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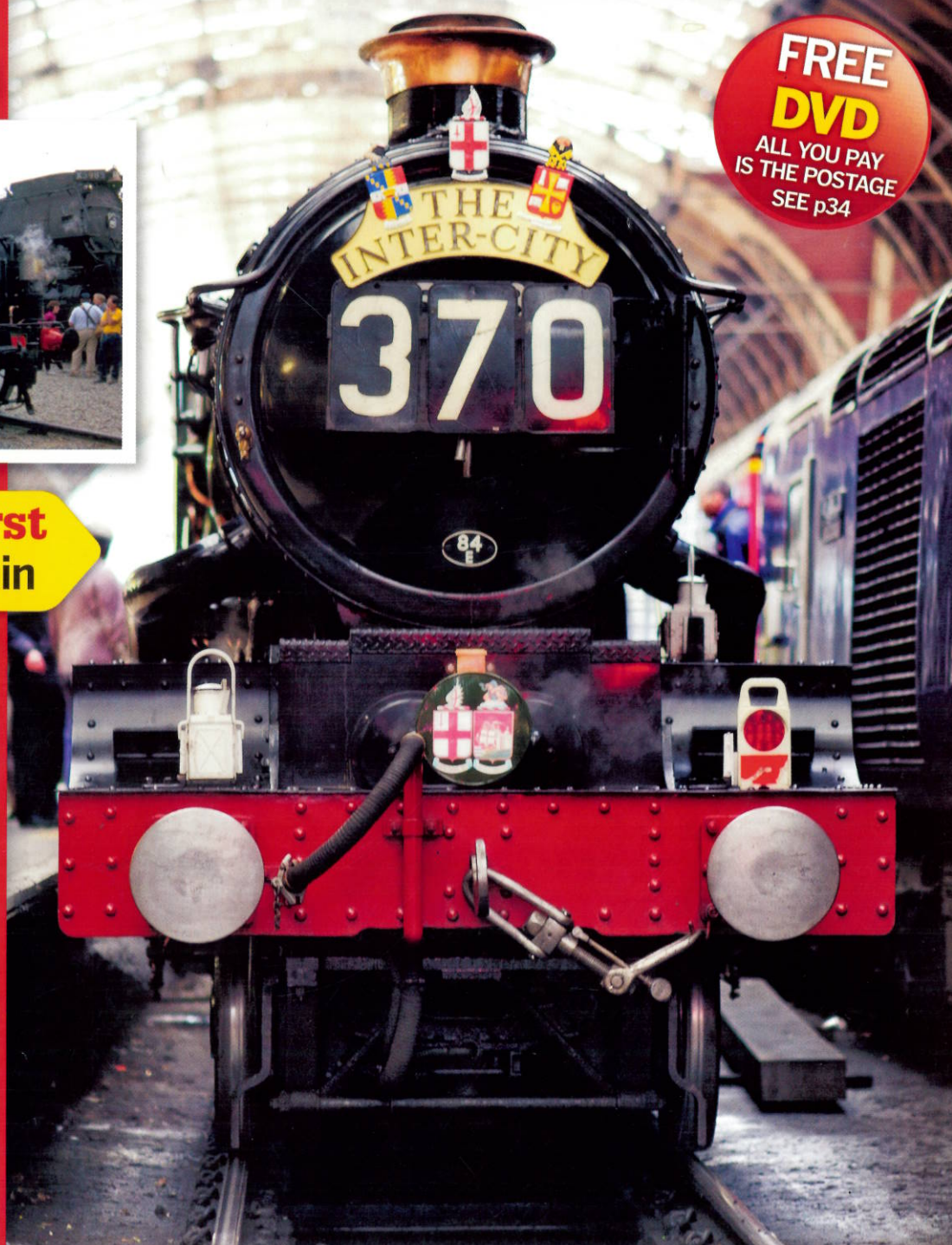
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BY TONY STREETER

Dunrobin: coming home and steami

Duke of Sutherland's famous 0-4-4T in surprise move to Beamish

DUNROBIN is coming home – and could steam in Britain in just two years!

The unique Sharp, Stewart 0-4-4T, which was built for the Duke of Sutherland in 1895, is to move to Beamish from Canada this year.

In a deal expected to be finalised imminently, the North of England Open Air Museum is to buy *Dunrobin* and its dedicated 'day saloon', No. 58A,

for CAD160,000 (£102,000).

The locomotive, which has been in Canada since 1965, is currently owned by the British Columbia Government and is based at the Fort Steele heritage town in the state.

Shipping to the UK is expected to take place in spring via the port of Vancouver, after any asbestos on the locomotive has been stripped.

"My personal hope would be to have it in time for the 'Great North Steam Fair', which starts on April 14," Beamish curator of

Left: Even after 45 years in Canada, *Dunrobin* still carries its original Highland Railway tablet catching apparatus, fitted to allow the Duke of Sutherland to operate the locomotive on single lines. **TONY STREETER**

Below: *Dunrobin*, as seen at Fort Steele on July 14 2005. The enlarged cab was fitted to allow the Duke of Sutherland to give his guests – including the occasional monarch – cab rides. **TONY STREETER**

Right: *Dunrobin* has been a regular performer at the Fort Steele heritage town in British Columbia, although the Canadian-style coupler jars the otherwise pleasing appearance of the locomotive. **HOWARD JOHNSTON**

transport Paul Jarman told *Steam Railway*.

Dismantling of *Dunrobin* is planned for this year, and a return to steam in 2013 "is achievable," said Mr Jarman.

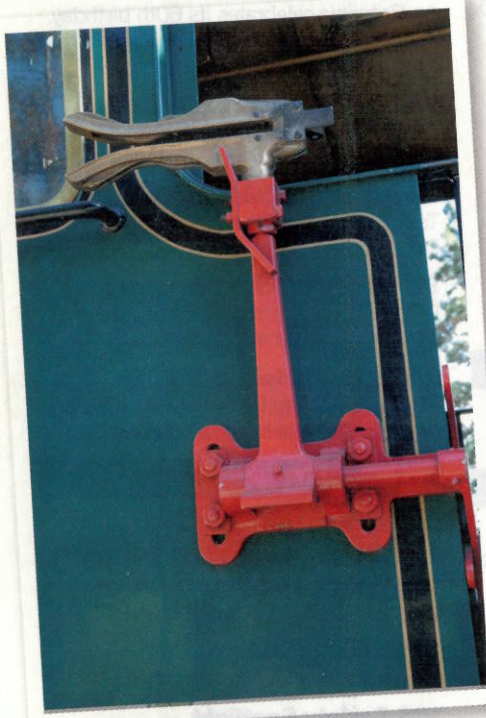
After restoration the locomotive will be made available for hire, as well as running at the County Durham site.

"It would be great to see it at *Dunrobin*," said Mr Jarman "and of course on some of Scotland's preserved lines."

"The foremost thing is its obligations at Beamish, but it would be certainly available for tour."

Mr Jarman – who has not yet seen the locomotive – plans to travel to British Columbia in January to carry out a full survey. He described the 0-4-4T as "ideal" for operation on the short Beamish demonstration line, based around the restored Rowley station.

"It's a small enough high Victorian tank engine, it looks the part, and it's ideal for us in terms of practicality – it'll go round" >>



Dunrobin: Overlooked, o

It was the bargain of 1965, but no one seemed interested.

When the Duke of Sutherland's unique 1895 0-4-4T *Dunrobin* and its private coach were put up for sale at just £1,000 (£15,000 in today's money) for both, there were no takers from the UK.

Then a Canadian businessman stepped in and whisked them across the Atlantic for his own private use. While it seemed as though they would be lost to the nation forever, it has thankfully turned out to be just a 45-year holiday.

Despite its illustrious history and powerful connections with royalty and aristocracy, the locomotive *Dunrobin* has always been a jewel in the vault. So its arrival at Beamish next year will be the first time that its elegant features will have been truly appreciated by a large audience.

While we must be pleased that all three items from the Duke's personal train have survived, it is no thanks to the fifth Duke of Sutherland, who had little regard for his treasured assets.

In 1949, when British



ing in 2013!



Above: Also coming home with Dunrobin is the Duke of Sutherland's dedicated 'day saloon' No. 58A, which is preserved with the locomotive on Fort Steele. TONY STREETER

atcast and unwanted – until now!

Railways Scottish Region tore up the historic agreement that enabled *Dunrobin* and its two saloons – a bogie coach and a four-wheeler – to run on the main line, the Duke's blunt response was to dispose of them to the highest bidder.

The large saloon, whose occupants included King Edward VII, King George V and King George VI, narrowly escaped being sold to a dealer for conversion into a bungalow. It is now in the National Collection, and has recently been moved to the Scottish Railway Preservation Society at Bo'ness in exchange for the loan of NBR 'J36' 0-6-0 No. 65243 *Maude* to York.

The story of a rich nobleman indulging in his hobby begins with the third Duke of Sutherland, who was very much an enthusiast for railways, realising the benefit of having a line to serve his home at Dunrobin Castle.

While insisting on having his own station two miles north of Golspie, the Duke paid for the construction of the 17.5 mile line from Golspie to Helmsdale after the previous promoters had run out of money to push any further north, and it was completed in June 1871.

It was natural that he should

want his own rolling stock in preference to the rudimentary items operated by the Highland Railway. His locomotive normally took his private saloon as far as Inverness, but his saloon was then allowed to be attached to any main line service.

The original *Dunrobin*, a 21-ton 2-4-0T built by Kitsons of Leeds, was replaced in 1895 by the present engine of the same name, three years after the fourth Duke inherited the estate.

Designed by Highland Railway Locomotive Superintendent David Jones, remembered for creating the first UK 4-6-0 No. 103 (now in Glasgow Transport Museum) the second *Dunrobin* was an 0-4-4T, completed at Sharp, Stewart's Atlas Works in Glasgow in 1895. Its livery was dark green lined in black and yellow, and – unusually for its day – it had an enclosed cab, large enough to carry passengers as well as the crew.

There were two plush passenger saloons, the larger of which was on bogies and internal fittings fit for royalty. The smaller one was a four-wheeler, constructed at the Highland Railway's Lochgorm Works in 1909, and the two were often coupled up for greater riding stability.

Purchased through a Lincolnshire-based dealer, Captain Jack Howey – millionaire Chairman and co-founder of the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway – had *Dunrobin* moved to the Kent Coast for display at New Romney.

Following Captain Howey's death in 1963, and a review of the RHDR's poor financial and structural condition, the new owners decided to put their standard gauge assets on the market. However, preservation was still in its infancy, and there could have been little interest in quirky non-BR vehicles when there were bigger distractions – not least the elimination of the Stanier 'Princess Coronation' 4-6-2s – and Great Western types were being mercilessly reduced.

Dunrobin's foreign buyer was announced as Harold Foster, a Canadian businessman who wanted to take it to Victoria, British Columbia.

At this time, rescuing the engine and the small saloon from their decrepit shed at New Romney on March 11 was seen as a mercy mission, and also a significant logistical exercise. Special arrangements were made for Southern Region '33' diesel D6569 (since scrapped) to be sent from

Ashford to drag it from the rusty RHDR siding, through New Romney station and into the nearby goods yard. Two low loaders then arrived to take the vehicles on what was thought to be a one-way journey to London Docks.

Once in Canada, *Dunrobin* was soon in trouble, because the owner was declared bankrupt before even the end of 1965, and the engine and saloon were destined for public auction to pay the importer's debts. Their estimated value had also risen seven times to £7,000.

The government of British Columbia stepped in with a successful bid of \$15,000, and *Dunrobin* was chosen to haul Canada's centenary train across the country, driven by Charles Bucknell who was seconded from BR's Colwick (Nottingham) depot for three months.

These duties over, it went to a museum at Fort Steele for regular employment on a three-mile line in the south east of British Columbia.

Dunrobin was a popular visitor at the Steamfair show at Sacramento, California from May 3-12 1991, standing alongside Locomotion No. 1 and Captain Bill Smith's GNR 0-6-OST No. 1247.

HEADLINE NEWS

A Highland legacy

It is interesting to note that the Highland Railway's 'W' class of 0-4-4Ts were near clones of *Dunrobin*, being built in 1905-1906 to the design of locomotive superintendent Peter Drummond. They were the last engines built at the company's Lochgorm works in Inverness, and were used on branch line services.

Passing to the LMS in 1923 where they were numbered 15051-15054, No. 15052 was withdrawn in 1930, and 15054 followed in the 1940s. The remaining two survived to become British Railways Nos. 55051 and 55053. They spent their final years based at Helmsdale for working the Dornoch Light Railway, and by the time they were finally withdrawn in 1956 and 1957 respectively, they were the last former Highland Railway locomotives still in use, and were still in almost original condition. See this month's 'Glorious Years' on page 83.

» the curves," said Mr Jarman. "On top of that it's got a hell of a history."

Built to haul private trains over the Highland Railway for the fourth Duke of Sutherland, from his private station at Dunrobin near Golspie, north of Inverness, the locomotive hosted the kings Edward VII, George V and George VI, and Prime Minister Winston Churchill, among others. However, the Dukes' right to run trains expired with nationalisation in 1948, after which *Dunrobin* was

declared surplus and privately preserved (see panel).

It moved to Canada in 1965 after being bought by a businessman, and subsequently ended up as the first locomotive at the newly established Fort Steele open-air museum – where the 2 ½-mile demonstration line is named the Dunrobin Railway.

Repatriation of the locomotive and coach is the culmination of efforts that started during a Steam Railway tour to Canada, organised by GW Travel in 2005 – the year



Above: Part of the interior of No. 58A. Imagine the dignitaries who have sat around that table. TONY STREETER

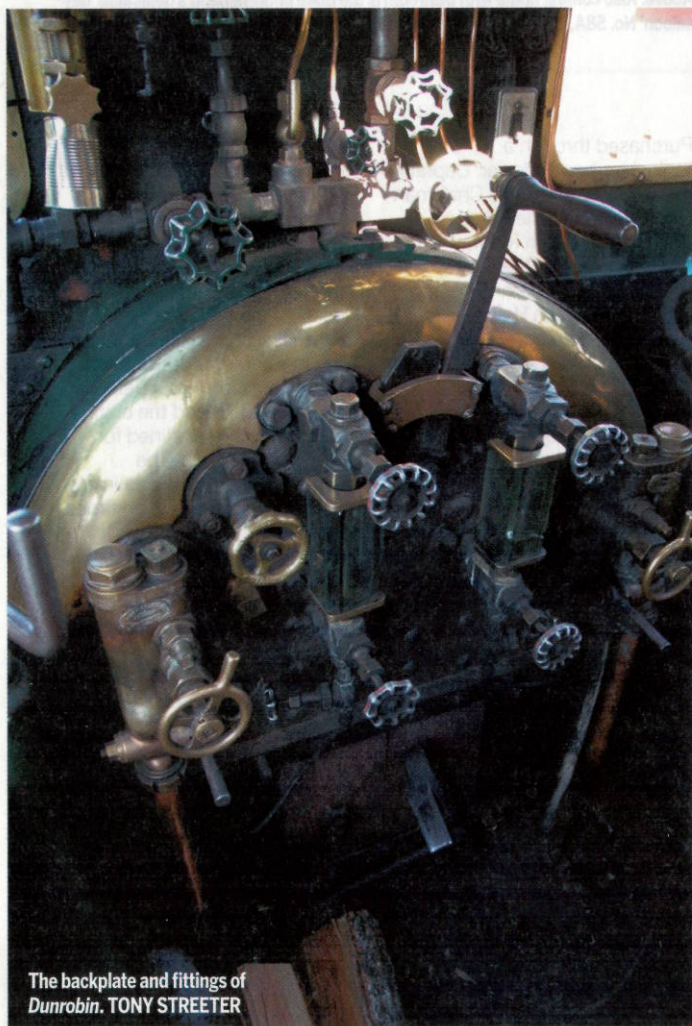
Dunrobin last ran. A positive response to initial enquiries by GWT and *Steam Railway* later led to a firm proposal to repatriate the locomotive by Beamish, which has been involved in detailed negotiations for over 12 months.

The plan has been masterminded by Mr Jarman and by special projects manager Jim Rees, who has been part of the repatriation discussions throughout, and who saw the locomotive at the Sacramento Railfair in 1991. Beamish director Richard Evans has said he is

"absolutely thrilled."

The locomotive is to be restored as closely as possible to its 'as withdrawn' condition; the Canadian additions of buckeye coupling, air brakes and electric headlamp will be removed. Beamish is also keen to collate the locomotive's story, and is asking people with relevant information to come forward.

Interested in hiring *Dunrobin* once it is restored, or have information on its history? Contact Paul Jarman or Jim Rees at Beamish.



The backplate and fittings of *Dunrobin*. TONY STREETER

'Y7' in steam and off to Beamish

RUNNING at Beamish before *Dunrobin*, will be 'Y7' 0-4-0T No. 8088. By December the diminutive North Eastern Railway-designed (but LNER-built) locomotive had steamed at its North Norfolk Railway restoration base.

After final tweaks, the Worsdell engine is expected at Beamish within weeks, painted in wartime LNER black with 'NE' markings. The 1923-built Darlington locomotive previously ran in BR black as No. 68088.