

NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY STUDY GROUP



NEWSLETTER

March 2026 – NUMBER **157**

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Sitting down to write this I was reminded of a teacher I had who, after calling me out to the front and putting his hand below his gown on to that piece of leather, would say "so here we are again then". In many ways this is like the Chairman's Notes where if you look back at previous years and what I wrote then, nothing has changed.

- I'm still asking members to pay their subs promptly
- I'm still looking for (other than the usual gang) volunteers to help out at Shows.

As regards the first, it still amazes me that some 30% of people need reminding.

The continued increase in production and postage costs for the Journal is almost certainly going to mean we look at an increase in subs. My personal proposal for the AGM, is going to be two levels, namely a pre Xmas sub and a post Xmas (but higher) sub. Who knows, it might just concentrate the mind.

As regards the second, we have in date order:

Perth (27&28 June), George Watson's (5&6 Sept.) and Falkirk (21&22 Nov.)

Anyway.

In the last Newsletter it was erroneously stated that I mentioned the passing of Bill Lynn. This should, of course, have been Ed McKenna. It is also my sad task to advise members of the recent death of G. Norman Turnbull. Known personally to many, Norman spent decades walking and photographing the railways in the Borders and further afield. We owe him a big debt of gratitude for the photos etc he leaves behind.

For the 7mm modellers amongst us, the Group's first commission in 7mm and our first 3D printed kit is selling well. If well supported will see more added to the range with the earlier I6T mineral wagon proposed next. 3D is, to me, a game changer and I look forward to seeing what else is planned albeit preferably in 4mm!!

On the subject of 4mm, we still have some of our exclusive RTR **Glen Sloy**, available to pre-order at reduced rates.

On the book front, Volume 2 of **Scottish Traders' Wagons** is now out and our Sales Officer has copies available at reduced members rates.

Our member Grahame Hood has finished his book, **Peebles Railway Memories**. This will be a very limited production, priced at £20 but the Group is negotiating so as to be hopefully able to offer Members a copy at the reduced rate of £18 plus the usual P&P. Full details are not yet known but if you are interested, email our Sales Officer to note your interest. It will be offered on a first come first served basis.

In response to a couple of questions regarding the Forum of Scottish Line Societies, Scottish Railway Conference 2026, full details and a booking form will be included with the July Newsletter 158. Lastly a thank you to those who responded to my "information wanted" in Journal 156. We are now sure of all but one. The answers will be in the July Journal.

Robin Boog

ECJS Restaurant Car

An update to the expression of interest for a 3D printed ECJS Dia 78 Restaurant Car in Newsletter 156.

Pat reports the project has comfortably exceeded the minimum order number.

Andy reports little progress to date, no doubt partly due to the winter season of flu's and colds and the weather!

One snippet of info is that in LNER days one of these cars was in regular use on the morning train from Aberdeen to Inverness, no doubt with the sleeper twin off the Aberdonian, which went to Lossiemouth, returning on the afternoon departure from Inverness.

SALES

The USB of NBRSG Journal back issues now covers up to Journal 140.

If any member has previously purchased a CD or USB and would like to have the PDF's added up to Journal 140, they can return the original item to me along with a SAE for large letter, and I will add the new files and post it back to them.

sales@nbrstudygroup.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTION TIME

A big thank you to all those members who paid their renewal subscription promptly, about two-thirds of those due.

Reminders were sent to the 97 still outstanding at the end of January, and over three-quarters of these have been resolved.

If our records show you have still to renew, your mailing includes a reminder.

Renewing online using the online form (from the Members area of the website) is the quick and easy way to pay and was used by nearly two-thirds of those members who have renewed so far; but renewal by post and cheque is still very welcome too.

We again cannot stress enough how important it is to renew promptly. It takes considerable time and effort to remind those who haven't paid. *Andrew Jones*

MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITIONS

The next exhibition we will be attending with the group's stand is the Perth Model Railway Group (part of the Scottish Model Engineering Trust) exhibition where we will once again have our own stand.

Any member who is able to assist with manning our display stand, even for an hour or two, please contact:

exhibitions@nbrstudygroup.co.uk

PERTH

27 & 28 June 2026,

The Dewars Centre,

Glover Street, Perth, PH2 0TH

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

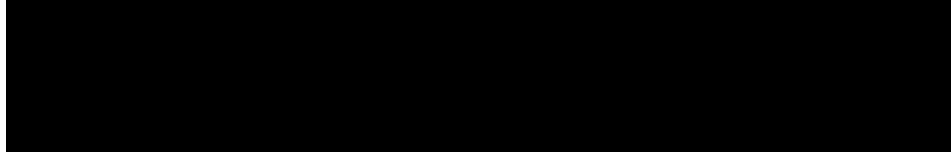
New Members: We are pleased to extend a warm welcome to the following new members:



Change of Address:



Resignations:



Deceased: We are sorry to report the death of the following member:



There are 325 active full members recorded for the Group

FORUM OF SCOTTISH LINE SOCIETIES Scottish Railway History Conference, Saturday 3 October 2026

We return to the A K Bell Library in Perth this year for the sixth conference which has the theme '**Railway People**'. The programme will follow the same format as previous years, starting at 1100 and finishing at 1700.

We used the Library for the first time in 2024 and found the facilities there to suit our needs very well.

The list of speakers is being finalised but will include a wide range of topics to provide interesting and unusual aspects of working for the railways.

The cost for the day, to include a buffet lunch, is expected to be around £30.

Booking forms will be available shortly and will be included with the posting of the July Journal 159 as well as being on the Groups website.

Keith Fenwick

MONKLAND & KIRKINTILLOCH 200

An exhibition, entitled 'Monkland and Kirkintilloch, Scotland's First Modern Railway', will launch on 21 March at the Auld Kirk Museum and will run until 20 May.

The exhibition will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Monkland and Kirkintilloch Railway, which opened in 1826 and covered a 10 mile route from collieries in the Monklands, to the Forth and Clyde Canal in Kirkintilloch.

Visitors will be able to view significant and rare archival materials from the East Dunbartonshire archives at the William Patrick Library, including a contemporary drawing of the first M & K locomotive as well as archive photographs from the 1960's and sections of rail, stone sleeper blocks and Monkland Railways tickets. There will also be a display of locomotives and wagon models.

The museum will be open Tuesdays to Saturdays from 1000 until 1300 and then 1400 until 1700.

Other events to mark the bicentenary are being organised at the Kirkintilloch end of the line including inauguration and unveiling of a National Transport Trust Red Wheel at Southbank Marina.

16 April, a talk held on the history of the railway by Don Martin MBE. The event will also serve as the launch of a book of his own photographs from the 1960's of the Monkland & Kirkintilloch line.

A Guided Walk along the northern part of the Monkland & Kirkintilloch Railway is planned for 7 May.

www.edlc.co.uk

BORDERS RAILWAY

Ten years on from the opening of the railway from Edinburgh to Tweedbank in the Borders, approval has been issued to start the next phase of work to explore the case for extending it to Carlisle.

Following recent confirmation from the Department for Transport and drawing on the first tranche of the up to £10m committed by the Scottish Government and the UK Government through the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

This stage unlocks the funding to appoint a project manager Turner & Townsend, for work to assess the benefits and challenges of extending the line beyond Tweedbank.

The development of the Strategic Outline Business Case for the Borders Railway is a key project within the Borderlands Deal to assess the transport options and potential benefits that would best serve this part of the South of Scotland and Northern England.

Following the success of the re-instatement of the Borders Railway to Tweedbank, an extension could improve transport links to towns such as Hawick, which continue to face the effects of recent economic downturns, as well as offering improved connectivity for tourists, commuters and residents alike.

Extending the railway through the heart of the Borderlands could also provide more environmentally friendly transport connections for the places and towns along the route.

The railway line, better known as the Waverley Route, closed on the 9 January 1969. The line from Edinburgh to Tweedbank was reopened to passengers on 6 September 2015 after many years of campaigning.

ON AND ABOUT THE (exNBR) LINE

Glenrothes

Fife councillors unanimously backed a motion in December, calling for the renaming of the station 'Glenrothes with Thornton', known thus since its opening in 1992.

Located three miles away from the new town of Glenrothes, it often causes confusion for passengers travelling into the area as Markinch is closer.

A campaign which first started in 2019 by Thornton Community Council to rename the station simply as 'Thornton', has gathered wide spread support in the area.

St Andrews

StARLink campaigners have pledged to continue their fight for a rail link to St Andrews. This is despite a recent decision by Transport Scotland, after deliberating over 18 months, to reject the findings of the appraisal where they claim that there was no 'socio-economic' case for a railway of any kind to St Andrews and that all that was needed was an enhanced bus service.

www.starlink-campaign.org.uk

Bathgate

Network Rail installed around 800 metres of new, higher capacity drainage pipes near Bathgate station to reduce the risk of flooding. Teams also inspected and cleared existing drainage to ensure it continues to operate effectively.

The £800,000 investment was carried out over Sundays 15, 22 & 29 March. On those dates, train services ran as normal between Helensburgh and Bathgate. A replacement bus service between Bathgate and Haymarket, calling at all intermediate stations was in operation.

Pomathorn

The former station master's house at Pomathorn was bought at auction in September 2025 by a couple who have started a YouTube blog about their purchase and on-going renovation.

Opened on 4 July 1855 and initially called Penicuik (which was actually half a mile north of the station), it was renamed Pomathorn after the Penicuik branch opened on 2 December 1872.

Downgraded to an unstaffed halt from 1 November 1946, renamed Pomathorn Halt from 7 July 1947, it would close to all traffic along with the rest of the Peebles Loop on 5 February 1962.

The videos can be found on YouTube:

Pomathorn Station Renovation.

www.youtube.com

Electrification

A nine day closure from Haymarket to Dalmeny commenced 17 January to allow for engineering work associated with the electrification of the railway.

This included demolition and replacement of bridges at Saughton, South Gyle and Dalmeny, and the removal of one at Turnhouse. Track lowering and renewal at Turnhouse as well as de-vegetation included the Winchburgh chord.

During the closure, a revised timetable of services between Inverkeithing to Dundee and Inverkeithing to Leven operated via Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline. Aberdeen services were diverted via Stirling. A bus service operated between Edinburgh and Inverkeithing.

Work has now commenced on the next stage, with overhead masts being seen north of Kinghorn to Thornton North Junction and along the Leven line. Later engineering work will see masts go up between Thornton and Ladybank, Cardenden to Thornton North Junction.

In Kirkcaldy, the wooden footbridge which runs from Boreland Road to Randolph Place requires replacement while the footbridge between Lady Nairn Avenue and Viewforth Gardens needs the parapets to be raised in height. The road bridge on Rosebery Terrace also requires its existing stone wall parapets raised.

At Falkland and Coaltown of Balgonie, bridges are being demolished and rebuilt.

From Saturday 21 February, engineers began preparatory work ahead of piling on the sections of the route to be electrified between Newcraighall and Shawfair, and from Bowshank Tunnel to Tweedbank station on the Borders line.

To allow it to take place, line closures were held over the three weekends of 14/15, 21/22 & 28/29 of March.

This is part of the Scottish Government investment of £342m to electrify the Fife and Borders line, albeit with discontinuous electrification requiring new battery electric trains which have still to be ordered.

Cable Theft

£20,000 of cable was stolen from a section of track near Valleyfield Lagoons in Fife on the evening of 25 January. Further sections of cable had been cut and hidden.

Thanks to Alan Simpson & John Yellowlees for their contributions with additional material from The Courier & Advertiser, East Lothian Courier, Glasgow Times, The Fife Free Press, The Herald, Network Rail, Railscot.co.uk, The Scotsman

Leven

The £5.8m footbridge, spanning the Levenmouth Rail Link between Kirkland and Mountflourie opened at the start of March. The bridge opens more than a year and a half after the rail link became operational.

The 100-metre structure reconnects communities, schools and services on either side of the railway, restoring an important local link that has been unavailable during rail reinstatement works.

Developed and delivered by Fife Council's roads and transportation services with funding from the UK Government, it was constructed by Network Rail and its contractor following extensive planning, engineering and installation activity.

This follows the already open bridge and lift at Cameron Bridge station and the 144 meter long footbridge at Duniface, connecting Methilhill and Kennoway.

These three bridges all form part of new active travel routes, reconnecting communities divided by the rebuilt railway and improving walking and cycling in the area.

West Highland Line

Network Rail successfully delivered a £15m improvement project on the line between Crianlarich and Fort William.

During a nine day closure of the line in November, engineers worked to deliver a series of upgrades, including renewing sections of track, drainage improvements and clearing hazardous vegetation to help protect the line against heavy rainfall and extreme weather conditions.

Key elements of the project included:

- Targeted track renewals, replacing around 10km of rail and more than 9,000 sleepers.
- Renewal of a railway bridge near Corroul, and vegetation management.
- Renewal of five culverts, improving drainage and ensuring structural stability.
- Renewal of Feith footbridge.

Rosyth

A £0.25m feasibility study for a rail freight facility in Rosyth to support logistics and future supply chains is to be undertaken after Forth Green Freeport received its full business case approval.

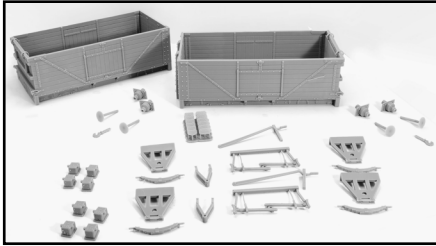
Fife Council cabinet committee members were given an update on the development project which is expected to create around 7,000 jobs between Rosyth and Burntisland and generate substantial investment in the area.

MODELLING NEWS

Mineral Wagon kit

Our next model wagon kit, our first 7mm model and which is 3D printed is now available to purchase.

**NBR Dia.97 ; LNER SSA Dia.28B
18 Ton Mineral Wagon.**



Developed in 1919 and introduced in 1920, the 18 Ton mineral wagon was an improved version of the earlier 16 Ton wagon introduced in 1905. The LNER continued to build these through 1923 and they were uprated to 20 tons during the second world war. Those which entered BR service, lasted until the mid to late 1950's, with the newly built 16 Ton steel mineral wagon rapidly replacing older wooden bodied wagons.

There are two versions of the kit, one in as-built NBR condition (**K007**) and the other as later repaired and seen in LNER and BR use (**K006**).

Axleboxes with both NBR and LNE lettering are included, along with waterslide transfers covering their entire working career. Separate 3D printed wagon number plates, both NBR and LNER, are also included.

Wheels (3'1" open spoke), bearings and couplings are left to the purchaser to source, to suit their own preferences.

Sprung steel buffers and working 3 link couplings are available separately from Scottish Wagon Works.

These wagon kits are for now only available from the NBRSG. Production is limited to small batches and there may be a delay between completing orders.

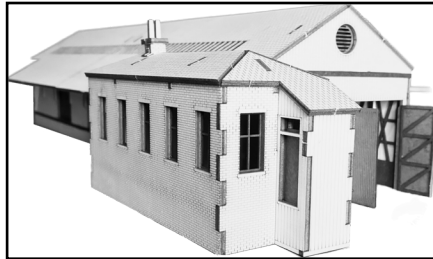
Further information and photographs of the kit are on the Groups website.

Price for NBRSG Members	£38.00
Price for non-Members	£45.00
P&P	£4.50

sales@nbrstudygroup.co.uk

PopUp Designs

Latest release from PopUp Designs is for the NBR Goods Shed which used to be at Markinch. This is laser cut in plywood and available in N, OO & O Gauge.



This building is typical of many North British Railway goods sheds, and the kit has options to allow it to represent similar sheds across the region whether they were formed of wood (Markinch), brick or corrugated iron.

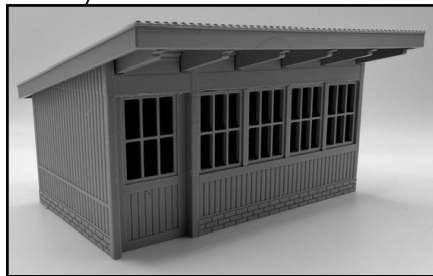
The Goods Shed at Markinch was notable as the home to John Cameron's A4 '60009 Union of South Africa' for over 20 years. Fortunately, it had moved out in 1994, almost a decade before the shed was burnt down on 27 July 2002 in an arson attack.

www.popupdesigns.co.uk

Atkitz

Atkitz is a family-run team founded by Jon and his father-in-law Alex, producing 3D printed building kits in 7mm scale.

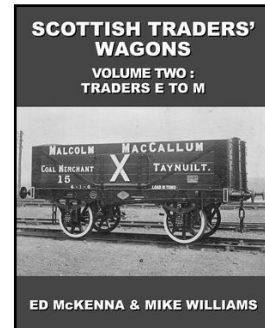
A recent release is based on images of the waiting shelter found at Glenfinnan Station on the West Highland Line, although the style is generic enough to fit most layouts.



Made from only 4 parts, the kit features a 3 course brick base, wooden panelled upper section and an overhanging corrugated roof. The walls are made from a single piece, avoiding any unsightly join lines.

www.atkitz.co.uk

PUBLICATIONS



**Scottish Traders' Wagons
Vol. 2
Traders E to M**

By
Ed McKenna
&
Mike Williams

This, the second of the three volume series, covers Scottish traders whose business names began with the letters E to M. It describes and illustrates the wagons owned or hired by more than six hundred businesses at over one hundred locations from Inverness in the North all the way down to Dumfries and Berwick upon Tweed.

As well as more than one-hundred coal and ironmasters, there are entries for very nearly 400 individual coal and lime merchants. In addition to these traders, wagons on the traffic of brewers and distillers, brick and earthenware goods manufacturers, quarry owners, iron founders, flour millers and grain storage, oil and chemical manufacturers, paper makers, public works contractors, textile and jute manufacturers and municipal utilities all appear, adding another 100 + entries.

Some businesses were large, the Fife Coal Company grew by takeover to have a fleet of over 7,000 wagons.

In 1898 R.Y. Pickering secured a 5-year contract to maintain 174 wagons currently on the traffic of Thomas Muir, Son & Patton of Dundee. Wagon hire was a significant feature.

Many of the photographs in the Hurst, Nelson and Pickering collections depict wagons in liveries that only lasted a few years until they were repainted and re-lettered before going on hire to other businesses. These changes are documented and cross-referenced.

www.lightmoor.co.uk

Price for NBRSG Members	£30.00
Price for non-Members	£35.00
P&P	£4.00

sales@nbrstudygroup.co.uk

The North British Railway Study Group is a registered Scottish charity, Number SC044351

Website: www.nbrstudygroup.co.uk

Please email items for the next Newsletter to newsletter@nbrstudygroup.co.uk or post them to the Newsletter editor:

Ian Terrell, [REDACTED] no later than 3rd July 2026