 37003 actually should subsequently be registered for mainline use. Restoration to this standard also simplifies greatly moving the loco to other sites (such as visits to other lines): once the loco has been passed for rail moves, these are more cost-effective (and better for the loco) than by road.

Once 37003 is operating reliably and successfully on the MNR (and possibly visiting other lines), then, and only then, can a decision sensibly be made as to whether the further step should be taken, the additional equipment required fitted, and the loco registered for mainline use. Even once the loco is restored to first-rate standards and in reliable regular operation in preservation, a decision to go for mainline registration will only be considered if there is a clear commitment from one or more railtour operators to use the loco: under no circumstances will 37003 be registered for mainline use “on spec”, i.e. in the hope or assumption that work will materialise.

Finally, whether as a charity or simply as a voluntary members’ group, we will *always* be governed by the overriding duty to preserve 37003 and all the Group’s assets for future generations. Above all, this means: we will not contemplate mainlining 37003 if there is any real possibility that it risks in any way compromising the loco’s physical wellbeing, or it represents an undue commercial risk to the Group. On the latter point, we would envisage protecting the group further from unexpected financial risks by using a wholly-owned limited company for operating purposes, just as other [charitable] loco-owning groups do. It is proposed to operate the loco on the mainline in partnership with established railtour operators and charter TOCs, on a basis under which they bear the critical commercial risks - not the Group’s operating subsidiary.

4. Is there likely to be sufficient demand from railtour operators when there are still numerous operational class 37s on the main line?

Our assessment of the market, after consultation with railtour operators, locomotive owners, and others in preservation, is there is a clear market for 37003. We propose that 37003 operating a strictly limited number of railtours per year – it is highly unlikely that it would be in double figures. Mainline certification will not proceed without clear and committed work available. The limitation will ensure that the loco retains “exclusivity”, and keep mainline mileage to a sensible level.

5. Has the potential extra wear and tear on 37003 been considered?

Yes. The loco will not be working every weekend or available for general spot-hire or similar. The long-term preservation of 37003 is the overriding principle, and this will not be broken or compromised in any way. Restoring 37003 to the highest standards, as appropriate to mainline running, and maintaining an adequate stock of high-quality spares, will be consistent in any event with the loco’s best interests, even if ultimately a decision were taken for commercial or other reasons not in fact to proceed with mainline registration.

6. Would it not be a more realistic aim to have 37003 established as an operational part of the Mid-Norfolk diesel fleet before making a decision on main line running?

Yes. This is exactly the plan. The AGM gave us a mandate to restore 37003 *to mainline standards*, not necessarily to go ahead and register the loco. The first step after restoration is entry into regular traffic on the MNR, and only once this has happened, and only if the commercial conditions are right, will a further decision to proceed with mainline registration be contemplated.

37003 in “shrinking to 1/76th scale” shock!

In conjunction with Bachmann, we are very pleased to announce a Limited Edition collectors' model of 37003 in BR Corporate Blue livery. The model will incorporate the latest Bachmann 37/0 chassis, with directional lighting and a 21-pin DCC decoder socket. The model will be re-tooled with full buffer beam cowls as originally worn by 37003. The headcode will be in the "0000" style, similar to the above, but without the headlight carried on the Wensleydale Railway - effectively mid-1970s condition.

Demand for this model will be high, and due to the costs involved we do require a deposit of £40 per item to be paid on placing an order. This is fully refundable should for any reason production not take place. Only 512 models will be produced, with individually numbers certificates, and they will be allocated strictly on a first-come, first-served basis. The model is priced at £79.95 & £4.00 Recorded Post and Packing. Delivery expected in late 2009. One month before the models are shipped we will send you a notification that the final payment of £43.95 is due, and this must be paid in full before your order is dispatched.

If you would like to place an order, fill in the enclosed form and return it with your cheque - or you can order on-line at <http://www.c371g.co.uk/model.htm>.

**Syd the
Syphon**By Mike
Millward

Syphon! Pictorial

1960s scene in North Yorkshire



Top left: Type 3 no. D6777, sporting full yellow ends, with brake tender leading the loco, on a mixed freight at Harmby, on the Wensleydale branch in North Yorkshire. 6th April, 1968.

Below: Oops! Further up the Redmire branch, Type 3 no. D6758 is seen derailed on the sidings at Wensley, while railway crew look at the mishap and discuss what to do next. 8th December, 1968.

Both pictures: by late Arthur Hartley (courtesy of the Barry Wetherell collection).



Syphon! Pictorial**37s on the Cambrian Lines**

Above: 37179 clags her way out of Newtown with 1J24 09.35 Euston to Aberystwyth, on Saturday 28th September, 1985. Note the leading Mk1 is bursting with enthusiasts enjoying the 37 haulage, even in the brake compartment(!), whilst others are on old goods shed platform taking pictures, even spilling onto track, when attitudes were far more relaxed in these days. How times have changed now!



Left: The very same day, 37275 leads 37241 after arrival at Shrewsbury with 2J22, the 1340 from Aberystwyth. While 37275 is of course still with us in preservation, 37241 was stored in 1996 and sadly cut up in 2001 at Thomson's in Stockton.

Both views: Steve Hollis

CREWE WORKS TEST TRAINS – PART 1

Story and all photos by Steve Hollis

When the mid-life refurbishment programme was announced for the class sometime around 1984, I can remember reading an article in *Rail Enthusiast* [*That's Rail to the younger audience!—Ed.*] about the plans with excitement and anticipation.

Being only 14 years old at the time, little else mattered in the world except for my obsession with this strange new hobby known as “bashing” which was undertaken at every available opportunity.

Having already become a dedicated follower of the class, it was extremely reassuring to see that the locos would not be going the same way as the class 40's which were on the verge of extinction at the time, and that BR had a long-term requirement for English Electric type 3 traction. I suppose that even the most optimistic BR view would not have envisaged refurbished locos still in traffic some twenty years later, and it really is a testament to the design quality of the English Electric stable that the locos have lasted so long. Indeed, I doubt that BR has ever owned a more durable class that has repaid the initial build cost so many times over.

As is already widely known, the original intention of BR was to refurbish every loco, and at this time all 308 of the remaining locos were generally still in traffic and therefore appeared to have a secure future. The only casualty at this time had been the infamous D6983 which had met its early unfortunate demise a long time ago - in an accident back in December 1965.

Crewe works had been chosen as the BREL facility that would undertake the refurbishment programme, which was expected to take 4 to 5 years to complete.

The only downside to the refurbishment programme for myself was the cosmetic alteration (or butchering in my opinion) of my preferred eastern region split-box machines, with the removal of the imposing headcode boxes. These features gave the early locos a raw, rugged & powerful look, and whilst some people may consider them to be potentially ugly [*Shurely shome mishtake? - Ed.*], to me they were the undeniable link to the 1960s and the design philosophy of this golden era of diesel loco construction.



Above: 37276 is seen at Crewe works on 16 February 1985, awaiting refurbishment. She was to emerge in September that year as ETH-fitted 37413 and was sent to Scotland, where she is happily now preserved at Bo'ness.

During a Crewe works visit on 16th February 1985, I can recall several of the former Welsh coal machines (273,276,301) standing around the works yard awaiting their call into the workshops for conversion into ETH 37/4 locos.

Crewe works at this time was an extremely interesting venue to visit, with the entire site being full of vast quantities of locos, and you could have spent an entire weekend there, never mind just a Saturday morning's official visit. The scrap yard area at the eastern end of the works was particularly interesting, as it included a line up of recently withdrawn class 40s which looked as if they could still burst into life at any second if the button was pressed.

At this stage, the running-in and trial runs of a refurbished loco were not thought to comprise anything other than a trip along the North Wales coast line, usually to Llandudno, using the works test train, made up of shabby departmental mark 1 and 2 stock with boarded-over windows. The purpose of this "running-in" exercise was to determine any gremlins requiring further works attention before a full release back into traffic could be made.

Whilst this procedure precluded any opportunity to travel behind the newly refurbished locos, this was not too much of a dilemma given their passenger status and, no doubt, many years' service ahead of them on class 1 diagrams. Eventually, however, this procedure was interrupted when 37412 was turned out on a passenger diagram on 16th October 1985 when it piloted 33057 on the 1D27 11.16 Crewe – Bangor and 1V06 return working.

The next few machines reverted to using the works test train, until 37415 worked the 1D27 and 1V06 on 30th October 1985 - piloting 33057 again. After this date the split between the use of the works test or 1D27/1V06 became rather random to say the least, with some machines working both diagrams prior to being released into traffic.

With these first refurbished ETH machines being released into traffic, attention then turned to the various freight variants, and commencement of the 37/5, 37/7 & 37/9 programme began.

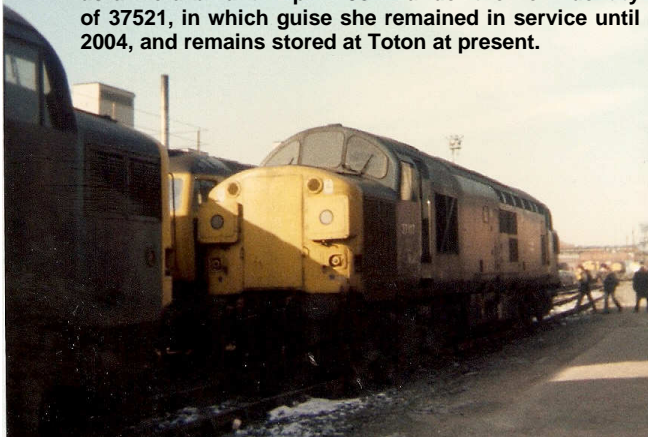
The first 37/5 freight machine to enter the works was 37005 on 26th June 1985 for refurbishment into 37501, followed rapidly by 37253, 246,082 and 017, as the 37/5 programme was commenced in earnest. The 37/7 & 37/9 programme would later run concurrently with the 37/5 programme and continue throughout 1986/87/88.

As the ETH programme concluded in early 1986, the overlap with the first freight machines being completed meant that BR also continued to use either the works test train or 1D27 / 1V06 on a random split basis. How Crewe Works decided on which option was utilised was never clear at the time; suffice it to say that it appeared to be pot luck which procedure was employed. If anyone knows the "logic" on these decisions I would really like to know, as it was a mystery to most people at the time.

Looking at our website fleet history records, the use of either the 1D27 / 1V06 diagram was certainly not a reliable opportunity to sample haulage on the north Wales coast at that time. All you could do was keep your eyes and ears open for any sources of gen from people supposedly in the know, and also keep your fingers crossed.

My first taste of a refurbished loco was a pair of welsh ETH machines, 37428 & 429 between

Below: A candidate for "butchering"...?! 37117 is seen also at Crewe the same day. This loco did not emerge as a "refurb" until April 1987 - under the new identity of 37521, in which guise she remained in service until 2004, and remains stored at Toton at present.



Crewe & Shrewsbury on the 11th August 1986 whilst working the 1V01 (MO) 00.42 Manchester Piccadilly - Cardiff. This dropped us at Shrewsbury in the early hours, for 37431 out and back to Aberystwyth on the 2J11 04.08 Shrewsbury – Aberystwyth and returning 1A31 07.22 Aberystwyth – Euston.

Right: Not long out of Crewe works after refurbishment and conversion into their new identities, Large Logo pair nos. 37431+37428 are seen stabled at Shrewsbury, on Sunday 10th August, 1986, awaiting their next turn on the Cambrian lines.



The next refurbished loco sampled was the first freight variant - 37800, which was the former (and well-travelled!) 37143, bagged on Wednesday 20th August 1986. This machine had entered the works on 19th March 1986 for conversion into one of the first heavyweight 37/7 variants, taking around five months to be refurbished. At the time I was out and about on another of the infamous Midland ("Midi") weekly rover tickets, and on hearing the gen that a refurbished machine was *likely* to appear on the 1D27 11.16 Crewe – Holyhead diagram, we made our way to Crewe in hopeful anticipation.

33028 was sitting on the stock in west bay platform number 6 ticking over, with plenty of people milling about, which gave a sense of confidence in the gen from earlier that morning. Eventually, a refurbished centre headcode loco appeared from direction of the works and backed onto the class 33 and stock. The appearance of the loco in the relatively new Railfreight livery was striking, and, given the immaculate condition of the paintwork, certainly made good first impressions. In my opinion the later introduction of the red solebar band spoilt this attractive livery, which otherwise complemented the large logo blue passenger livery around at the time.

Back on the 1D27, 37800 was duly taken, but only as far as Chester, due to the limits of the Midi rover ticket, and my available funds at the time.

Regardless of this, the first taste of the refurbished machines had made me determined to try and sample more wherever possible. The rest of the summer of 1986 did not however produce any further haulage opportunities for me with the refurbished locos, although you did hear on the grapevine, several days or weeks later, that further workings had occurred using the 1D27 / 1V06.

As 1986 concluded, I decided that I would try my luck on the test trains again, as the supposedly reliable gen implied that one machine would be released each week, with Wednesday being the allocated day.

Find out how Steve got on in the quest for more refurb mileage - in the next Syphon!

Syphon! Pictorial**EE Luxury: Venice Simplon
Orient Express with 37s**

Top right: 37109 forming the rear of VSOE train being looped at Lenham, working between London Victoria and Folkestone West, on 21st August, 2003. A Class 67 was leading, and 37109 worked the return portion as far as Ashford, where the 'Skip' took over for the run back to the capital. 37109 is now safely in preservation, based on the East Lancashire Railway. Kendal May



Above: Class 37/5 no. 37697 at Wandsworth Park works a VSOE to Folkestone Harbour with the famous landmark of the former Battersea Power Station in the background, on 10th January, 1998. Peter Holden

Last month's Caption Contest...

This edition's offerings are from Mick Sasse & Nigel Holden...

'Doesn't everyone need a snow tractor to pull the snow plough?'

'Once again some took the view that Mr Sasse had been a little over-enthusiastic with the white paint'

"Got to be a slug: nothing else moves slow enough to get a covering like this!"



BYOT draw winners (July - September 2009):

The latest winners have been...

July:

1st - **37021 Richard Robinson**
2nd - **37255 Tony Nuttall**

August:

1st - **37209 Michael Groves**
2nd - **37129 Mick Parker**

September:

1st - **37156 Andrew Long**
2nd - **37009 Ian Simpson**

Sincere thanks to all who take part - we really value your support in providing us with a steady monthly income for 37003. There are still plenty more locos available - both unbent locos and refurbs; NB, boilered and EH too, even heavyweights and slugs! So if you think you might like to join up, for only a pound a month per loco, Mick Sasse would be delighted to hear from you.

Volunteering with the C37LG

As 37003 undergoes restoration to working order at Dereham, we're very keen for anyone who might be interested in helping us, with anything from advanced traction engineering through to a possible ability to hold a paint brush, to get in touch: there's something for everybody to do, and the MNR is a great line with a really friendly atmosphere. If that's a bit far away for you, we're also extremely grateful to all those who help out with our equally important fundraising efforts, especially by helping us to man sales stands and selling raffle tickets on railtours. Whatever you choose to get involved in, we're sure you'll find it rewarding - and you'll be doing your bit to bring us closer to the day when 37003 is pulling passengers again. If you're up for it, just give any of us on the committee a shout, and we'll give you all the gen.

In the next issue...

- More memories of chasing the first refurbished 37s on the Crewe test trains.... and a full reference guide to what was done to which loco, and when!
- A new puzzle feature to test your railway knowledge.
- Memories of a favourite machine, now sadly no longer with us.
- Some rather rateable archive photographs.
- And of course as always a full update on progress on 37003 and reports on what the Group has been up to.

New items from C37LG sales

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). We don't make a **charge for P&P with any orders made this way**. Or you can order any of our stock online at www.c37lg.co.uk (follow the links from there), and you can pay conveniently with a credit/debit card using the gift of PayPal (a modest P&P charge applies)! Thanks for your support.

New this month we have we have...

Our exclusive 2010 (yikes, it's that time already!) calendar, featuring 12 very varied images of 37s at work over the years on a variety of trains. It's printed on high-quality art paper in A4 size (so it doesn't take up half your wall!) and is something of a snip at only £6.99.



Coming soon to a fridge near you... 37510 and 37080 can be seen in this 1993 view in Aberdeen - and on our £1 fridge magnet! (Also available as a key ring for the same price!)

New additions to our wide stock of DVDs include these new products from the ever-reliable Visions International stable - the start of a series focusing on major rail freight operators of the present day. The first two focus on the remarkably varied operations of GBRf, and on a FOC known to all fans of English Electric quality, Direct Rail Services. The discs are available for £19.00 (RRP £19.95).



... as well as the existing range of modern-traction and other rail-related DVDs, plus other random goodies like mousemats, audio CDs, enamel badges, and of course the exclusive and rather classy 37003 china mug!

And finally, don't forget our brand-new and extremely exclusive Bachmann model of 37003 herself in 00 scale - see the separate article.

So new we haven't even got a picture of it yet!!!!

Syphon!

On the Wensleydale branch on 1 December 1968, BR green liveried, with full yellow ends, no. D6767 works an engineers' train, assisting in the reconstruction of the main A684 bridge at Spennithorne. *Picture by late Arthur Hartley (courtesy of the Barry Wetherell collection).*

