



# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2009

**T**wo years on from Steel, Steam & Stars I, we have a second opportunity to secure a really big boost to 6880's coffers and in the process have a whole load of fun. For after all, this is our hobby, and if we can't enjoy it, it's perhaps time to pack up!

For the organisers it is an anxious time, and your treasurer understandably is looking nervous as we commit up front to a six figure sum in terms of expenditure to enable Steel, Steam & Stars II to go ahead. But this is no ordinary gala as you know, and this time round we have a whole nine days of entertainment to get through. Make no mistake, this event will stand head and shoulders above all other galas this spring, if not the entire year. Of course there are and have been some excellent galas; the recent M&GNR 'That's yer Lot' event at the North Norfolk Railway was held over two weekends and has been hailed as a great success, the Severn Valley Railway had four impressive guest engines for their Spring Gala and the forthcoming Barrow Hill event has a line up of 'A1', 'A2' and 'A4' Pacifics. But none of them have the scenery, or the imaginative timetable and sheer variety of locomotives that SSS2 offers!

After the Society's members and covenanters, the gala is the next best opportunity to raise funds for our very own 6880. So please come and support the event. If you can

help in some way, even parking cars for an hour or two, or selling souvenir programmes on the trains, your help will be greatly received. Just contact Quentin McGuinness on the number at the end of this newsletter and he will soon find you a job. And if you don't fancy working, then come and visit the event and buy a ticket. Better still, bring a car full of friends and buy lots of tickets!

Visitors to the railway over the period 18th to 26th April, will be able to inspect progress on the building of 6880 *Betton Grange*. As you will see from Will's report overleaf, a great deal of progress has been made since the last newsletter. It is important to keep the momentum going, so the success of this year's gala is crucial in many ways. So tell your friends, neighbours, workmates and family and suggest they come over to Llangollen and enjoy a day out in the beautiful Dee Valley.

Two years ago, the funds generated from the gala enabled real progress to be made on 6880 with more steel being ordered to complete the main frame superstructure. This year it is hoped to get enough in the kitty so that the extension frames can be ordered and added to the loco's frames. This is the part of the frames that the cylinders will eventually be attached to, so is a milestone stage in the construction work. Let's make the most of this opportunity.

**Paul Appleton**



*A splash of LMS red at the recent West Somerset Railway gala - now newly restored 6100 Royal Scot is heading to North Wales for the Steel, Steam & Stars II Gala - provided that last minute adjustments and painting can be finished at Crewe on time. Photo: Quentin McGuinness*

# 6880 Progress Report – Will Naylor

It was December, and with Max out of the country, Ian and Mick under the influence of colds and flu, etc., and Richy P burning coal on the Santa Specials, we didn't expect to make a great deal of progress. But, despite the ice cold of the shed, we got stuck in. First job was a book sort out as we had just acquired over 300 books for the sales and promotional stand.

We then unloaded my poor car, which seems to be putting up quite well with having various bits of metal for 6880 loaded in and out of it. First out were the new cab steps from Anglering, and a nice job they are too! Then the top, front, pressed steel stretcher, followed by the bottom, front, cast steel stretcher. We trial fitted the pressed steel stretcher and declared ourselves pleased with the fit.

We then weighed up fitting the steps, but declined to drill any holes due to fading light and unclear dimensions. Steve Rodenhurst then made lots of sparks by removing some unwanted rivets.

On the promotional front Mick, Mark and Barry handed out 750 leaflets at Wigan Model Railway Exhibition. Thanks guys. At this point we were down to just over 30,000 leaflets left out of the 60,000 that were printed.

At this stage it was also decided to change the working weekend plan due to the amount of work needed to be done to bring 6880 up to the required finish for the Gala, and also the amount of galas and exhibitions that we needed to be at on the promotional trail.

Two weekends per month were suggested as follows; January: 10th/11th, 17th/18th, February: 7th/8th (reserved for the Churnet Valley Railway as 5199 was due be there and we planned on running a stand), 14th/15th, March: 7th/8th, 14th/15th (rubbing down the Dukedog's paintwork and the last SSS2 Gala meeting before the event), 21st/22nd (painting the Dukedog), 23rd-27th (Dukedog photo charters - five days planned), 28th/29th (stand at the West Somerset Railway Gala), April: 4th/5th, 11th-17th, 18th - 26th (SSS2 Gala!), 27th (Tidy up). We then plan on going back to one weekend per month after the Gala.

The next visit to the National Railway Museum was scheduled for 24th and 25th Jan in the hope of discovering more of its secrets. Being copied for us at the turn of the year were the cylinder drawings and the much needed frame plan and erecting plan.

Back on the engine, the welding of all the brackets for the outriggers by yours truly was almost finished with a view to having everything ready for machining before Christmas. The order for the bolts for holding on the brake hanger brackets was also placed.

The picture bottom right shows the collection of brackets that go underneath the footplating that runs alongside 6880. They have been folded, welded and then machined.

We now have the microfiche for some of the drawings we acquired from the GWS. We are looking to get better quality copies so if anybody knows where this can be done, please let me know.

Moving into January, we reached agreement to buy a fireman's-side rear coupling rod and a blow-down valve from West Coast Rail at Camforth.

The Great Central Railway's winter gala at the end of January was attended by Peter & Kate and Neil & Craig. Many thanks to you all. The Churnet Valley was attended on 7th & 8th February with, as planned, 5199 making her first gala appearance there, and again the leaflets were being handed out in great quantities.

Stafford Model Railway Exhibition was also attended by Ian Massey and Quentin McGuinness. Someone did go with no leaflets at all .....ahem Ashley!

Next an apology - I missed off young Martin Perry last report, a long time member of 6880, who goes by the name of 'split pin' due to his physique which keeps him employed at Llangollen getting into place where the larger proportioned staff cannot get to, so a jolly useful chap when it comes to squeezing into side tanks and fireboxes, etc.

The Storage Containers have something of an overhaul, thanks to Mick Prior and Mark Jones (Spuddie). When we go out on tour we just grab what we think we need. Most of the time we are successful in the fact we have taken the right stuff. Coming back on the other hand is a different matter. Having driven many miles and talked for many hours, the guys on tour are a bit on the tired side and the remaining contents tended to get slung in with the intention of sorting things out at a later date. But of course, this never happens, so Mick and Mark have redesigned it with strict guidelines that things go back where they should or else! This really was a much needed job, so well done guys!



*Making progress: Left: the front bottom frame stretcher is now finished. It goes between the front of the frames at the bottom, and is sandwiched between the frame plates and two spring hanger brackets - this had to be a very accurate machining job. Centre: First of the finished buffer beam brackets - these go behind the buffer beam and are riveted onto the buffer beam and the extension frames. The buffers are also bolted through them. Right: The prepared brackets that will support the footplating.*

And now we are up to March and the sole surviving 'Dukedog', No. 9017, has finally made it to Llangollen after an absence of nearly 50 years. A big thank you to all involved as some of you may know, Quentin and I went through one hell of a political journey to get her here – there was even a spanner in the works at the eleventh hour which contributed to her arriving on Saturday afternoon, later than planned.

A big thanks to the Bluebell lads for making this happen, especially Chris Knibbs, Lewis Nodes and Chris Shepperd - not forgetting Mr Andrew Goodman for sponsoring the move. I am sure we have made many friends along this particular journey. Thanks also to everyone that was there to help, especially the Tallyllyn lads – Andy, Will and Russ.

Once again, the leaflet team were out in force and I understand Kate, Pete and Ian were at the Severn Valley Railway on Friday, Ian, Geoff and Neil were there on Saturday and Quentin, Terry and Ben were all there on the Sunday. With record crowds over the weekend, a great number of leaflets were distributed and a fantastic amount of interest in SSS2 generated. Not forgetting Mick and Spud who were meanwhile leafletting all the way to Scotland and back! I also managed to complete a mailshot, including over 350 letters, sent out to clubs, railways, etc., so there is plenty of awareness out there.

Meanwhile, the gala overview has come together (see back page). It is only when you read this that you realise just how far we have come since Steel, Steam & Stars I. Believe me, this is an event on a massive scale and the information will be released once we are absolutely happy with it, including to the local, regional and national press.

By the time you read this, you should have spotted adverts appearing in *Steam Railway*, *Heritage Railway*, *Railways Illustrated*, *Hornby Magazine*, etc. and we are literally down to the last few boxes of leaflets.

The weekend of the 14th & 15th March was a working weekend combined with a Gala meeting (the last one) and 9017 paint preparation, so we really were pushing ourselves as much as we could. In the shed were me (with the last four brackets from the Churnet Valley), Ian Massey, Neil Tiley, Quentin McGuinness, Richard Pumphrey, Steve Rodenhurst, Jon Kerr and Ashley. Assisting was Chris Collins from the Llangollen Railway full time staff. Oh, and not forgetting the return of Hank!

The last of the brackets went on, followed by the cab. Yes, the cab is now in its rightful place as the accompanying picture shows. The last four brackets for the footplate angle were also fitted and with that, I am pleased to say 6880 is on target for the Gala in so far as where we planned to be.



*6880's smokebox saddle bracket is now in place.*



*Landmark: the cab and main frames are united.*

Meanwhile down at Pentrefellin, another gang of seven were preparing and painting the 'Dukedog' so that it could foray out on a number of pre-Gala charters.

We also had Danny Hopkins over from *Steam Railway* magazine who came down to talk about the Gala and progress with 6880 for a special themed edition of the magazine due on sale at the beginning of April.

Of all the things achieved over the past few months, the most memorable has perhaps been the fitting of 6880's cab onto the frames. Another amazing highlight was the discovery of the cylinder drawings in the archives of the National Railway Museum at York.

Other major milestones have been; completion of the main frames. The stretcher bearings are now fully riveted to the two side plates. The drag box has been cast, machined and fitted to the main frames. The rear buffer beam has been cut, drilled and fitted to the drag box.

The front saddle plate angle has also been fabricated and fitted. Four angles have been cut and fitted below the cab, and four further angles fitted to hold the buffer beam and saddle plate in position. Brake hanger supports have been cast, machined and fitted to the frames.

Eight pressed steel brackets to support the footplate have been made, machined and fitted to the frames and footplate angle iron cut and fitted to the supports. Also now to hand are most of the inside motion, newly cast horn guides, buffers, chimney and blower ring, safety bonnet, rubbing plates and whistle,

The plan for March 21/22 was to see the footplating fitted, albeit in 6mm ply for the time being as we still need some datum lines before cutting steel, and having a permanently fixed cab was one of them. Also the weekend should have seen 9017 rolled out of the paint shop and put into steam.

And that brings us pretty much up to date.

Future dates: The weekend of the 4/5 April sees us promoting at Barrow Hill. The run up to Easter should see 'B1' 1306 *Mayflower* on shed. After Easter - welcome to gala mania! The next and last visit to the NRM planned for 16/17 May.

**Steel, Steam & Stars II**  
**April 18th-26th**  
**The Complete Low-down on**  
**What's Happening**

**Saturday 18**

The Gala officially opens at 08.00 with the departure of the first train comprising ex-GWR 'Dukedog' 9017 resplendent in BR black and the first time in over 49 years that a 'Dukedog' has steamed along the Dee Valley. Pete Waterman will officially open the event with this departure. There then follows a half hourly service throughout the day. Motive power for the day will include 1306 *Mayflower*, 249 *Marayshire*, 3440 *City of Truro*, 9017, 5199, 44806, 6430, 5526 and hopefully 6100 *Royal Scot*.

At Llangollen station we will have the 'Betton Grange Society' promotional stand and there will be various other trade stands and the 'Patriot Project' who will be promoting the building of the *Unknown Warrior*.

On Platform One at Llangollen station there will be a chance for your first cup of tea and a bite to eat upstairs in the Henry Robertson suite. The Beer festival will be open from lunchtime. There is a one off entry price of £5 which includes a souvenir Steel, Steam & Stars II glass.

On Platform Two, accessible by the footbridge, you can view the *Steam Railway* staff busily putting the next issue together. There will be access to the shed at the end of Platform One where you can view the latest progress on the building of 6880 and a chance to talk to the 6860 team. Also on show will be 80072 in the final stages of restoration, whilst other ongoing projects include 5532, 5539, 7754 and *Burtonwood Brewer*, whilst the boilers of 2807, 5773 and 7298 will also be available for inspection. Waiting in the wings for her turn is 7822 *Foxcote Manor*.

Llangollen is also the departure point for the freight train that the public can ride on.

A small additional fee applies to this. Please remember there are no one trip only tickets; Steel, Steam & Stars II is an event with fixed price ticketing that give you access to all trains throughout the day.

At Berwyn you will find the station open serving tea and refreshments. Moving further along the line, trains may pause at Deeside loop to allow another train to pass.

At Glynodyrwy there will be plenty to see, so we recommend you break your journey at least once during the day to take a look at the smaller scale railway displays, starting at 3.5in gauge and going right through to 10.25in, there will be over 50 live steam locomotives for you to view and see, some offering rides for a small additional fee. There will also be a number of traction engines in steam and trundling around. For those interested in two-wheel petrol power, there will be a collection of vintage motorcycles on show too.

A Snack bar selling various types of food with substance will be on site, along with lighter refreshments including teas and coffees. All trains terminate at Carrog and the plan is to change locomotives here for the return journey to Llangollen. In the station building there is a cafe serving teas, coffees and refreshments, whilst outside there will be numerous trade stands and exhibitions from including Hornby model railways, Ian Allan Publishing, etc., plus a narrow gauge (2ft) line will be in operation courtesy of the West Lancashire Light Railway.

On Platform Two there will be an exhibition of paintings by renowned railway artist, Eric Bottomley, GRA.

Trains run until 21.50 when the last round trip returns to Llangollen station.

Please note that there will be no lineside photographic passes available for this event. The BEAVERTAIL™ observation coach from the GCR and the Thompson Buffet are running each day and there may be an inspection saloon also making an appearance.

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I am very grateful to Paul Appleton, our Newsletter Editor, for following up promptly with another issue. The members deserve to be kept informed and I regretted the situation we had arrived at before Paul joined us. It is good to have someone keeping us on our toes!

During the time since the last Newsletter, we have been reviewing our procedures for ordering new parts and contracting work. Further drawings have been found during a second visit to York Museum and there are still more to be looked at during a final visit in May. I am now confident that sustained progress will be achieved once we have settled down after the gala.



*9017 arrives at Carrog on a photo charter on 26th March, resplendant in BR black. Photo: Quentin McGuinness*

The event is going to be a fantastic chance for us to raise a substantial sum of money, which in turn will see the locomotive progressed further. The extension frames that carry the cylinders are a major item that needs progressing and we hope these will largely be paid for by the gala.

In order for us to maximise the revenue, we need a good many volunteers. There are many jobs like selling the official souvenir guide and manning the on-train buffets, which are fun because you get to travel on the trains. Take the guide for example. We are having 5,000 printed. This sells at £3, so it is important that we get enough volunteers to ensure the £15,000 is achieved.

The gala team have made a terrific effort this time to raise their game. We now need your support to help make the most of it. If you can spare some time to visit and give a little of your own time, we will all benefit. Take a look at *Steam Railway* magazine. Danny Hopkins has gone to town with this issue and the gala features heavily.

Telephone me on: 07989 396577 or email: [quentin.6880@googlemail.com](mailto:quentin.6880@googlemail.com) to arrange your visit. See you there!!

**Quentin McGuinness**

**MEMBERS' SPECIAL with 1306 - FRI 17TH APRIL**  
**Departs Llangollen 19.15, arrives back 21.30**  
*All members please confirm your places*

William Naylor 01704 381018, 07791281431 [williamnaylor@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:williamnaylor@blueyonder.co.uk)  
or Quentin McGuinness on 07989 396577 [quentin.6880@googlemail.com](mailto:quentin.6880@googlemail.com)

**Sunday 19th**

The service starts at 09.00 and finishes at 18.30. The locomotives rostered for the day will be; 1306, 249, 3440, 9017, 5643, 44806, 5526 and 6100. Everything else listed for Saturday also applies on Sunday.

**Monday 20th**

Monday will feature locomotive Nos 9017, 5526 and 5199 in a Cambrian theme. The BEAVERTAIL™ will be running and there is a freight cruise planned for the evening - more details on this later. First trip from Llangollen is 11.00, the last at 16.50.

**Tuesday 21st**

Scottish Day, featuring 246, 1306 and the Black Five renumbered as 44801, complete with a blue smokebox number plate. If 6100 is available she may well be running. The first trip from Llangollen is 11.00 and the last leaves at 16.50.

There will be a special showing in the evening at the Bridge End Hotel of PSOV's latest offerings. This starts at 19.30 and a separate entry fee applies. 246 will be running an evening special, departing Llangollen at 21.45. Day rover tickets are valid or a one off price of £8.00 will be payable on the train.

**Wednesday 22nd**

It's Ian Allan Special recreation day today, featuring 3440, 9017 and 5526, the latter two in BR black. 3440 and 9017 will be double-heading, whilst the small 'Prairie' will be on the auto train. Expect headboards galore re-creating the feel of those famous Ian Allan Specials from the 1950s and '60s. The first trip from Llangollen is 11.00, the last 16.50.

There will be a film show in the Bridge End Hotel featuring archive footage from B&R Video. Again this starts at 19.30 and a separate entry fee applies.

3440 will be running an evening special departing Llangollen at 21.45. Rover tickets or a one off price of £8 again apply.

**Thursday 23rd**

A day for a certain type of wheel arrangement, this being the 4-4-0, featuring 3440, 9017 and 246. First train out of Llangollen is at 10.30 and trains will be paced at 45 minute departures throughout the day until 18.30.

In the evening there will be a 'photoshoot' on shed, starting 18.00 through until midnight. It will feature all locomotives and 7822 next to 9017. A small fee applies and there will be loco crews rostered to move locos around.

**Friday 24th**

Back to business with an intensive timetable starting at 09.00 and finishing at 21.45, which is the last round trip. Locomotives featuring will include 1306, 249, 3440, 9017, 5199, 44806/1, 5526 and 6100.

Expect all exhibits at Glynodyrwy and Carrog to be back up and running.

**Saturday 25th**

Like last Saturday, this is going to be a busy day with an intensive service with departures every half hour from Llangollen. First departure is at 08.00, the last train at 21.45. Locomotives are scheduled to be 1306, 249, 3440, 9017, 5199, 6430, 5526 and 6100.

A Welsh Highland Heritage Railway special will depart Carrog at 19.35 hauled by 9017 and 5199 on eight coaches, this is also the second day 249 and 1306 will be doublehead. You will have to buy the brochure to find the other one!

**Sunday 26th**

Starting a 08.30, the last round trip to Carrog is at 15.00. There is a Glyn Valley Tramway Group AGM special departing at 11.00 hauled by 6430 and 5526 and there is a 16.15 departure that is hauled by 9017, but this train will not leave Carrog until 18.30 due to the Cavalcade.

The closing spectacle is of course the cavalcade itself when ALL of the locomotives will be arriving at Carrog at 18.05.

The last train leaves at 18.30 with a choice of 6100 or the LNER pairing bringing Steel, Steam & Stars II to a close. Then it's off to the beer festival for us to drink the left overs and more than likely get very drunk!