

AUTOCAR

North Eastern Railway 1903 Electric Autocar Trust

Newsletter No. 45 — Spring 2022



The North Eastern Railway 1903 Electric Autocar Trust

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Front Cover: 3170 and 3453 at Bolton Abbey during AGM break on 13.11.21.

Photo courtesy of Alan Chandler

Spring 2022

Welcome to the 45th issue of our newsletter. This edition is again compiled by myself and John Carr. Thanks from us both to all that have supplied articles, notes and illustrations.

June 2022

Dave Cullingworth, Secretary

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Your Autotrain needs you! - Volunteer Vacancies

- ◇ **Secretary**, to organise meetings, ensure year end reports are submitted to Companies House and the Charity Commission.
- ◇ **Newsletter editor**, to seek and edit contributions, compose text for news reports and articles, lay out typographically for printing.
- ◇ **Grant application lead**, for the shed/museum.

The following can be done "as and when": the more volunteers the better!

- ◇ **Anyone with professional, trade or general skills**, to assist and/or advise when needed.
- ◇ **Explainers/stewards**, to assist passengers and staff sales and/or publicity stands at exhibitions or when the Autocar/coach are 'on tour'.

If interested please contact the Secretary using the details given on the inside of the front cover

Chairman's notes

John Furness

The trailer coach 3453 will be operational this year! Whoopie Yes I can confirm it is going into service for the summer holiday services. Alan, Geoff and Steve have worked wonders getting the compartments up to passenger standard. They look a lot better than they did With complete luggage racks and all trim done. It isn't to the same level of finish that the Beamish coach is. But that is a museum piece. Ours has to run all day and every day, so is done to a more robust standard, to survive the rigours of 21st century families. Well done everyone .

But let's not kid ourselves it is truly finished. It isn't. Not by a long way. The driving compartment is virtually untouched there is still some detail to add in the compartments. Last but by no means least is the livery. It is planned to carry on with this work once it stands still again. The painting will be done early next year. We still want a relaunch day when all this is done. I for one cannot wait.

Secretarial Matters – June 2022

Dave Cullingworth

Wendy Anderson

The Trustees and Committee were devastated to hear tragic news that Wendy sadly passed away in March. Wendy was a Trustee and well known in the heritage railway scene. A full obituary by Stephen Middleton appears later in this newsletter.

Welcome to the new Treasurer

A warm welcome to Martin Cleaver who has offered to take over the Treasurer's role from Peter Lund.

Peter Lund's long service

Peter was due to stand down at the end of his latest 3 year term at the next AGM. Martin agreed to take on the role of Treasurer prior to that to get a handover and ensure continuity. Martin is also committed to getting online banking setup, something that we have been struggling with for the last few years.

Many thanks to Peter who has performed this role for a good few years now

and has been a member and supporter of the Trust since its inception. Peter has kindly offered to remain on the board as a Trustee and will be seeking re-election at the next AGM. Both his nomination and that of Martin as Treasurer and Trustee will need to be ratified by the membership at the next AGM.

Steve Hoather—Project Engineer

At the recent Trustees and Committee Meeting, Steve was unanimously co-opted onto the board as a Trustee. This is to reflect his immense technical knowledge on the Autocar and Trailer and huge contribution to the success of the project. Like Martin and Peter, this nomination will be ratified at the AGM at November.

Time for a new Secretary

My current 3 year tenure as Trustee and Secretary will come to an end at the AGM in 2023. After 9 years in the role I wish to stand down and will not be seeking re-election. It has been a real honour being involved with such a special and unique project but I have an increasingly larger work load with my involvement in another heritage charity local to where I live. As the trailer car will be fully operational and complete with repaint next year, it would be a fitting time to step down. We have now transitioned from a restoration and engineering based organisation to one that will focus on running and supporting the operation of the two vehicles.

We now have well over a year to find my successor and have a transition. These are the main responsibilities of the Secretary:

- Organise Committee/Trustees Meetings
- Organise the Annual General Meeting
- Ensure the Trustees' rotation process is maintained.
- Ensure that the Charity Commission and Companies House annual returns are accurate and submitted in time
- Work with the Trustees to ensure that the organisations articles are up to date and relevant, and that we operate legally an within the framework of the Charity Commission and Companies House.

I would be delighted to hear from anyone who feels that they could take this role on. Please let me know using the contact details inside the front cover.

Date of next Annual General Meeting:

Saturday 12th November 2022, 10:00am from Embsay. Put in your diaries!

Dave Cullingworth, Secretary

June 2022

Engineering and Restoration Progress Report

Steve Hoather

Since my last report (written in November last year) our Thursday team of volunteers (Alan, Geoff and me) have made solid progress on the Trailer.

Alan has completed the finger guards on the doors of all the remaining compartments. We decided that the walls and ceilings needed a second coat of gloss paint before we could fit the luggage racks, and cold weather well into March meant it was the beginning of April before Alan could finish the painting, but the luggage racks are all now fitted.

The drawings for the under seat heater housings were completed by Alan, and the material for all 12 fabricated by Yorkshire Profiles – we previously used this firm for the power car heater housings and various other items and had very good service from them. Alan is assembling the heaters at home and we fitted the first production one in compartment 5 in May. The other compartments need some of the seat support posts repositioned, and we will do all these, and then paint them, before installing further heaters.

Geoff, meanwhile, has been checking all the doors and locks, and found that many of the budget locks could not be used as the tongues did not engage in the slots. At the time of writing (end of May) he has almost completed the south side of the coach, and it will need shunting to the other road in the carriage shed to give access to the north side, both for the door locks and to repair the passenger communication chain. This should be possible once the extension to the carriage shed has been completed.

Although we had intended John to repaint the exterior of the coach in lined NER livery this spring, it has not yet been possible to accommodate it in the shed, so we decided at our committee meeting on 7 May to defer this to next year. This enables the coach to be used in service during the summer school holidays. Provided the coach can be shunted to gain access to the North side doors, we are confident that we can have it ready for service by the end of July, with the heating to follow in the Autumn and the cab seats (which need a raised floor in the desk area to be designed and fitted) to follow next Spring.

For some months, I have been labelling and cataloguing our spares which we hold at Embsay, and this will be an ongoing process in “quiet” moments. The spares have already been useful in overcoming a problem with the reverser – this gave trouble at times as soon as we started running the vehicle in 2018, and it is fortunate that it has a handle for manual operation by the driver or we would have had several failures as a result of the reverser sticking.

Dave Moore checked and lubricated the reverser whilst the vehicle was at Loughborough in 2020, and all seemed well, but just before Christmas it failed to operate again. Fortunately, I was present when the temperature was around freezing, and found that the problem was caused by air blowing past the rubber seal in the pneumatic actuator, but only when the temperature was below about 2°C. We have a spare reverser in the stores (off a class 73 loco), so I removed the actuator from it and Stephen Middleton took it to Dave at Loughborough whilst passing. Dave has overhauled this spare actuator and tested it in cold weather and it now awaits return to Embsay – it is not worth a special visit as the original works OK now the weather is warmer.

Certification Success

Away from the vehicle, the big news is that our Independent Competent Person, John Payne, has now issued a certificate for the Autocoach after seeing the results of the brake tests last Autumn and other information on safety aspects of the changes we have made to the vehicle. This means that, under the *Railways and Other Guided Transport Systems (Safety) Regulations 2006 (ROGTS)* , we may now use the vehicle for passenger service as soon as we are ready.

Steve Hoather

May 2022



Trailer car 3453 now has luggage racks in all compartments. This is 1st class.

*Photo courtesy of **Alan Chandler***



Brake Testing taking place on 15th November 2021

*Photos: Top courtesy of **Dave Moore***

*Bottom courtesy of **Steve Hoather***

Obituary—Wendy Anderson

Many people are described as 'a character' but Wendy Anderson took being a character to new heights...in a nice way. As a newcomer to what was then the Embsay Railway she was the first to greet me with a 'put down that spanner, you look dangerous!' She then proceeded to complete the job I was attempting so much quicker than I. I still avoid metal, being more at home with wood! Wendy supported me with whatever I worked on, from brake rigging straps on a 6 wheeler to the underframe of Queen Victoria's saloon.

Her maintenance meant my collection never missed a day running and we worked so well together, helping each other. Mind you, she had a healthy disrespect for me, and others too but it was all good humoured. Her language and abuse came from a good heart and it was worrying if she did not greet you with an insult.

She was generous, my daughter Honey received a Hornby Thomas collection 'Stepney' on her second birthday and she always came up with the goods when parts were required, a testament to her networking skills. It really was a shock to learn that we lost her so young and our sympathies go to her family and many friends.

Stephen Middleton



Wendy making adjustments during brake testing on 3170, 5th September 2018.
Photo courtesy of Alan Chandler



Wendy Anderson pictured at the Launch Day on 19th October, 2018. Photos: (stills from his video) Martin Sunderland

Treasurer's Report

Martin Cleaver

I was recently appointed Treasurer of the Autocar Trust and am pleased to take on this role of one of the most unique vehicles in railway preservation and heritage.

I am no stranger to the Yorkshire Dales Railway or Embsay & Bolton Abbey Railway as the preferred trading name, having been around since the age of 12, some 50 plus years ago!

I was Treasurer of the Railway for many years and recently stood down as Director and financial bookkeeper of the Trading company at the railway, the trading company responsible for the two shops, buffets and bars on the railway. I was a director of the trading company from its creation for over 36 years. I have been a member of the Autocar trust for three years now and proud to be one of the few drivers of her.

I must first thank Peter Lund for his help in the handover process and not forgetting the work he has done and continues to do for the Trust which we are all grateful for.

My first job was to sort out new mandates for the Bank which to say has been a challenge is an understatement. Even today nearly in June, I received a letter from the bank demanding proof that our business address was correct and asking for evidence that it was!

We are also having to comply with "making tax digital" which does not make the task any easier and we have signed up to SAGE software for a very cheap charity rate of a quarter of what it should have been, so only a few pounds a month. Now the VAT returns are entered electronically.

Money laundering regulations, tightening Charity Commission rules and the generous gift aid scheme, are taking many hours to read through and act upon.

I look forward to helping the Trust in this role and to assist in some small way to ensure the future financial stability and security of the Autocar and Autocoach.

Letters

In response to John Carr's article 'What Might Have Been' from issue 44 of the newsletter, *Professor F W Hampson* writes:

Dear Sir,

Very few railway historians and authors appear to be aware that the East Coast Main Line (ECML) was electrified from 1904 to 1963 at 600volts DC. This utilised 3rd rail, from Newcastle Central station to Manors, Heaton, Heaton Junction, Benton Bank and Little Benton to Benton Quarry. Additionally there were double track S.E. Curves to the Tyneside coast line at Benton and double track S.W. curves to Backworth.

The NER mainline 4-6-4 electric locomotive was regrettably cut up in 1957 when it should have been retained for the National Railway Museum collection as the first mainline electric locomotive. A similar situation allowed the scrapping of the first mainline diesel locomotive, LMS 10000. However, a replacement replica of 10000 is in hand.

With currently several withdrawn steam locomotive classes being reconstructed and incorporating modern design improvements, an operational replica of NER No.13 using modern traction equipment is feasible:

- The body shell is a basic box structure unit
- Modern 25kv AC traction motors on roller bearing main axles, or as motorised fore and trailing bogie wheels.
- The NRM have drawings of No.13 and photographs of stages of its construction.

If one really went the whole way, e.g. as per the Class 800's and utilise No. 13's large central motor area as a dual electro diesel system, plus regenerative braking system, a flick of the switch to raise the pantograph and one would have a revenue earning locomotive capable of operating on the ECML, WCML, East Anglian lines with the diesel engine for use on non electrified lines using modern traction drivers.

There would be no heavy forging or casting needs e.g. cylinder blocks, coupling rods and linkages. No boiler high pressure maintenance and inspection like boiler tubes, superheater flues and fireboxes. No coal or water source needs, or fire box clinker and smokebox ash disposal needs, or "warm ups".

In conclusion, as a schoolboy, one actually saw and footplated ex No.13 as BR 26600 during its brief sojourn, under cover at South Gosforth car sheds, during

those three years, when all thirteen ex NER locos could be seen, before 26510 was despatched, in rebuilt form, as Ilford car sheds depot pilot.

Thus all thirteen locomotives have at least once in their lifetime, traversed and travelled the up and down ECML from Newcastle to Benton quarry, albeit by what would be in 2022 termed 'Q' light engine movements.

As the two ES1 Newcastle quayside locos were allocated to South Gosforth, with one usually sub shedded to Heaton MPD, these two locomotives used their three rail pickups to proceed from Heaton to Benton quarry and thence via the SW curve to gain access to Benton and thence South Gosforth EMU depot.

Dr. Ing. Prof. F.W.Hampson, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
8th April 2022

John Carr comments:

It is good to hear from Bill Hampson. We first met after the ever popular NER Class H (LNER Y7) 1310 was delivered to the Middleton Railway by the members of the Steam Power Trust. Then, whilst Sales Officer of the Scottish Railway Preservation Society, our team that brought D49, 246 Morayshire, Caley 419 and the reunited Caley coaches overnight from Falkirk to staging sidings at Urray Nook was eternally grateful when the SPT treated us to a car shuttle to a member's house from Darlington Diesel Depot in the "wee sma hours". There we were treated to a welcome early breakfast of bacon butties and tea with wash and brush up opportunities. The cause was, of course, the 1975 celebrations of the S&DR's first 150 years and we hope that all three of 1310, the Autocar and the Autocoach will play a major part in the bicentenary celebrations in 2025, only just over two years away.

Professor Hampson's memories of South Gosforth depot when all of the NER's electric locomotives were concentrated there, and his account of the ECML and curves routes used for the Quayside locomotives makes fascinating historical reading.

However, as a subscriber to the G5 and B17 new-build projects, as well as devotee of the Autocar and NER's North Tyneside electric stock, the thought that a younger generation might create, following Steve Hoather and colleagues, a new No.13 based on modern (perhaps middle-aged in

railway rolling stock terms!) redundant ex TOC and BR vehicles but otherwise much as Sir Vincent Raven and his team imagined is delicious. What a sight that'd be on the Darlington-York racing stretch of the ECML with ECJS, NER and LNER coaches in tow! Are any of our younger colleagues up for the challenge?

Sales and Publicity thoughts for the Future

John Carr

All of the officers' reports in this issue of the Newsletter have an underlying common theme. As we move from the restoration, testing and proving in traffic phases of an incredible project executed by very few people how can we secure the future of our magnificently recreated Autotrain?

If I may Steve (H), I will take the liberty of claiming that the recreated Autocar and Autocoach together are the forefathers of all the demus running around on what will shortly be Great British Railways. This is a great marketing point that should enable us to connect with sympathetic parts of GBR and their contractors when present troubles have receded. Like a swan swimming, quite a lot is coming together, for example concepts and potential contacts are being developed, but it will necessarily take time in a purely voluntary organisation to deliver beneficial publicity, sponsorship and revenue earning projects. If we have any designers, graphic artists, fund raising specialists or copywriters out there these are examples of the professional and skilled inputs we need. And every little can help even if it's only a few hours here and there.

We share with many other rolling stock owners that are not part of their host railway's ownership structure that our main revenue income comes from hire and maintenance agreements which, understandably, are not notably generous to the stock owners—railways are expensive things to run! Visitors travelling in or viewing our train will have been exposed to the host railway's shops, catering and fund raising appeals before they reach our vehicles. We do have a trick up our sleeve here in that I believe we may have the only heritage train with a WLAN capable of allowing passengers to access audio and visual material during their journeys. This includes route commentaries, historical and technical details. However not everybody has a suitable mobile device, many that do use only a few features such as messaging, camera and phone calls and although there are plenty of QR codes around, only the younger generations fully embrace them.

So, unusually, we have technical solutions but we desperately need volunteers

to assist passengers by explaining features of the vehicles, the passing scenery or other queries and also taking the opportunity to sell merchandise or take orders for later delivery. **Please, Please, Please if you could make time available to carry out such roles drop me or Dave Cullingworth an e-mail**—this applies to all the roles identified on page 3 in “Your Autotrain needs you”. Training will be available for those wanting to try something new.

Then comes the question, assuming we can achieve the staffing nirvana of having a volunteer on every rostered working of the Autocar (with or without the Autocoach) what can we sell. Obviously things associated with the Autocars in some way but we cannot afford or store significant stocks. Please (just one this time!) do e-mail or write if you can spare five minutes to tell me what you, your family members and friends if you’re thinking of a group visit. Some ideas to start with:

- ⇒ Souvenirs such as Autocar and NER badges, Autocar branded pens, NER & LNER replica cups, mugs, plant stands etc.
- ⇒ Children’s items—have we any budding authors to write tales around the Autocar to entertain (and educate?) child visitors of any age? Novel toys (no taker has yet been found for a friction drive Autocar, although the rate of advance of 3D printing suggests there should be someone out there to try it using an adapted chassis from a friction drive lorry or train)
- ⇒ Enthusiast books. We would not stock a significant tange of expensive books but by consolidating orders most likely for books yet to be published attractive discounts are available from several publishers that I am corresponding with. An example is the widely advertised “Glorious Years of the LNER”.
- ⇒ Household items. Tea towels seem to be making a come back and in the past I made a good return on yellow dusters printed with locomotives. But what are the 21st century equivalents?
- ⇒ Stationery from Christmas cards (anyone have access to anything of autocars in the snow?), letter cards, notebooks etc.

All ideas welcome, no matter how fanciful they may appear!

Talking of agreements with suppliers, this edition carries a full page advertisement for Ellis-Clark trains of Skipton. Again it is early days but we are exploring using some of the panels in each Autocoach compartment to promote modern business products using NER/LNER style advertising. As with books there is the possibility of consolidating orders for model railway and other equipment produced or retailed by sponsors or advertisers, But it will take a team to develop and implement such deals as both customers and suppliers must have confidence in them.

Another long term project is to look for opportunities for bus or coach based excursions based on one-way or return journeys on the AutoTrain with through ticketing to main destinations such as Keighley, Skipton, Colne and Harrogate. These will be designed to generate additional revenue for the Trust after the Railway and bus/coach companies have taken their agreed fares revenue. I hope to do something this year although the bus industry is currently badly affected by staff shortages and the impacts of Covid on patronage, both as a result of the recent rise in infections and longer term changes in travel because of factors like home working.

The Public Relations front remains fairly quiet, but the release to traffic of the Autocoach will be an opportunity for local and heritage press releases, perhaps around a launch day at Embsay in which our LNER Coach Association friends might also be involved.

The Autocar Models arrive

John Carr

After a seemingly everlasting wait the Heljan 00 gauge models of the NER 1903 Autocars finally emerged from a Covid and port congestion delayed supply chain at the end of April, and pre-orders arrived with customers by early May.

These models were produced exclusively for Rails of Sheffield and the Autocar team gave full co-operation through access to the prototype as now running and to historical records of the two cars built. Rails report that "These models are selling fast and we do not expect them to be in stock for long".

As display models I can testify that the models look superb. However several purchasers have reported problems with performance, especially the automatic lighting after reversal and disappointment with the roof detailing on the LNER liveried version. Rails is aware of these and no doubt will be working with the manufacturers to eliminate any inherent faults as well as resolving problems with individual models.

The Trust will be receiving a generous donation from Rails of Sheffield in due course. We look forward to continuing discussions with them on future projects including the possible introduction of a range of NER clerestory coaches including a push-pull driving trailer representing the Autocoach 3453. This will of course depend on Rails' assessment of the market in what is likely to be a difficult economic climate for some time to come.



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The Heljan Autocar model in LNER lined brown livery.

*Photo: **Dave Cullingworth***



3170 and 3453 in the Embsay carriage shed.

*Photo: **Alan Chandler***

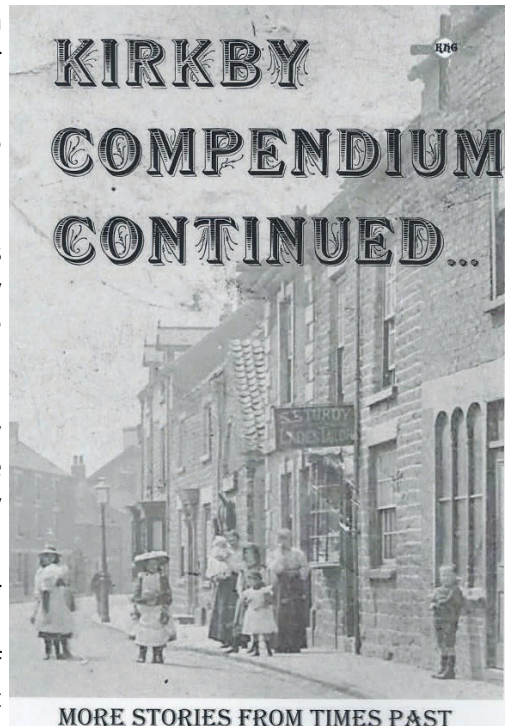
Elsie E Jennings - *Saviour of Autocar 3170?*

I was recently contacted by Louise Mudd of the Kirkbymoorside History Group as they were after a photo of 3170 as restored for their latest publication, 'Kirkby Compendium Continued'. This tells the stories of eight remarkable women who lived in Kirkbymoorside. Of interest to the 1903 NER Autocar Trust is Elsie Jennings, who was the only child of a wealthy family, and born, ironically in Addingham in 1894. Her father, Thomas was born into a railway family, her grandfather Richard having been a station master.

Later the family moved to Keldholme near Kirkbymoorside and owned a substantial area of land. Elsie married and in the 1920's and early 1930's she purchased several railway carriage bodies from the LNER. These were used as cheap rents out to farm workers and labourers in the area. Autocar 3170 was therefore saved by Elsie and her name needs to be included into the interesting history of the Autocars.

Elsie died in the early 1970's and her descendants moved to the USA. I understand from Louise that some of Elsie's relations are planning to visit the UK in the near future and hope to get to Embsay to ride on 3170.

The book costs £10 and we do get a mention along with my photo. If anyone is interested I can get copies but bear in mind it is a very small print run.



Dave Cullingworth

'Tail Lamp'



*Top: The AGM in progress on 13th Nov 2021 at Bolton Abbey tea room.
Bottom: members alighting the train at Embsay on the same day.
Photos courtesy of **Alan Chandler***