



# steamsounds **AROUND** 2014

1. It was well into 2014 before I was able to record my first steam hauled trains for the year, March 8<sup>th</sup> to be exact when the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway held their Steam Gala.

As usual I had a hotel booked for Friday night so that I could have two easy days there rather than trying to cram everything into a day trip but my plans were thwarted by an infected tooth resulting in a visit to the dentist on Friday afternoon rather than steam in the Worth Valley but I did make it on the Saturday.

The railway only had a single visiting loco; the ex LNER K4 2-6-0 61994 'The Great Marquess' which is heard in this recording departing from Keighley with a shuttle bound for Ingrow.

With just 4 coaches (and O-6-OT 1704 at the rear) the K4 has a little difficulty with adhesion on the pointwork before getting a grip and passing on the steep gradient.
2. On a decidedly foggy 29<sup>th</sup> March the Railway Touring Company ran another tour visiting the North East. As they have done in the past, this tour was advertised as visiting Boulby Mine but unlike some previous tours, this one actually did.

Because of the numerous reversals in the itinerary the train was top and tailed with K1 62005 and B1 61264 providing the motive power.

Our recording spot for the 1 in 61 climb back from Boulby was on the edge of Roxby Woods at the opposite side of the valley from the line between the Mine and Grinkle Tunnel.

Although the train was running late they spent more time than we had expected at the mine before departing.

With the B1 leading the pair sound fine on the gradient and we were very pleased with our recordings once the sound faded away as the K1 entered Grinkle Tunnel at the top of the climb.
3. Having missed visiting the last North Yorkshire Moors steam gala I couldn't very well miss the Spring 2014 event could I?

I have to say that, in view of the weather on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April, missing the gala was a tempting prospect but there I was having had a lift from a friend, ready for the first train from Grosmont.

Later in the day we found ourselves at Levisham where there was the added attraction of a bacon sandwich and Bovril and we were only just in time before the Weighbridge tea hut closed for the day.

With a bacon butty consumed we went a short distance up the line to record the next northbound train which was a Pie & peas special being run to raise funds for the appeal to restore Dame Vera Lyn.

This train had locos at both ends; 44806 at the front with 75029 providing assistance at the rear.

As the recording begins the nearby signal clatters to the clear position before the train departs, clattering back to danger after it has passed.
4. In May Germany and the Harz beckoned again for some guaranteed noisy steam recordings.

On 14<sup>th</sup> May, after a ride to the foggy summit of the Brocken in the morning, I spent the rest of the day around Schierke and, as well as getting recordings of the big 2-10-2s, I was hoping for a good recording of one of the railway's Mallet 0-4-4-OTs working the regular Wednesday Traditionszug.

The Mallet in use that day was 99 5901 and although the train it was hauling was short, I was quite pleased with the recording I got of it passing the Pfarrstiege foot crossing about a kilometre from Schierke station.
5. As well as running on Wednesdays, the HSB also usually run a Traditionszug on Saturdays but on 17<sup>th</sup> May, instead there was a 'Fotosonderzug' with 0-6-0 99 6101 which was 100 years old in 2014.

The one problem we had with this train was that we had no real idea of when it would run; the HSB quite rightly keep such information to those who have paid for a ticket so all we could do was go to Steinerne Renne getting there in time for the first ordinary train and wait until the special turned up.

While waiting for the second service train we had been hearing high pitched whistles coming from the direction of Hasserode indicating that the 0-6-0 was on its way but it was the second train off Wernigerode that arrived first.

Once that was on its way to the Brocken, 99 6101 arrived but it had to wait until the preceding train had cleared the next section.

I'd never heard one of the HSB's 0-6-0s before so this was something completely new for me but I have to say that, given the choice, I think I'd rather have a 2-10-2 for noise.
6. For this visit I had a number of things that I was hoping to do; one was have a ride behind a Mallet; something I'd failed to do on each of my previous visits and, true to form, something I failed to do again; still it gives me an

excuse, if I needed one, to visit again. The other thing I wanted to do was see the view from the Brocken. When I visited last year the summit was shrouded in cloud throughout the time I was there and, for the first couple of days that seemed to be the way of things again but I'm pleased to say that the weather did eventually clear so late on Saturday afternoon, the last day of my visit, I took a ride back to the summit to have a quick final look at the view.

99 7240 was the loco and approaching the siding adjacent to the Goetheweg footpath we were stopped by signals as the downhill train hadn't arrived. That gave me another excuse for an on-train recording as I knew from past experience that the start on the gradient would be very loud.

As you can hear, I wasn't disappointed!

7. After my brief stay at the Brocken summit I returned all the way to Wernigerode with 99 7240 which, of course, had to go into the Goetheweg siding to allow the final train of the day to pass.

99 236 was on the uphill train and made a fine sound passing on the gradient before 99 7240 propelled my train back out onto the main line.

A fine, final recording for this trip.

8. Believe it or not, out of all the preserved railways in the UK, one that I'd never gotten round to visiting until this year was the Bluebell. Well, my excuse was that I was waiting until they extended to east Grinstead.

As I was down in London for a couple of nights, on 15<sup>th</sup> June, I made my first visit to this railway which others had told me was a bit special.

After having a ride I decided to try for a couple of lineside recordings at Horstead Keynes where I was quite impressed with the station though it would be much improved by the removal of the rotting and rusting rolling stock scattered around the place.

SR S15 4-6-0 847 heading for East Grinstead was the loco that I recorded not far from the station and I didn't think it sounded at all bad.

As 847 headed north and yet another aircraft heading for Gatwick passes overhead I could just hear SECR Class C0-6-0 592 departing for Sheffield Park.

9. The day after my Bluebell visit I travelled on to Somerset to stay in Minehead, somewhere I used to visit regularly but hadn't been back for 14 years and on 17<sup>th</sup> May after taking a ride on the first train I went to Crowcombe and walked down towards Nethercott to get a lineside recording near Nornvis Bridge.

It was a little breezy there but I found enough shelter to get this recording of GWR Manor 4-6-0 7828 'Odney Manor' (although it was carrying a different name) climbing the gradient towards Crowcombe.

10. On the following day I spent some time around Stogumber where I was pleased to get this lineside recording of the S&DJR 7F 2-8-0 88 in its final few months before coming out for overhaul departing for Crowcombe and Bishops Lydeard.

11. The prospect of a steam hauled train on what is now my home patch got me out for a recording on 28<sup>th</sup> June when BR Standard Pacific 70013 'Oliver Cromwell' worked a train from Kings Cross to Scarborough with the outward working coming via Bridlington rather than the more usual and less interesting route via York.

Having made a similar recording of the same engine last year near Sewerby we decided to try a spot further up the 1 in 92 climb from Bridlington near Bempton station.

Despite the wind not being as favourable as it might have been we did get a reasonably long recording and must have first heard the Brit whistling for the level crossing at the site of Flamborough station.

With 12 coaches behind the tender 70013 doesn't sound to be being pressed but is certainly going well enough as it passes and continues the climb to the summit about a mile and a half away.

12. As far as main line steam was concerned, the year had been a bit quiet for me but the prospect of two trains running in the North West on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> July looked likely to improve things.

The first of these trains was running from Carnforth to York and back hauled by the GWR Hall 4-6-0 5972 'Olton Hall' which due to its Harry Potter connection carries the name 'Hogwarts Castle'. This train was to be its last run for some time as, in the not too distant future, it will be going on display at the Warner Brothers studios near London for at least two years so this could prove be a 'last chance' recording opportunity.

We headed for Clapham at the top of the climb from Wennington and only just got there in time. As expected, the train had a diesel on the back which was clearly providing some assistance but the Hall didn't sound too bad with its 10 coach train.

We'd expected to get a recording of the Hall on its return from York but due to it starting a small lineside fire at Gargrave, the Hall got no further than Leeds as Network Rail at York, who already had a fire risk warning in place, instituted a steam ban which lasted right through the summer season meaning that the Scarborough Spa Express programme of trains were all diesel hauled and other trains either diesel hauled or cancelled. This has not been a good summer for steam.

13. While the steam ban mentioned above was instituted by NR(LNE), other regions seemed to have a different view of fire risk conditions so elsewhere, most trains ran as booked including the other train running that day, a Cumbrian Mountain Express hauled by ex LNER A4 Pacific 60009 'Union of South Africa'; this train didn't even have a diesel on the back.

Having never recorded an A4 on Shap we headed for Shap Wells though not to our usual spot but ended up on the hillside between Salterwath and Shap Wells.

With 11 coaches behind the tender the A4 sounds to be going well on the gradient.

14. One train running from York that did get some steam haulage was the Waverley run each Sunday from York to Carlisle and back but this was only steam hauled from Hellifield to Carlisle and back though even that was affected on a few occasions due to strikes by the Fire Brigades Union; no fire brigade cover, no steam.

My one opportunity to record this train came on 17<sup>th</sup> August and coincided with gale force winds and frequent heavy showers; the dry stone walls at Selside were essential on this occasion.

The previous running of this train had seen the 48151 in charge and, as I've not had many recordings of this loco recently, I was quite looking forward to hearing it again but instead we got Carnforth's Jubilee, 45699 'Galatea'.

The Jubilee had 11 coaches behind the tender and behind those 11 coaches was a Class 47 diesel but it didn't seem to be providing much in the way of assistance when the train passed us on the 1 in 100 gradient.

15. After recording the Jubilee we had an appointment with an old friend not seen since 1989.

That old friend was the ex-SR West Country Pacific 34092 which has spent the last 25 years having a protracted overhaul and, after some test running, had finally re-entered service the previous day.

This recording is of 34092 departing from Oakworth.

It sounds as though there's still a little work to do as, as you can hear, there are a couple of glands blowing but despite that unwanted sound, it was really nice to see this loco back in service.

16. In September 2014 I'd planned yet another trip around Europe flying to Budapest then working my way back to the UK by train stopping off here and there and for this trip there was no steam involved; at least, that's what I thought when I planned it.

One of the places I'd planned to stop off in was Nürnberg, a city that I'd passed through, I've even visited the DB Museum there but never stayed and having one full day free I scouted around on the internet for something to do aside from walk the streets of the city. My browsing just happened to lead me to the Deutsches Dampflokomotiv Museum which wasn't far away in Neuenmarkt-Wirsberg and I put that down as a possible but then spotted that by complete coincidence, my free day just happened to coincide with an event which would see regular shuttle trains running to Marktschorgast taking them up the Scheife Ebene which, with its 23% average gradient (a little less than 1 in 40), is Germany's answer to the Lickey. What's more the museum had planned to be hosting no less than 9 BR01 Pacifics 6 of which would be working the trains along with two bankers. Talk about a happy coincidence!

So, on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September I had an early start from Nürnberg and got to Neuenmarkt-Wirsberg in good time to buy a ticket and take a ride on the first train of the day before heading to the lineside for the rest of the day.

The locos on the first train were Pacifics 01 533 and 01 509, both of the two cylinder variety, with the train of 8 coaches being banked by 2-6-2 tank 64 491.

I easily managed to get a window in the second coach and recorded the complete climb.

This proved not to be the best run of the day as there was some trouble with slipping and matters were taken pretty gently but it was good at last to have a ride behind steam on the main line in Germany even if my total 'mileage' was only about 14 km up and down the gradient!

This is just part of the complete recording and was made about half way up the climb and despite things being taken pretty gently, there's still trouble with adhesion.

17. After my ride I caught a service train back up to Marktschorgast and set off along with hordes of other spectators down the path that runs alongside the line.

I'd missed the second train of the day (the only single headed train that day) which had passed my descending train and didn't have a great deal of time to find a spot for the third train which had 3 cylinder 01 1075 piloting oil fired 01 509 with former Prussian P8 4-6-0 38 1301 providing rear end assistance.

I ended up recording this one from just off the busy path at a point not all that far from the top of the climb.

18. I spent the rest of the day further down the gradient in the company of some like minded German sound recordists; I knew they were like minded as, as soon as I arrived, I was told in no uncertain terms that, if I was staying there, I must keep absolutely quiet. Just what I wanted too!

My last recording at this spot was of the two 01s that I had ridden behind that morning, 01 509 and 01 533 but before they pass the previous train rolled past down the gradient on its way back to Neuenmarkt-Wirsberg. Noisy 38 1301 was the banker.

19. The North Yorkshire Moors Railway Autumn steam gala had a Great Western theme this year with no less than three locos from that railway visiting the line.

We didn't get to the railway until early afternoon on 26<sup>th</sup> September and spent most of our time around Levisham; not just for the bacon sandwiches either!

The first of the three GWR visitors we recorded was 2-8-0 2807 and as it departs it produces that gunshot exhaust on starting that is typical of GWR locos. Heading off into Newton Dale, with its small wheels, it soon

sounds to be going far faster than it actually is.

20. Next came the second GW visitor 5029 'Nunney Castle' and, before it departs, 45428 can be heard heading for Pickering before the Castle makes some fine sounds heading off into Newton Dale.

The third GW visitor was Pannier Tank 1501 but that loco spent most of its time not doing much at the Grosmont end of the line; apparently it had problems...

21. For our final recording of the day we went to the other end of the line to get 45428 returning from Grosmont with the diner at Darnholme.

Of course, by this time, it was fully dark and with a clear sky, there were a few million stars to look at for added entertainment which was just as well since the Pickering bound train was about 30 minutes late when it finally left Grosmont.

Sound was carrying well and we could just hear the Black 5 accelerating when it emerged from Grosmont tunnel. Once the Black 5 got to Beck Hole, where this recording begins, we could hear it clearly until it came under the bridge and passed us with an almost deafening exhaust.

Approaching Goathland it sounds as though the Black 5 is checked before reaching the station.

This is certainly my best recording to date at this spot!

22. The Keighley & Worth Valley Railway held their usual Autumn Steam Gala over three days, Friday 10<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2014 and I was there for part of Friday and Saturday.

Unusually, the railway didn't have any visiting locos, aside from 45305 which had been there for some considerable time. What it did have was the first gala appearance of 34092 since its overhaul had been completed.

I arrived at Keighley around mid-day on Friday to find trains were not running to time and I eventually departed for Oakworth where I set off to walk down towards the loop to find a handy and reasonably sheltered spot; it was quite windy and there were showers forecast though none materialised while I was there.

One of the recordings I made there was of 45305 which, as usual, makes plenty of noise restarting from the loop and climbing the gradient to Oakworth.

23. On the following day I stayed around Keighley and among the recordings I got was this one of 34092 accelerating on the easier gradients along G. N. Straight.

I was quite happy with this; see what you think.

24. As you have read, 2014 has not been a particularly good year for main line steam activity for me thanks mainly due to the little local difficulty during the summer between Network Rail and West Coast so, with two steam hauled trains coming to York on 13<sup>th</sup> December, I was glad to be able to take advantage of a final opportunity for this year for some recordings.

Our first recording that day was of the Vintage Trains charter running from Tyseley behind GWR Castle 4-6-0 5043 'Earl of Mount Edgcumbe' and we went to Thurnscoe mid-way on the 1 in 150 climb between Bolton-on-Dearne and Frickley.

Although this train had a 30 minute late start from Tyseley, due to some fairly slack timings, it was a little early when it passed us going well on the gradient with 10 coaches, including Tyseley's water carrier, behind the tender.

A reasonably good start to the day.

25. We were pleased to see that the Castle was running early as that gave us a chance to get over to Bentley just north of Doncaster to record the other charter running to York that day which had started at London Kings Cross behind the LNER A4 Pacific 4464 'Bittern' which is soon to be withdrawn from main line work ready for its next overhaul.

The A4 was booked to stop at Doncaster; a pathing stop we assumed, but it may not have and we only just got to our recording spot in time when the 'Bittern' passed running a little early and being worked very easily.

We were a little disappointed, but not all that surprised, to see a Class 47 at the rear of the 12 coach train which seemed to be providing some assistance.

Not the worst recording I've ever made but not what we had hoped for.

26. For the two trains returning from York we started at Copmanthorpe for the A4 but the recording we got of it there was not good; the diesel seemed to be assisting again and the loco was making very little noise.

Our original plan had been to chase the A4 for a further recording south of Doncaster but, with it running a little late and not making much noise, we decided there was little point and decided to take the easy option and stay where we were for the Castle.

One aspect of this spot at Copmanthorpe was that there was plenty of passing traffic to watch while we waited; even a few freight trains and just before the Castle arrived, a light engine Class 66 passed heading south clearly being checked by signals.

When 5043 passed our spot, although not being worked particularly hard, it made a lot more noise for us than the A4 had.

Not too bad a recording to end the year.