



steamsounds AROUND 2013

1. The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway held their usual Winter Steam Gala over the first weekend in March and, as I've done for previous galas on the line, I booked a hotel for the Friday night so that I could have a couple of shorter days recording rather than try and do it all in one day.

The railway had two visitors for this gala, one of which was the BR Standard Class 2 2-6-0 78019. Back in the days when the railway had their own Standard Class 2, 78022, in service, generally the maximum load permitted for this Class 2 was four coaches, it had very occasionally worked 5 coaches up the branch but this was thought to be overloading it a little so I was a slightly surprised when I first saw the timetable and loco roster to see that this loco was booked to work trains the full length of the line single handed since most trains have always loaded to 6 coaches on Steam Gala days and, to be honest, I couldn't see 78019 coping particularly well. Seemingly I wasn't alone in that belief as the railway reduced the load for this loco on the few trains it worked single handed - but only by one coach.

As you can hear in this recording made on Friday 1st March 2013, 78019 does get its train out of Keighley station but it doesn't sound to be an easy task in the early stages. It's a good job it was a dry day!

2. The other visiting loco for the Gala was the L&Y '27' Class 0-6-0 1300, a similar loco to the railways own L&Y '25' Class 957 which was out of service as its boiler ticket expired earlier in the year.

I didn't manage to get a recording of 1300 working a train on its own but my final recording on the afternoon of 2nd March 2013 featured it double heading with the other visitor, 78019, heading for Oxenhope climbing from Damems Loop to Oakworth.

3. Having not been near any steam running on the main line for four months it was good to get out on 17th March 2013 for Black 5 4-6-0s 44871 & 45407 working a train from Manchester running via the Hope Valley to Sheffield then back to Manchester via Penistone, Copy Pit and Blackburn.

Railtour operators sometimes come up with some odd names for their trains but this one was one of the odder ones; The Tin Bath, a meaningless title to many.

Our first recording of this train was of the pair climbing the steep gradient from Manchester Victoria to Miles Platting and, to try to minimise the road noise, we went to the opposite side of the line to that which we have recorded from in the past.

This seemed to be a good move and we could hear the Black 5s right from the start in the station.

With 11 coaches the pair sound to be having no difficulty on the steep gradient as they pass and we could even hear a little noise after the train had passed under Rochdale Road bridge not far away.

4. I am pleased to say that I didn't have to wait another four months for my next main line steam recordings as there was another suitable opportunity available on 30th March 2013 with a tour running in the North East powered by 62005 & 61994.

Having decided not to try to get recordings on the section of the tour north of Newcastle we were able to have a later start with the bonus of having time to call in at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway on our way north.

We only had time to record one train, the first departure from Grosmont, and went to Beck Hole.

As we were really out to see a couple of other ex LNER locos it was highly appropriate that the loco that turned up on the first train to Pickering was the recently returned from overhaul ex LNER B1 4-6-0 61264.

The B1 sounds to be making fairly easy work of its load of 5 coaches as it passes heading up the 1 in 49 gradient towards Goathland.

Not a bad start to our LNER day.

5. After our brief visit to the NYMR we continued north to Durham to record the tour on its way south having already visited a few branch lines north of Newcastle.

Although two locos were involved in this train, it wasn't a double header. As the tour involved numerous reversals, to save time, it was topped and tailed.

Heading south a few minutes later than booked, the 11 coach train was being hauled by the ex LNER K1 2-6-0 62005 which, as you can hear, was being given some rear end assistance on the gradient to Relly Mill by the ex LNER K4 2-6-0 61994 *The Great Marquess* at the rear of the train.

A shorter recording than we had hoped for but certainly something a little different.

6. Another trip through the tunnel for a visit to Germany gave me the chance to have my first main line steam ride for the year and this ride must rank as the most surreal main line steam rides I've ever had.

Picture this: I have ridden about 15 miles from a large town on a well filled, fairly modern two car DMU. After about 20 minutes there it's time for my return train so there I am on an ordinary station with about 20 ordinary people waiting for an ordinary train to take me back but instead of another DMU, what comes round the corner but a steam loco on two coaches. No one shows the slightest surprise, everyone gets on and away we go. Surreal doesn't cut it!

This happened in Poland and was of course, the regular steam hauled service train that runs between Wolsztyn and Poznań Główny.

I had been staying in Berlin and as I'd never been to Poland on 18th April 2013 decided that a day trip to Poznań would be just the thing especially with the possibility of a bit of steam. I'd then travelled from Poznan out to Stęszew but please don't ask me to pronounce it; Polish pronunciation is still something of a mystery. I wasn't absolutely certain that the steam service from Wolsztyn would actually run; getting up to date information hadn't been easy but I thought it was worth trying.

0149-59 was the loco, a 1953 built (younger than me!) 2-6-2 and with two coaches didn't have to work particularly hard between stops. Add to that the fact that I could only get a recording spot on the wrong side for the wind so I didn't expect these recordings to be earth shattering.

This first one is the departure from Szreniawa.

Being on the wrong side for the wind wasn't ideal but not far from the start the line became tree lined and the noise increases dramatically before the regulator has to be closed ready for the next stop at Wiry.

Certainly an interesting experience and one I'd hoped to repeat over the full length of the line but it seems that there won't be a Wolsztyn to Poznań steam service next year with trains running to Leszno instead which won't be quite so easy to do.



steamsounds AROUND 2013

7. At the beginning of May the North Yorkshire Moors Railway held a 10 day steam gala to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the line's re-opening.

Wanting to see how things went before visiting I missed the first few days missing such delights as diesel hauled freight trains, loco rosters that were works of fiction (45428 booked to work when it was still missing a pair of wheels) and even a diesel hauled evening diner.

However, wanting to see and get a recording of one of the visiting locos got the better of me so I had a day at Levisham on Bank Holiday Monday 6th May 2013. Unusually for a Bank Holiday, the weather was fine, sunny, warm and most importantly, calm.

At Levisham I had intended to head for my usual secluded spot in the trees on the east side of the line but having heard how good the echoes were I decided to give the hillside to the west a try and ended up spending most of the day there.

The visiting loco that I was keen to record was 61306. Back in the late 60s this loco ended up at Low Moor loco and I often saw it working trains out of Bradford Exchange including a memorable ride behind it on the final day of steam in the West Riding in the Autumn of 1967.

Looking at the intended line up of locos, had I been asked what locos I wanted to record that day, I'd have said both Ian Riley's Black 5s, both B1s and the K1 which amazingly is exactly what I got.

Having recorded the two Black 5s and K1, according to the loco roster shown on the timetable the next train from Pickering should have had 61264 as motive power but when it arrived well over 20 minutes late it had the other B1, 61306 at the head.

Once again, the southbound train hauled by 60007 was already waiting when 61306 arrived, indeed, it had been waiting for a good half hour while the shuttle, a single saloon hauled by 69023, had arrived and been dealt with so it was the B1 that departed first making a fine sound heading off through the trees into Newton Dale.

8. For a little over two weeks in June 2013 I had planned another jaunt through the Channel Tunnel with, as part of my plan, visits a few steam railways. Unfortunately my plans had to be changed at short notice as one of the areas that I'd planned to visit was Saxony, specifically Dresden and the Elbe Valley but the serious flooding in that area in early June meant that there would be little point. That meant that two of the steam lines I'd intended to visit went off the list but I did have one other steam line to visit; that was in Austria, the Achenseebahn; a rack line that runs from Jenbach in the Inn Valley to Seespitz on the Achensee.

I arrived in Jenbach on 27th June 2013 and headed off up the hill away from the station to find a suitable spot for a recording and, finding a path through the trees next to the line below the station at Burgeck, soon found a good spot off the path which even had a good view and was able to make a reasonable recording of the first train but I couldn't help but notice how much more noise the loco was making after it had passed the station at Burgeck not far above my recordings spot.

Now, there was another departure from Jenbach 45 minutes later and I'd originally planned to rush back to the station and have a ride but I'd been sufficiently impressed with my first recording so I decided to stay on the lineside and headed off to another very steep path which crossed the railway about 500 meters further up the climb.

I was well pleased with my recording here as the sound seemed to carry further as the train approached and, as had happened with the first train, No. 2 propelling two coaches was much louder as it passed on this section.

The only downside was that I didn't have time for a ride. That will have to wait until next time.

9. Years ago I used to spend much of my spare time travelling behind and recording steam on the main line. Nowadays, partly due to the cost but mainly due to the difficulty in getting a decent recording spot (diners at the front!) my main line steam mileage has been limited to a few rides during the Summer months when the Scarborough Spa Express is running but 2013 will not be going down as a particularly successful year.

The 2013 Scarborough Spa Express season started on Tuesday 16th July and, because I've been on the first train of the season every previous year these trains have run I was there at York on the morning of the first day but unfortunately the 2013 season got off to a bad start.

After a few weeks of summer weather, something that we seem not to have had for many years, conditions on the lineside were very dry and, not wanting to risk problems with lineside fires, Network Rail insisted that any supposedly steam hauled train be assisted by a diesel.

At first they wanted a complete ban but after some negotiation agreed that the diesel could be coupled behind the steam loco providing the steam loco was, as they put it, in light steam; at least the punters would see a steam loco on the front of the train, and that is how the first SSE arrived in Platform 11 at York with the steam loco attached to the front of a Class 47 diesel. Unbelievably, only moments before departure Network Rail changed their minds and a message arrived that the diesel must pilot the steam loco so, off they went to Holgate to swap round. After this farce we left 45 minutes late and, as expected, there was hardly a sound from the steam loco.

Despite the almost certainty of diesel assistance, I was out for another SSE ride on Tuesday 6th August 2013 and, arriving at York was amazed to be greeted with the news that we were to have a diesel free run as Network Rail had decided that we'd had enough rain. Quite where that rain had fallen I'm not sure as we hadn't had much in the east of the country - but no-one was complaining.

The loco was ex LMS Royal Scot 4-6-0 46115 *Scots Guardsman* and there was very little noise to record departing from York, well, there's no point in rushing only to have to stand even longer at signals at Castleford waiting to get a service train out of the way, so it was after Castleford that I got my first chance at a decent recording.

Having got a clear road and passed through the station we had a further red signal which fortunately cleared just before we came to a stand and 46115 raises some fine echoes recovering and heading for Normanton.

That was my only diesel free run on the SSE this year; there were three other diesel free days but that's not a particularly good record out of 22 trains. Although the diesel presence didn't seem to affect passenger numbers very much, I hope we do better next year.

10. Sunday 11th August 1968 was a fine, dry and warm summer day on which I saw what was expected to be (aside from a few trips with Flying Scotsman) the final steam hauled train running on British Rail.

Sunday 11th August 2013, the 45th Anniversary of that event was anything but fine. After weeks of warm, sunny summer weather we had wind and rain to contend with; most annoying as not only was there a re-run of the 1968 15 Guinea Special to go out for but the added bonus of another train over the Settle - Carlisle line running from York with *Scots Guardsman*.



steamsounds AROUND 2013

As you will have read, we'd had problems with diesels being used to assist to avoid starting lineside fires and, while we already knew that the Anniversary train was not being diesel assisted, we suspected that the train from York would have a diesel attached and so it proved, a Class 47 was coupled right behind the tender. Why it should be that one train over the S&C was judged a fire hazard but another over the same route wasn't is a mystery and two attempts to get recordings of the Scot proved fruitless, it was nearly all diesel.

At least for our next recording we could be certain that there would be no diesel assistance so we braved the rain and wind and went to our usual spot at Selside.

The 15 Guinea Special, like the train in 1968, had started that morning from Liverpool hauled by 45305 continuing to Manchester (though not Victoria but through Piccadilly) to change engines at Longsite where the loco that had worked the train in 1968, 70013 *Oliver Cromwell* took over.

Heard even in the in pouring rain we were quite happy with this recording particularly as sound carried back well, we heard the Brit all the way to Ribbleshead and, after we had switched off and were packing up, we could just hear the loco continuing past Blea Moor and into the tunnel. Well worth getting wet for.

11. For the two train's return from Carlisle, due to the strong wind, there was only one choice for our recording spot; behind the dry stone walls near Greengate Bridge just south of Kirkby Stephen. Even better was that we wouldn't have to hang around too long as the two trains were timetabled to be only half an hour apart.

The first train was the one returning to York with 46115 and the diesel. After our experiences with this train on the outward run we feared the worst but, as you can hear, the Scot was being worked quite hard when it passed.

Much better than the morning fiasco and actually a better recording than the one we got of the two unassisted Black 5s a little while later.

12. What with diesels on the SSE and nothing much to go to the lineside for, by the end of August I was starting to suffer from withdrawal symptoms so I decided that a day out on the NYMR might be just the thing.

Earlier in the year the North Yorkshire Moors Railway acquired a new visitor from the Churnet Valley Railway, this was their S160 2-8-0 6046. Of course, the railway had its own S160, 2253, which is currently rusting gently at Grosmont with, apparently, no prospect of it ever turning a wheel on the NYMR again.

I've always had a soft spot for these engines (something to do with the American whistle perhaps?) and feel that they are idea engines for preserved lines. While being not too big to be uneconomic on shorter trains, they seem capable of handling longer trains on steep gradients. The only downside is that, being 'foreign', they aren't always popular with enthusiasts but as the main market for bums on seats on preserved lines isn't enthusiasts these days, that shouldn't be an issue. So come on NYMR, get to work on 2253.

Anyway, as the weather was still fine and the loco roster on the NYMR web site indicate that 6046 would be working with the added bonus of no diesels rostered; something of a rarity, I decided to spend the day at Levisham on 27th August 2013.

I should have known better than to trust the NYMR to provide accurate information and arriving at Pickering for the first train of the day I was not really surprised to find a diesel on the front of a fairly full train of not entirely happy passengers who presumably thought they were visiting a steam railway. Fortunately, when my diesel hauled train passed New Bridge, I was pleased to see the S160 there so could be reasonably confident of getting at least one recording of it whatever else happened.

Arriving at Levisham I was delighted to find that there was hardly a breath of wind and all was very quiet; just the way I like it so I headed off up the hill to the west, found a suitable spot and got set up. No sooner had I done that than I was most annoyed to hear a chain saw start up in the trees behind me. Typical! There was nothing for it but to move elsewhere and I walked further up the hill intending to go to a spot I'd tried before above Raygate Slack but even that proved impossible, or at least unwise, due to a herd of cows. I didn't mind the cows but the large, black, angry looking bull accompanying them seemed best left alone so I found a spot still just in hearing range of the chain saw but with the volume reduced considerably.

Before the S160 arrived the first train from Grosmont came down. The loco roster had suggested that along with 6046, 45428, 61264 and 60007 would be working. I thought that, aside from the S160, two out of three preferred locos gave me pretty good odds but you can guess what arrived...

Although the Pickering bound train arrived in good time, the northbound train didn't and continued not arriving for another 25 minutes. The reason? No idea but I feared that the S160 had failed. Had that been the case I think I would have packed and up gone home but at length it did arrive and with the S160 at the front.

I had no view of the train through the trees but I can safely assume that it was 7 coaches which, as you can hear, aside from a couple of slips causes no problems for 6046 as it heads off into Newton Dale while 60007 departs for Pickering. Doesn't that American whistle sound good!

13. My third trip across the Channel came in September 2013 and this time was entirely connected with steam as my destination was the Harz mountains in Northern Germany.

I started my visit in Nordhausen as I wanted to cover the southern part of the Harzquerbahn steam hauled, something I'd failed to do during my previous visit in 2012 and took advantage of a Harz Tour Card. This is an incredibly good value for money ticket being valid on the entire HSB network except Schierke to the Brocken, most bus services in the area as well as some Deutsche Bahn and HEX services around Wernigerode. Amazingly, it costs the same as a single ticket from Nordhausen to Wernigerode, 18€, but is valid for three days.

On the second day of my visit, 19th September 2013, I used my Harz Tour Card to travel by DB and HEX trains to Quedlinburg for a ride on the Selketalbahn where, on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, in addition to the regular steam diagram there is a second steam loco in use and this is usually a Mallet, a type of loco I have never travelled behind or recorded but from Quedlinburg it was the regular steam hauled train that I travelled on first.

On my previous visit the regular Selketalbahn loco was 99 6001 but with that loco out of service away at Meiningen a 2-10-2 was in use and I travelled behind it to Alexisbad where, to cover another section of the HSB that I hadn't previously travelled over, I changed to a railcar for the short ride up to Harzgerode before returning half an hour later on the same railcar to connect with the second steam diagram and get my first ride behind a Mallet - or not...



steamsounds AROUND 2013

The steam hauled train from Eisfelder Talmühle was a little late so it wasn't waiting when I returned from Harzgerode and, heard approaching, I thought it didn't sound quite as I expected a Mallet to sound and, sure enough, another 2-10-2 came round the corner. I wasn't best pleased but joined the train to travel back to Gernrode where I had arranged to meet a German friend for an afternoon's lineside recording.

We never managed to get an official explanation for the missing Mallet (which I later saw at Wernigerode) but there was a photo charter running on the Selketalbahn on the following Saturday so we assumed that it had been packed off to Wernigerode to be fettled and cleaned ready for that before returning with some vintage rolling stock for the charter. A shame but at least it gives me a good reason to visit again.

Having already made a couple of recordings of the two steam hauled services on the climb out of Gernrode my friend took me to a spot on the other side of the climb to the line's summit at Sternhaus Ramburg and, not being all that familiar with the line, I will happily admit that I had little idea of exactly where we were.

The recording spot that my friend was intent on going to appeared to involve a very steep footpath and while I'd have been willing to make the effort for the chance of a good Mallet recording, for a 2-10-2 on 4 coaches I decided that somewhere involving less effort would suit me fine: yes, I'm getting old!

The spot I found involved only a short level walk but had the distinct disadvantage of being very near to a busy road; traffic noise seemed a certainty.

As I have already said, I'd had little idea of just where we were but soon realised that my spot was not far from the start of the climb at Mägdesprung which meant that both the level crossing I could see nearby and the one out of sight near the station would be closed to road traffic before the train departed as both are triggered manually by the train crew from the platform so at least there would be no traffic passing while the train passed my spot.

That is exactly how things worked out and taking into account the respective sizes of the loco and its train I was quite happy with my recording of 99 7235 which I could hear right from the start at Mägdesprung.

14. After two days on the Selketalbahn with my Harz Tour Card during which I managed to travel on one of the two parallel departures from Eisfelder Talmühle and cover the Stiege Loop it was time to buy a somewhat more expensive HSB Mehrtageskarte and concentrate on the Brockenbahn.

On Saturday 21st September 2013 having had a noisy ride to the mist covered Brocken we returned to Schierke to do some lineside recording including an opportunity for a Mallet recording.

On most Saturdays through the main part of the season the HSB run a special Traditionszug to the Brocken and this is normally worked by two Mallets. On this day the train was a short one and only needed one Mallet so the recording I got was a little disappointing so I have yet another reason to visit again.

The next train up the Brocken was the through train from Nordhausen which my German friend assured me was usually the noisiest train of the day and, although there seems no logical reason why it should be noisier than other trains, it was!

99 7247 certainly made a fast start away from the station then sound carried back very well as it headed away on the gradient through the trees.

15. After that we went down to Steinerne Renne to record the last two trains from Wernigerode. My friend decided he was going to record very close to the station (he likes to get good, hard starts) but suggested that I try a spot higher up, a little further away and pointed me to the appropriate path so off I went. He'd said it wasn't far but I couldn't see anywhere to get off the path which, being Saturday, was quite busy with walkers but eventually I was able to find a suitable spot which was nearer to the line than I'd have liked but, as time was getting on, it seemed my only option. I later discovered that my friend usually recorded much closer to the station from the path and I'd gone much too far.

Although I was further away from the station than intended I did get a very long recording of 99 7237 as I could just hear it departing from the previous station, Hasserode, then coming round the tight curves and arriving at Steinerne Renne before, after a short pause, making a fine sound starting on the gradient and passing heading for Drei Annen Hohne.

16. My final full day in the Harz was Monday 23rd September 2013 and what better way to start than with a ride to the Brocken. Arriving there after the usual noisy run when I got off the train I discovered the weather hadn't improved from the previous two days with even thicker fog, a stronger wind and even some rain, so I got straight back on the train again! I'd discovered on my previous visit that there was a good recording opportunity during the descent while the downhill train waits in the siding adjacent to the point where the Götheweg path meets the railway to allow an uphill train to pass.

Returning from the top with 99 236 we were a little late meaning that the uphill train hauled by 99 7239 had been stopped to await our arrival; something of a bonus as, with the uphill train having to restart on the steep gradient, this made for a better recording.

With the Brocken bound train clear, 99 236 soon has the downhill train back out on the main line and ready to continue.

Like last year, I thoroughly enjoyed my visit and, if you haven't been, I can strongly recommend a visit; I don't think you'll be disappointed.

17. Perhaps I should start with a mention of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway Autumn Gala; I can't recall how long it has been since I last missed visiting a steam gala on that railway, certainly not in the last few years when it has been my nearest line and relatively easy for me to get to but I missed this one; not with any particularly good excuse either. Quite simply, with the lack of any visiting loco, it seemed to me to be nothing more than an ordinary day on the Moors and, from reports I heard, it was very similar to an ordinary, peak timetable day; there were even diesels involved on a couple of occasions! I had already decided that I wouldn't bother with the first two days but thought that I might make the effort on the Sunday to see if I could get some recordings of the S160 on the climb from Grosmont but news that the loco had failed on Saturday afternoon caused me to abandon that idea; it wasn't worth the gamble though I gather that it did run that day.

The following week they had an LNER themed weekend with a visit from *Tornado* but I was away doing other things and the Wartime



steamsounds AROUND 2013

Weekend the week after coincided with the Keighley & Worth Valley Autumn Steam Gala which I knew I'd be attending.

Unlike the NYMR, the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway had not one, not two, but three visiting engines (four if you count 45305 which had been there through most of the Summer) so despite the very poor weather forecast, a visit seemed far more worthwhile and, as I have done for previous galas, I'd booked a hotel for one night so that I could spread my visit over two days.

I didn't arrive at Keighley until mid-day on Friday 11th October 2013 and rode up to Oakworth behind the WD which was looking almost like the real thing having been 'weathered' and renumbered as Low Moor's 90711.

At Oakworth it was very windy and that wind was coming from a direction that made finding shelter quite difficult but I found a spot behind a wall a short distance down towards Damems Loop that seemed Ok.

The three visitors were all of GWR origin and on the second train I recorded was GWR Manor 4-6-0 7812 *Earlstone Manor* visiting from the SVR, a loco that I had only recorded once before on a main line trip back in 1982 double heading with a Hall.

Working the 'Express', non-stop to Haworth, the Manor sounds fine climbing the gradient from Damems Loop before passing through Oakworth and continuing into Mytholmes Tunnel.

18. On Saturday morning it was still windy and had started raining and, after a disturbed night's sleep when the hotel's fire alarm went off at 1AM (a false alarm, of course) I almost decided to have a lie in and forget about the railway but shortly after 10 o'clock I was at Keighley having decided to give it a try for an hour or so and see how things went.

I arrived to find that trains were already running late, almost half an hour late in fact, so although I should have missed it, I had plenty of time to get a recording of 45305 departing with a 4 coach shuttle for Ingrow but it was the next train that I was keen to record.

Having heard the visiting GWR 0-6-PT 1501 make some very sure footed starts up at Oakworth the previous day I was keen to hear how it would cope with the difficult start out of Keighley on this damp morning and, as you'll hear in this recording, 6 coaches on the steep and sharply curved start out of the station sounds not to be a problem.

19. Later in the day I tried a couple of recordings on G. N. Straight not far from Keighley station, a spot I'd tried before a few times with mixed results. The gradient eases here and often drivers ease their locos so while I found better shelter from the wind there, it was a bit of a gamble.

My first recording was of 45305 and that strong breeze carried the sound of my favourite Black 5 right from the start in Keighley station.

This time, on reaching the easier gradients there's no easing and I was quite impressed with the way 45305 accelerated its train as it passed.

20. Although I'd seen the loco a couple of times during the Summer when it appeared briefly, diesel assisted, on Scarborough Spa Expresses, 9th November 2013 was my first real chance to get a recording of Carnforth's latest loco Jubilee 45699 *Galatea* which I can recall seeing a few times looking as though it were more likely to appeal to a scrap merchant than anyone thinking of restoring it.

Based on reports from previous runs I have to admit that I wasn't expecting much since it seemed that Carnforth had had some difficulty in getting everything right but, as it had been a while since I had been out for a recording on the main line, I didn't want to miss the opportunity.

The train, operated by Vintage Trains was to be steam hauled from Carnforth over Shap then return south over the Settle - Carlisle line to Hellifield so despite a rather poor weather forecast we headed for our usual spot at Shap Wells for our first recording where we found the breeze was fairly light and it looked as though we had a reasonable chance of staying dry.

Indeed, at the booked time the weather was dry and there was even a little sun about but of course the train was late. It had been stopped in the loop at Tebay as they had been having injector problems and requested to be put inside to give time to get a decent amount of water into the boiler before climbing Shap.

The stop at Tebay meant that it was perfectly timed to pass our recording spot just as a heavy hail storm arrived; just a few minutes earlier and we'd have been fine.

Despite the weather conditions 45699 seemed to be doing Ok, not fast but Ok with its 10 coach train. Not only that but everything appeared steam tight with no untoward hissing from glands or cocks and it sounded spot on with three nice even beats. Perhaps Carnforth has got it right at last? Let's hope it stays that way.

