



steamsounds at North Yorkshire Moors Railway Steam Galas

Although the North Yorkshire Moors Railway is entertaining at any time, for an enthusiast, that entertainment is improved considerably when the railway holds a Steam Gala. These normally are arranged twice a year in Spring and Autumn at times when the railway would otherwise be less busy. As well as using locos normally resident on the line, Galas also offer the opportunity to invite locos from elsewhere to pay a visit so let's start with a recording of one of those visitors...

1. Visiting the railway for the Autumn Steam Gala in 2009 was the BR Standard Pacific 70013 *Oliver Cromwell*.
We are at Darnholm and as the recording begins, a flock of southbound geese, no doubt heading for warmer climes, pass overhead before the Brit is heard approaching on the 1 in 49 gradient with the first train of the day.
The loco is eased for the speed restriction over Bridge 30 which had not at that time been rebuilt, before passing and completing the climb to Goathland in fine style with 6 coaches behind the tender.
2. Another entertaining feature of Steam Galas is the operation of demonstration freight trains which usually run between Grosmont and Goathland and, during the Spring Steam Gala in 2004 the NER P3 0 6 0 2392 was employed on this duty.
Unlike some other lines, the NYMR is usually able to turn out a freight train of reasonable length. A dozen wagons with a brake van at either end was the load on this occasion and, as you can hear in this recording made among the trees between Beck Hole Bridge and Green End, 2392 is making steady progress and a fine sound climbing the steep 1 in 49 gradient towards Goathland.
3. As an alternative to demonstration freight trains during the Spring Steam Gala in May 2011 the railway operated a passenger shuttle between Grosmont and Goathland powered by the ex NER J72 0 6 0 T 69023 hauling the GNR Saloon.
Now, with just a single coach it would have been a surprise to have heard a lot of noise from the loco but I didn't think that this recording made near Beck Hole Bridge was too bad.
4. Back to another demonstration freight train for this recording made during the Spring Steam Gala in 2008.
The railway had an interesting visitor for this gala; the ex Great Eastern Railway J15 0 6 0 65462 usually based on the North Norfolk Railway, which I had never even seen before, let alone recorded and this was in use on the demonstration freight between Grosmont and Goathland.
For its first foray up the 1 in 49 gradient to Goathland 65462 had the full length goods train, 14 wagons and two brakes, and as this was deemed to be too much for the J15 to manage alone, this first run was banked by the ex LNER K1 2 6 0 62005 which was looking nice and shiny after a recent repaint.
As the recording begins the J15 can be heard approaching Beck Hole Bridge and sounds to be doing more than its fair share of the work. As the train passes the sound of 65462 is replaced by 62005 at the rear of the train.
The railway had been relaying the track here and had placed a 15 MPH speed restriction on the new section which perhaps explains why the K1 is being worked fairly easily but once off the restriction 62005 is worked somewhat harder as the train continues on the gradient to Goathland.
5. Another feature of Steam Galas is double heading.
Now, I'm not a great fan of double heading as, quite often two locos just means less noise as they share the work that could be done by one. Another reason is that sometimes, once under way the exhaust beats of the two locos tend to merge and you might as well be listening to a single loco. However, find two locos with differing wheel sizes and different exhaust sounds and double headers can sound interesting.
Such was the case during the 2006 Spring Steam Gala when BR Standard Class 4 2 6 0 76079 double headed with the ex LNWR G2 0 8 0 49395. 49395 is usually referred to as a 'Super D' as it was a superheated version of the similar D Class goods engine.
I'd find it hard to think of two locos with differing sounds as you can hear in this recording made of the pair passing Green End on the climb to Goathland with a 7 coach train.
6. Another double header features in this recording but we are off to Levisham at the other end of the line.
Visiting the railway for the 2010 Autumn Steam Gala was ex SR Unrebuilt Battle of Britain Pacific 34070 *Manston* and this was double heading with the ex S&D 7F 2 8 0 53809, just the kind of pairing that must have often happened on the Somerset and Dorset route.
Trains cross at Levisham and to complete the Somerset & Dorset picture, the train that the aforementioned pair were



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- crossing was being hauled by BR Standard 9F 2 10 0 92214 which can be heard departing for Pickering as 34070 & 53809 get under way and head off into Newton Dale.
7. Yet another entertaining feature during Steam Galas is the running of trains on the Esk Valley Line, not just to Whitby as is done on normal running days but the other way to Battersby. This gives the chance for some of the railway's locos to stretch their legs at a little more than the 25 MPH maximum allowed on NYMR metals. During the Autumn Steam Gala in 2007 we had spotted that, with a bit of luck we might be able to get a recording of two trains at Grosmont, one heading for Battersby, the other to Pickering. We would have two chances during the day but everything would have to be timed just right. We had already made one successful recording earlier (you can hear it on my original NYMR audio CD) but for the second recording we needed the train from Whitby to be more than a few minutes late. Now it is not unknown for the timetable to go a little awry at these events and such was the case on this day with the Whitby train being just late enough. As the recording begins the ex LNER K4 2-6-0 61994 *The Great Marquess* with the 14:46 to Battersby is already waiting in the platform ready to depart while a few passengers cross to Platform 4 for the 15:00 to Pickering waiting to depart behind GWR pair; 0 6 2T 6619 & 2 8 0T 5224. The K4 gets away first and accelerates away on the 1 in 102 gradient then, as the its regulator is closed for the speed restriction over river bridge not far away, the GWR pair depart, 6619 sounding the decidedly untypical chime whistle which, along with its Kylchap blastpipe must be of considerable annoyance to the true *Great Western* enthusiast! As the sound of the Pickering bound train begins to fade away the ex LNER Q6 0 8 0 63395 can be heard shunting the freight train into position ready for its next run up the bank.
8. For the following year's Autumn Steam Gala the railway had the ex LMS Black 5 4 6 0 45231 visiting which, being a loco passed for main line running, was employed working trains to Battersby. Heard from a point on the valley side overlooking the line about half way between Grosmont and Egton, as this recording begins, you can just hear the Black 5 approaching the speed restricted bridge over the River Esk and the loco is eased before continuing on the 1 in 102 gradient towards Egton making a very fine sound.
9. Still heading for Battersby we have a recording made of another Black 5, 44767, about half a mile north west of Glaisdale station during the 2011 Autumn Steam Gala. The Esk Valley Line only sees a Sunday service of trains from Middlesbrough to Whitby during the summer months and, as the NYMR Gala weekends fall outside this period, they have the line to themselves and take full advantage by running two trains on the line as far as Battersby. These trains cross at Glaisdale and 44767 had been waiting for a train heading for Whitby hauled by another Black 5, 45428, to arrive. With the Whitby train safely in the loop and the token obtained 44767 can leave and after a little trouble with adhesion sounds fine on the 1 in 102 gradient. Not far away is a bridge over the River Esk which, like most bridges on this line, has a speed restriction on it and the driver shuts off causing the safety valves to lift. Once clear of the bridge 44767 sounds fine heading away on the gradient towards Lealholm and Danby.
10. For trains returning from Battersby, most of the run is on favourable gradients all except for the initial 1½ miles to Kildale. This, at 1 in 47, is the steepest gradient on the line. During the Spring Steam Gala in 2007 the BR Standard Class 4 4 6 0 75029 was employed working trains to Battersby and as this was the first year that Gala trains had run to Battersby, the load was just 4 coaches. Heard from a point about mid-way between Battersby and Kildale 75029 sounds to be having little trouble with its load despite the steep gradient.
11. Among the locomotives visiting the North Yorkshire Moors Railway over the years they have been fortunate to have had a few from the National Railway Museum. For the Spring Gala in 2003 the ex LNER V2 2 6 2 60800 *Green Arrow* was visiting and was a loco that I was keen to get recordings of it climbing the steep gradient between Grosmont and Goathland. Having already recorded the loco earlier in the day I had been a little disappointed to find that the it was being worked fairly easily; I had hoped for far more noise! Later in the day the loco hauled the lunch time dinning train, *The Moorlander*, and was being driven far harder when I recorded it passing *Green End*. With 7 coaches behind the tender, including three heavy Pullman cars, it makes a fine sound on the 1 in 49 gradient.
12. For the Spring 2006 Gala another loco that is part of the National Collection visited the railway. This was the GWR 4 4 0



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3440 *City of Truro*.

Whether it was the Railway's decision or imposed at the insistence of the NRM I'm not sure but the maximum load for this loco when working single handed was no more than 3 coaches.

The three coaches that the loco was hauling when I recorded it passing Green End on this occasion were hardly typical of a GWR train being of the LNER Teak variety.

As you can hear in this recording, the 4 4 0 has no difficulty whatsoever with this light load on the climb.

13. Back in 1987 the idea of day to day running through to Whitby was a mere pipe dream but during the Autumn Steam Gala that year the NYMR managed to run a few special trains.

As they needed a main line certified engine they obtained the BR Standard Class 9F 2 10 0 92220 *Evening Star* from the NRM.

Getting a recording on the 'main line' between Grosmont and Whitby wasn't an option; we had taken a ride on one of these trains earlier in the day and found that the loco made virtually no noise until having passed non-stop through Platform 3 at Grosmont, it encountered the steep climb to Goathland.

Heard near Beck Hole Bridge on a breezy afternoon, 92220 sounds to have steam to spare, making easy work on the climb with another train returning from Whitby.

14. At the end of a successful day recording trains during the 2009 Spring Gala we thought we had made our last recording when, on our way home, approaching the railway bridge at Moorgates we spotted the tail end of a train heading for Goathland. Realising that this meant that the train we had already recorded on the climb from Grosmont must still be waiting we stopped for yet another recording.

The loco was ex LNER B1 4 6 0 61264 which can be heard approaching from Goathland as this recording begins. Not far away, the loco is eased for a speed restriction and the safety valves lift briefly before the regulator is opened once more for the remainder of the climb to Goathland Summit.

Seen in the late afternoon sunshine hauling 5 teak coaches the B1 made a splendid sight and sound to round off the day!

15. Levisham is a good place to visit on Gala days if for no other reason than the catering provided at the Weighbridge; I can give a strong recommendation for their bacon butties and Bovrill!

As far as railway activity is concerned, with trains crossing there is plenty of interest and, during the 2011 Spring Gala there was even more entertainment than normal.

Visiting the railway for a second time was the unique BR Standard Pacific 71000 *Duke of Gloucester* which, as this recording begins, is about to head off towards Goathland and Grosmont then, to maintain the BR Standard theme, as the sound of the Pacific heading off into Newton Dale begins to fade, BR Standard Class 4 2 6 4T 80072 piloting BR Standard Class 9F 92214 can be heard departing for Pickering.

After that, the entertainment wasn't over as, standing in the siding at the north end of the station was the replica Liverpool & Manchester Railway 2 2 0 No. 9 *Planet* with its 2 replica coaches. This loco was providing a short shuttle run through Levisham station between service trains and once the signalman has cleared the route out of the siding, *Planet* propels its coaches back into the down platform.

16. Having a high profile visiting loco on the railway is always a good way to boost passenger numbers and one of the highest profile locos to visit the North Yorkshire Moors Railway in recent years is the LNER designed, newly built A1 Pacific 60163 *Tornado*.

The first visit of this loco was in the Spring of 2009 and it certainly drew the crowds as this was its first visit to a preserved railway Steam Gala.

As this recording begins 60163 is waiting with at Levisham a train bound for Grosmont but, before it departs, the BR Standard Class 4 4 6 0 75029 can be heard departing for Pickering.

Departing, 60163 slips on the level crossing but once that is corrected the loco has no further difficulty with its 8 coach train and doesn't sound as though it needs to be worked particularly hard on the gradient into Newton Dale.

17. In 2007, for the Spring gala the NYMR made rather ambitious plans for what should have been a rather splendid event with the London and North Eastern Railway as its theme. Plans were for all three A4 Pacifics currently in working order to attend along with other locos with LNER connections but sadly unforeseen circumstances prevented a number of locos from attending so the event was changed to one with an East Coast theme and, to cover the loco shortage, diesels appeared in the roster. Now, even though I have a slightly soft spot for Deltics, this was a Gala that I didn't attend.

Not to abandon the idea completely, the NYMR tried again the following year and I'm pleased to say that no diesels were required this time and they succeeded in having all three A4s on the line.

The Gala was spread over two weekends and on the final day of the second weekend I reached Goathland in time to get a



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recording of the first train off Grosmont departing for Pickering.

It came as no great surprise to find that this train was being hauled by one of the visiting A4 Pacifics, in this case 60009 *Union of South Africa* which can be heard departing for Pickering as this recording begins and accelerating well on the rising gradient towards Goathland Summit.

18. During the winter of 2009/10 the NYMR had at last found the resources, or perhaps I should just say money, to rebuild one of the bridges on the climb from Grosmont to Goathland. This bridge, Bridge 30, crossing Eller Beck not far north of Darnholm which being 145 years old, was in serious need of renewal and a fund raising campaign during 2009 plus money from elsewhere enabled the work to be carried out that winter with a brand new bridge constructed and installed in time for the main running season. As the 2010 Spring Gala was the first to see trains over the new bridge I thought I might as well go and have a look at it and try some recordings near there for a change.

On the first train from Grosmont that morning was ex LMS Black 5 4 6 0 45407 which, having spent lots of time on the railway, while not actually a resident, can hardly be classed as a visitor.

This recording was made from the hillside to the east of the line overlooking Bridge 30 and as it begins, 45407 can be heard approaching from Beck Hole and making a fine sound as it passes with 6 coaches behind the tender.

19. On the same day another visitor to the line, the GNR N2 0 6 2T 1744 had been employed running shuttle trains between Grosmont and Goathland with a pause so that passengers could view the new bridge. As the N2's train was just one saloon coach, there wasn't much scope for recording but later in the afternoon it worked all the way to Pickering with three teak coaches.

With this slightly heavier load it did make a bit more noise as you can hear in this recording of it departing from Levisham.

It was a little unfortunate that there appeared to be a minor problem with the level crossing. Instead of the warning sounders only working when the barriers are being lowered, they remained in operation continuously, only stopping when the barriers returned to the raised position. So, if you were wondering what the strange sound coming from the left is, now you know!

20. I have already mentioned that banking is sometimes a feature of Galas but having a working banker isn't all that common with trains returning from Pickering. For operating convenience as much as anything (it saves running round and also may save a light engine path) a loco may remain on the rear of the train returning to Grosmont but all too often they do little work, perhaps moving no more than their own weight.

Having double headed a train to Pickering during the 2010 Spring Gala Black 5 44871, which had been piloted by Standard Tank 80072, remained at the rear of the returning train.

Departing from Levisham, aside from a stuck cylinder cock, 80072 sounds fine. As for the Black 5 at the rear, aside from its whistle, there's little to be heard but 80072 sounds to be having no difficulty with 7 coaches plus the weight of the 'banker' as it heads off into Newton Dale.

21. Aside from 6619, which was resident on the line for some years, locos of Great Western Railway origin haven't been common on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway but in Autumn 2011 they had a visit from Manor Class 4 6 0 7822 *Foxcote Manor* which is heard in this recording departing from Levisham and making steady progress on the gradient while 92214 can just be heard heading for Pickering.

22. We have already heard one visiting 'Brit' in the very first track on this disk but a second one visited for the 2012 Spring Gala so we'll end with that; this was 70000 *Britannia* and, as they are usually well worth recording, we'll have another departure from Levisham.

At the time there was a 15 MPH speed restriction just to the north of the station so the start was a little slower than normal but once clear, 70000 sounds fine accelerating away on the gradient into Newton Dale.

