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<http://svrtrust.org.uk>

Caring for Gresley carriages on the Severn Valley Railway  
The Railway Station, Bewdley, Worcestershire, DY12 1DP

Group President: David Williams

Vice President: Mick Haynes

Members: Hugh McQuade (Ch), Stewart Clark, Mike Cranmore, Colin Griffiths, Richard & Doris Gunning, Richard Hill, David Massey, David Mead

## LNERCF & LNERCG NEWSLETTER No. 81

### 'TORNADO' REUNION WITH THE GRESLEY TEAK SET



Peppercorn new-build Class A1 60163 **TORNADO** has paid another visit to the SVR partly as a positioning move for its programme of main line travels. During this visit, **TORNADO** has been rostered on the SVR's normal timetable for certain weekends in November. In this rôle it has operated as the train engine for the normal regular Bridgnorth-based service, and is hauling the SVR's wonderful set of Gresley teak carriages. The set is currently being strengthened by one BR Mark 1 coach to fill a gap while open carriage 43612 is out for its overhaul. While '**TORNADO**' is here the opportunity was taken to attract additional business by providing a pre-bookable hamper service for passengers travelling in the beautiful restored (and virtually rebuilt) Gresley Kitchen Composite 7960.

This all proved to be popular judging by the crowds on the SVR on the relevant dates, despite some grimly dull weather at times. But what a pity the especially made antimacassars were missing from 7960...



### PROJECT 9581 PROGRESS

There has been some progress on the fundraising front including our first sponsored picture window (window number 1 - thank you SC) plus one of the narrow plain windows (number 14 - thank you CT) and another 'inch' of length (thank you NP). Let's hope for lots more!

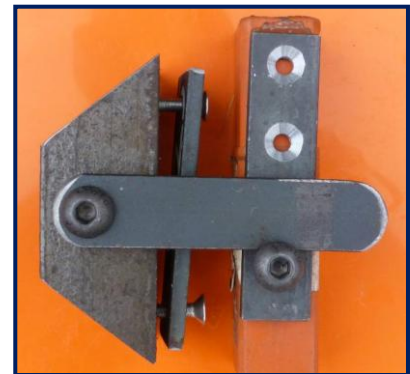
General donations of any amount are always welcome - including sums for the '£100 per inch of 5981's body length' appeal.

The project team are working very hard to progress the work. Several areas are receiving attention at present. First, secure steel

frameworks have been installed to carry the two roof-mounted water tanks - one for the bar and kitchen area and the other for the wheelchair-accessible WC. More work is in hand to rebuild the floor reflecting the coach's new layout and to provide a sound base for the bar and seating areas and for the decorative floor finishes. A new end-wall has been constructed using sound wood recycled from the interior of the former GWR 5043 (from which the new GWR 9581 will emerge). On the fittings side, securing catches for the battery boxes under the coach have been made.



The pictures illustrate some aspects of this work.



## FAREWELLS - Pete Simpson RIP



Our Newsletter 80 included an 'in memoriam' tribute to Peter. His funeral has since taken place in Gloucester attended by several SVR members and at which an address was given by Colomb Howell. Over the weekend of 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> October two of our locomotives – GWR 2-8-0 2857 on Saturday and GWR 0-6-0 Pannier 7714 – carried a wreath in his memory. Pete Simpson was, *par excellence*, a supremely knowledgeable engineer and draughtsman. In his special quiet and effective way, Peter touched the lives of many groups and individuals on the SVR. His expertise was valued and extended widely through the restoration movement. Several major restoration/new build schemes elsewhere depended on his expertise and wise advice.

David Williams, editor of SVR NEWS, has said that Peter was certainly one of the SVR's most knowledgeable steam locomotive engineers and had been a quiet footplate companion who could often repair a locomotive 'on the hoof'. His passing is a major loss to the whole railway restoration movement in the widest sense of that term.

The picture shows Peter (*on the right*) involved in the sort of precision work he loved.

## Gerry Bennett RIP



Another sad passing of a great Severn Valley character is that of Gerry Bennett, who was a good supporter of the SVR and of the LNER carriage restoration group. Gerry was perhaps best known to many people as the 1940s events 'spiv' character dealing in 'dodgy black market' articles. Gerry revelled in this rôle and attended these events on other railways as well as here on the SVR. The attached picture will remind many readers of this quintessential personality. Gerry also is fondly remembered by our LNER group as he contributed when he could to our fundraising – including sponsoring one of the long end-carriage teak panels for the restoration of LNER Brake Third 24506.

Gerry was also involved in the B17 Steam Locomotive Trust's project to recreate a new-build Gresley 4-6-0 Class B17 SPIRIT OF SANDRINGHAM. David Williams, who shared Gerry's mutual love of the B17s, says of Gerry that he was fiercely supportive of the SVR though not afraid to point out what he saw as our railway's shortcomings. Hugh McQuade of the SVR's Engineering Services says that one of Gerry's regrets was never to have seen a restored Thompson Class BI 4-6-0 locomotive visit the SVR to haul our set of Gresley teak carriages.

Both Pete and Gerry helped to make the SVR what it is today as one of Britain's leading restored railways.



And, finally, we wish all our readers and supporters a happy Christmas and best wishes for 2020

**LNER Carriage Group**

**November 2019**

**LNER (SVR) Coach Fund**

Earlier editions of this newsletter may be downloaded at: [http://www.lnersvrcoachfund.org.uk/news\\_letters.html](http://www.lnersvrcoachfund.org.uk/news_letters.html)

Websites with information about the Teak Train and current developments can be found at:

<http://www.svrtrust.org.uk> <http://www.lnersvrcoachfund.org.uk/> <http://lner.svr-rollingstocktrust.org.uk/>

Either of the second or third addresses takes you to a shared website covering all aspects of the SVR teak train