

THE LAKESIDE & HAVERTHWAITE RAILWAY

Monthly news and activities from behind the scenes - March 2026

GENERAL STATUS

The February half term could best be described as 'steady' despite the appalling wet weather. Trains were hauled by 'Princess' for the first half of the week whilst 'David' had some caulking of foundation ring rivets completed by Jack Dibnah. Once tested, 'David' then took over duties on the service trains for the final days of half term.

Nearly 40 years after leaving the West Somerset Railway, 'Victor' is to visit Somerset again to help them celebrate 50 years of operation. 'Victor' will take centre stage for the '50th anniversary event' from the 28th – 29th March where it will pull a recreation of the first WSR public service just as it did on the same date and time in 1976. Before returning to Haverthwaite 'Victor' will stay to feature at the WSR May 1st – 4th 'Spring Steam Spectacular'

The John Fowler engineers have completed the Lakeside signal box lever frame structure replacement and this was commissioned in time for the half term service trains. They have moved on to repairing the abutment embankment erosion at Landing How bridge. The erosion damage has been caused by children playing and eroding the slope.

The Ivatt 46441 repaint at Bury by Alan Hardaker is now largely complete (photo below). There is just another coat of varnish required and this will be done when the loco returns to Haverthwaite. The tender will return to Haverthwaite first whilst the loco will travel to Carnforth for tyre turning. Following this, the loco will be reunited with its tender at Haverthwaite, hopefully in time for the start of our main season.



Jim Morris

It is with great sadness we report that Jim Morris passed away peacefully at home on the 17th of February, aged 93.

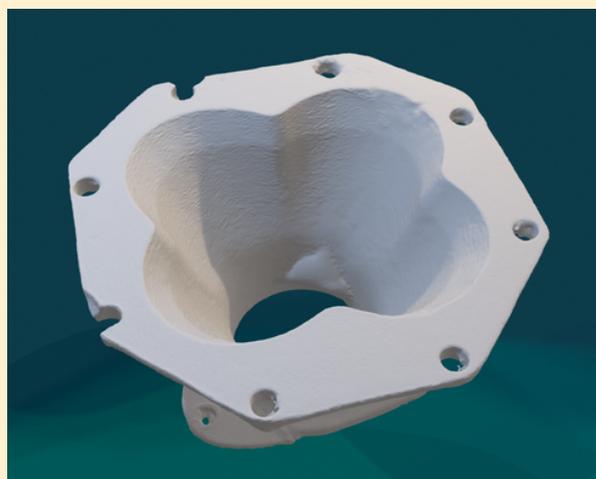
Along with Austin Maher and David Piercy, Jim was a founding director of the Lakeside and Haverthwaite Railway Co. Ltd. The company was formed on 26th March 1970 when the Lakeside Railway Estates Company decided not to pursue the saving of the branch line. He purchased Fairburn 42085 from BR and also Bagnall 'Princess' for use on the line. Jim remained a staunch supporter of the railway right up until his death. He continued as a director of the company right up until his passing. This was a total of 56 years and he was chairman of the railway company from 2019. We have a huge debt of gratitude to Jim for his active support and influence which helped enable our railway to be successfully preserved and become a key Lake District tourist attraction.



Locomotives Under Overhaul

BR Fairburn 4MT 42085

The blast pipe and blast pipe cap digital scans have been completed and the initial reverse engineered model of the blast pipe is close to completion. Photo (below left) shows the blast pipe cap being scanned and photo (below right) shows the initial scan of the blast pipe internal passageway shape.



The steelwork for the new bunker arrived at John Fowler & Co. in February and they have immediately commenced the fabrication assembly. The photo (right) shows some of the pre-prepared 'flat pack' and photo (below) shows the start of construction with panels initially tack welded into place by Alex Sharphouse and Alistair Colquhoun.



We continue to pursue two options of sourcing spring damper bearer pads. One would use rubber cut from sheet whilst the other is to join with other locomotive groups who require these parts. This should create a suitable need for a batch size that would make moulded pads more cost effective.



Through these discussions we became aware that the new build locomotive Clan 'Hengist' project also required damper housings which we already had. As a result we loaned a damper housing from 42085 so that they could scan the part and reverse engineer a detail drawing for housing manufacture. The photo (below) shows the Fairburn damper housing in place on the spring hanger of 'Hengist' as it is checked for fit.



Carriage and Wagon

Mk 1 TSO M4410 overhaul progress continues in the second end vestibule. The paneling attachment battons are being shaped and fitted. Where required the batton plies are shaped and bonded together around formers as can be seen in the top photo. The lower photo shows John Allen fitting a batton to the ceiling.



Mk 1 BSO 9218 has been brought into the paint shop for an upper body repaint by Alan Hardaker. This is targeted for completion in time for this seasons opening trains.



Due largely to the efforts of volunteers David Birkby, Paul Timewell and Oliver Poskitt, the first Low Wood Gunpowder van restoration has been completed as seen here. The team will now start planning a similar restoration on the second van.

Locomotive Status

Bagnall 'Victor'	- Operational
Bagnall 'Princess'	- Operational
Hunslet Austerity No. 25 'Sapper'	- Operational
Barclay 'David'	- Operational
BR Ivatt 2MT 46441	- Winter maintenance
BR Class 20 20214	- Operational
BR Class 110 DMU	- Operational
BR Class 03 D2117	- Operational
BR Class 03 D2072	- Operational
LMS Class 11 7120 (LMR 878 'Basra')	- Operational
Simplex Tram 'Rachel'	- Operational
Hunslet Austerity 'Repulse'	- Under overhaul
BR Fairburn 4MT 42085	- Under overhaul
BR Fairburn 4MT 42073	- Awaiting overhaul

Volunteering opportunities at the L&HR

New and returning volunteers are always welcome. Locomotive, carriage or wagon overhauls and S&T repair/replacement continue to give us plenty opportunity for a variety of restoration tasks.

We welcome you to join our midweek gangs (or indeed any day of the week) to work on maintaining and improving our railway, including the rolling stock overhauls. We can certainly make a big difference to the visual standard and the pace of work that is done. Just get in touch and we can provide more detail. It is a friendly place and we all find it really rewarding! We shall endeavour to ensure that you are directed towards (and supported on) the appropriate tasks.

If your preference is to volunteer on some of the wider range of tasks that you will see taking place at our railway (or via this newsletter), including gardening, permanent way maintenance or locomotive crew/train operations, then again, please get in touch either by e-mail to info@lakesiderailway.co.uk or phone 015395 31594 Option 1

This and the previous monthly newsletters may be found at:

<https://www.lakesiderailway.co.uk/newsletters/>