

WIN NEW BLUEBELL
RAILWAY ALBUM

GRESLEY P2: BUILDING STARTS NEXT SUMMER

HERITAGE RAILWAY

Issue
181

THE COMPLETE STEAM NEWS MAGAZINE

September 26 -
October 23, 2013

WEST COAST RAILWAYS IN 'CATHEDRALS EXPRESS' COUP



PICTURE SPECIAL

TORNADO STORMS INTO BLUEBELL

■ SWANAGE, BLAENAVON AND NORTH NORFOLK GALA ACTION

FOUR A4s FOR BARROW HILL FEBRUARY GALA

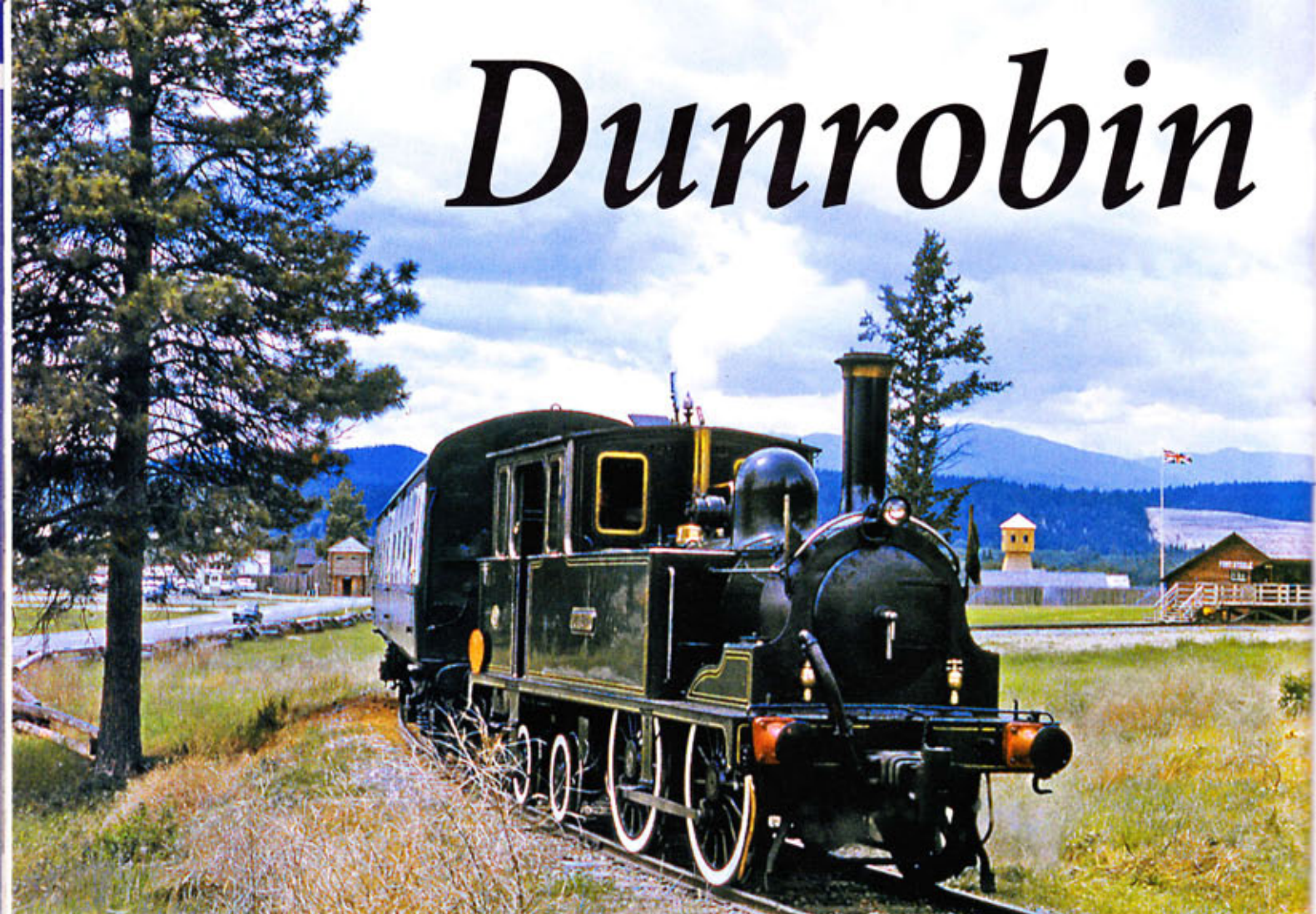


MORTON'S

£4.10



Dunrobin



It is amazing how much information has been made available following *Dunrobin's* arrival back in the UK. This particularly nice view was sent as part of a batch of images taken by the late Ray Manning in June 1970. PHOTO: RAY MANNING/BEAMISH COLLECTION

A locomotive for the rich and famous...

The former Duke of Sutherland's private train consisting of Sharp Stewart 0-4-4T No. 4085 *Dunrobin* and Highland Railway-built brake-saloon No. 58A were reunited with British soil in May 2011 following a 46-year exile in Canada.

Well cared for during their life across the Atlantic, the pair are now subject to an extensive restoration programme to enable their use at Beamish Museum in County Durham. Beamish's transport curator **Paul Jarman** outlines something of their unique history and explains the process of their repatriation and the start of their new lives in England.

The 4th Duke of Sutherland, Cromartie Sutherland-Leveson-Gower (1851-1913), was very typical of the heirs to the powerful British nobility as the British Empire, under Queen Victoria, reached its epoch. With military service, a peerage and enormous wealth and a host of ennoblements, including the post of Mayor of Longton near Stoke-on-Trent (where the family owned the magnificent Trentham Gardens), the 4th Duke shared his father's interest in railways and rail travel. He had inherited a private train and the rights to operate it over the Highland Railway, his father having been instrumental in the construction of the Far North (Sutherland Railway) route northwards from Inverness.

A locomotive was provided, the original *Dunrobin*, a Kitson & Co. 2-4-0T which was later sold to the Highland Railway where it was rebuilt, renumbered 118 and given the name *Gordon Castle*, its original nameplates being transferred to a replacement locomotive, as we shall see. In 1899 Wolverton works built bogie saloon No.57A for the 4th Duke, a coach so luxurious in its appointments that it set the standard for the Royal Train carriages that were subsequently built in the LNWR works.

In 1895 the 4th Duke took delivery of a new



The 4th Duke of Sutherland – a man synonymous with our story here.

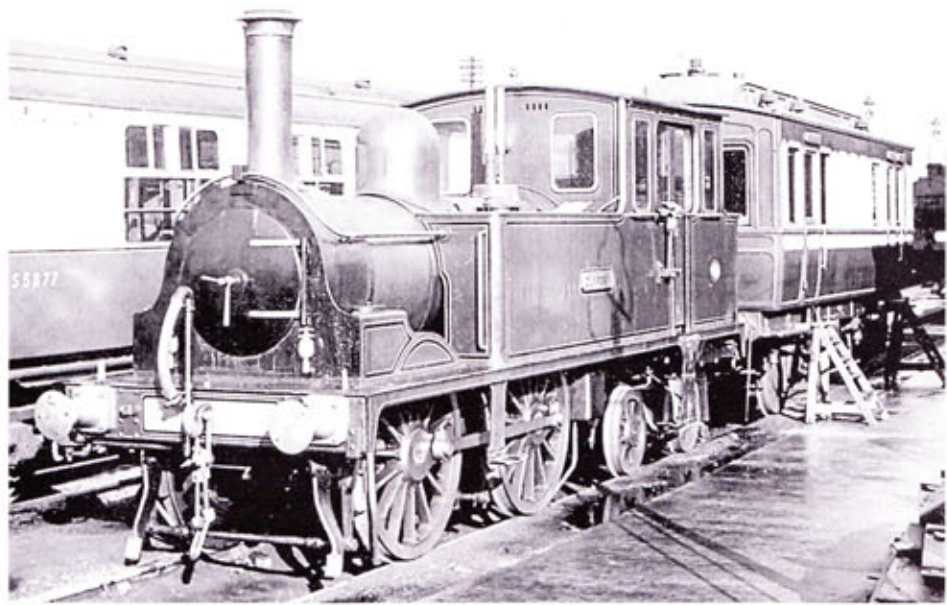
locomotive to pull his private train. This was designed by David Jones of the Highland Railway and built by Sharp Stewart in Glasgow (by then having relocated from Manchester and later to be assimilated into the mighty North British company). The engine was an 0-4-4T of fairly conventional design, though it had one feature that made it unique in the annals of locomotive design – a fully enclosable cab with a four-person wide upholstered seat high up above the footplate. This was to enable guests, of which there were many and of very high status in Europe, to ride in the cab between Inverness and Dunrobin Castle, some 86 miles to the north (by rail – the route was deliberately circuitous in order to open up the Sutherland Estate and in

some ways recompense for the earlier and infamous Highland Clearances by the 1st Duke of Sutherland).

In 1909 a new carriage, No.58A, was delivered. Built by the Highland Railway at its Lochgorm works in Inverness, the coach was described as a brake-saloon and included a single passenger saloon, water closet and brake compartment. End windows were also fitted and the interior was relatively plain in comparison to 57A. This suggests that the saloon was largely used for the conveyance of luggage and the guest's entourage, with the dignitary riding in style (and warmth!) aboard *Dunrobin*.

Operationally, it would appear that 57A was largely kept to running south of Inverness, with transfer to the smaller carriage and locomotive taking place for the final leg of the journey. A carriage shed was built at Dunrobin station and the locomotive kept at Golspie, to the north. When the Duke required his train, the castle at Dunrobin would inform the railway and the regular driver, Mr Alex Rhind, a member of the staff at Dunrobin castle and the driver of both *Dunrobins* from 1870 (the opening of the railway) until 1917, would prepare the locomotive and collect the coach from Dunrobin station. If meeting the Duke or his guests at Inverness then the train might proceed to Inverness the previous day and lay over at the Highland Railway shed. Sometimes the collection would be made from Kyle of Lochalsh, meeting a steam ship there. Operating notices (seemingly collected and retained by Mr Rhind) show that *Dunrobin* and 58A would be used on maybe half a dozen occasions each year, for a period of days in which they would act as taxi service meeting trains or steam ships from the south, taking the party on shooting expeditions or generally running around on ducal business. They would then retire to their slumber pending the next call. In April 1920 a general repair was paid for by the Duke for *Dunrobin*, this taking place at Lochgorm.

Dunrobin did not just serve its master, the Duke. In 1916 the locomotive was loaned to the Highland Railway for use shunting at



Dunrobin and 58A on display at Ashford Works open day in August 1950 and demonstrating that at least one trip away from New Romney was made during the pair's residence there. J. H. ASTON/BEAMISH COLLECTION

Invergordon, and again in 1940 it was loaned to the Royal Navy where it was put to work as a shunting locomotive once again at Invergordon before moving on to Rosyth and later the Defence and Naval Stores at Dalmeir, west of Glasgow.

Dunrobin was still in use here in 1946 before being overhauled and returned to Golspie, though it probably never steamed after this until it was sold and moved south. Evidence of this overhaul was discovered during the dismantling of the engine in 2012, with the boiler barrel apparently being of later date and featuring some very unusual conical rivet heads. Such practice was common in the Navy, and was also employed by Fodens on its steam lorries, but is uncommon in railway applications. It is thought that the 1946 overhaul was carried out at St Rollox. A photograph dating from the 1940s shows the engine in quite shabby condition and clearly demonstrating that its role at Dalmeir was not one that gave consideration to its aristocratic ownership.

When the London Midland & Scottish Railway inherited the Highland Railway line at Grouping in 1923, it found (much to its annoyance) that it had to honour the access agreement for the Duke and his private train. However, by even the 1920s it would seem that the train was falling out of favour in preference to much quicker road alternatives to reach the castle and there is a distinct drop off in activity in the surviving notices for the period. Upon the formation of British Railways in 1948 the era of the private train was over and the ducal powers (by now held by the 5th Duke of Sutherland) were no longer valid. Already the train had been offered for sale, with correspondence suggesting that it had been offered to the London & North Eastern Railway. The final decision lay with British Railways, and its answer was that there was no need for the engine or coaches within the capital stock.

Quite what happens next is something that remains to be resolved. In practical terms, ☺



Another of the June 1970 views showing *Dunrobin* before air brakes were fitted though by this time running with the former Eastern Region BR Mk1 No. E3733. The impressive water tower is a sure giveaway of the location! RAY MANNING/BEAMISH COLLECTION



A rare view of *Dunrobin* and 58A's first run in Canada on June 27, 1966. Following overhaul at New Westminster the pair were test run locally before a press debut and embarkation on the tour to celebrate the centenary of Canada's first railway being built. Lettering was shortly added to 58A to acknowledge this, lettering carried until 2013. DAVID DAVIES/BEAMISH COLLECTION



My first glimpse of *Dunrobin* at Fort Steele February 2011. The air pump dominates the front end but the clean Victorian lines are unmistakable. PAUL JARMAN



Touchdown! *Dunrobin*'s wheels make contact with UK rail for the first time since 1965 as the engine is unloaded at Bridgnorth on May 20, 2011. PAUL JARMAN

Dunrobin and 58A were sold to one buyer, 57A to another. This is sometimes quoted as being a Lincolnshire coachbuilder (for 57A) and the Lincolnshire Trailing Company for *Dunrobin* and 58A. However, it was Captain Howey (who is said to have been at Eton with the 5th Duke) who came north to collect *Dunrobin* and 58A and move them south to Kent where they would be displayed at his Romney Hythe & Dymchurch 15-inch gauge railway. Whether Howey purchased them directly or via a third party is not clear. 57A was stored at Wolverton and later went on display at the BTC museum at Clapham (1963-1975). It is recorded as having been sold in 1957 to the NRM, but this body did not exist at the time so who sold it and to whom (presumably

the BTC?) remains to be clarified. It is now part of the National Railway Museum collection and is on loan to the Scottish Railway Preservation Society which has placed it on display at Bo'ness.

The 1950 journey by *Dunrobin* and 58A from Golspie/Dunrobin Station to New Romney is well recorded, though not always entirely accurately! The engine was inspected by a BR boiler inspector and passed for travel under its own steam. Much correspondence took place regarding the route and the gauging of the train. It seems that at this time 58A's lower footboards were cut off in order to ensure that it did not foul any lineside equipment or platforms en route.

The engine and coach, accompanied by Howey and RH&DR driver R J Hobbs, set off on their

journey to New Romney on Monday, March 20, 1950. This was made under steam as far as Carlisle, calling and overnighing at Perth, 201 miles south, that evening. The following day another 150 miles were covered, reaching Carlisle, where the rods were removed and the ensemble was moved to Leeds as a special train (hauled by an LMS 'Crab' 2-6-0). From Leeds the journey continued as part of scheduled goods train movements, running via Toton, Wellingborough and Cricklewood with a variety of motive power including 4F, 8Fs, N1 and N15 at the head of the trains. At Ashford, the rods were replaced and *Dunrobin* steamed the final 22 miles to New Romney, arriving to a welcoming reception party on March 28, 1950. It was then



Stripping of the locomotive was soon under way as this view at Bridgnorth reveals. PAUL JARMAN



1. One of the distinctive cylinder lubricators on the front of the smokebox was removed in the 1970s to enable the air pump to be fitted on the front footplate. Despite extensive searching, the lubricator had to be considered 'lost' and therefore regular Beamish engineering volunteer, David Young, set about making

a replica. Here is the pattern, complete with core box. PAUL JARMAN

2. These are the raw castings, straight from the foundry. PAUL JARMAN

3. The finished, machined lubricator, alongside the original. PAUL JARMAN



shunted into a 'Romney' hut which was to be the pair's home for 15 years.

Occasional forays out of the shed were made during the 1950s and 60s, including at least one trip to Ashford to take part in a works open day (though it is not known if the trip was made in steam or not). By 1965 Howey had been dead for two years and the RH&DR needed substantial investment if it was to survive. By chance, Canadian businessman Harold Foster was looking for a locomotive and came across the adverts in *The Times* and *The Telegraph* offering *Dunrobin* and 58A for sale 'for about £1000'. He agreed to buy both engine and coach and in 1965 the pair were shipped to Victoria, British Columbia, where they were moved into a small museum that Mr Foster was creating. A photograph of *Dunrobin* has come to light, showing it being posted through a shop front, adding further to its unorthodox life.

Harold Foster went bankrupt and in November 1965 *Dunrobin* and coach were sold to the British Columbian Government for \$15,000. They were moved to the former tramcar depot at New Westminster which was now home to the BC Hydro repair shops. Here *Dunrobin* was treated to an overhaul and a full repaint. 58A was likewise repainted and the pair were outshopped in August 1966 before being used as a touring train to celebrate the centenary of railway operations in Canada. Once the tour was completed, the pair moved again, this time to Fort Steele in the Rocky Mountains (arriving in 1967), where the former town was being converted into an historic park complete with 4km long railway on which *Dunrobin* and 58A would be based for the next four decades.

In 1970 a BR Mk1 was shipped out to Fort Steele to supplement (though in practice largely replace) 58A as the railway's passenger coach. This coach still operates there today, though with indigenous motive power and in the company of locally converted (from flat wagons) passenger stock. Thus for 58A time pretty much stopped again as it settled into a period of prolonged hibernation. It was carefully stored under cover and apart from being fitted with a US style buckeye coupling at one end, it remained in totally original condition.

Dunrobin was in regular use supporting the shoulder season operation at Fort Steele, hauling the Mk1 coach around the demanding 4km circuit. It was reported by those who operated it to "require very little maintenance – all she seems to need is oil, water and coal". It was found operationally prudent (no doubt for reasons of familiarity) to fit air brakes to the locomotive, the clean Victorian lines being rather marred by the huge air pump mounted on the front of the smokebox. In 1986, the engine attended the Steam Expo in Vancouver (meeting the replica *Rocket* there) and in 1991 the journey south to Railfair 91 in Sacramento, California, was made (meeting the replica of *Locomotion No. 1*, a Beamish engine, in the process). *Dunrobin* was well used and much loved at Fort Steele and appeared widely in literature on Canadian railways and tourism. The last boiler inspection was carried out in June 2005, some repairs having been carried out following the 2003 inspection. However, there was very little call for using *Dunrobin* by then and it was almost certainly the final year it was steamed in Canada.

In 2010, with railway operations once again re-established at Beamish, the need for suitable motive power resulted in a list being drawn up of potential 'targets'. On this list was *Dunrobin* (something of a wild card) and also, further down, the Manning Wardle *Newcastle* which also later joined the Beamish collection. With NER Y7 0-4-0T No. 985 on long-term hire and operating the North Eastern Railway branch line, information was offered by railway journalist Tony Streeter that *Dunrobin* might be available for sale. In 2010 a dialogue was opened up with the Friends of Fort Steele (by then the effective operators of the park) regarding *Dunrobin* and it was soon established that they would be willing to sell the locomotive. The correspondence received with the engine after purchase reveals that there were several enquiries from the UK, though none were backed up with a credible offer.

Using new-found annual surplus, Beamish made an offer for *Dunrobin* (and 58A – it hardly seemed fair to separate the two now!) of \$160,000 (£103,000). This was accepted but a frustrating situation arose. The BC Government was



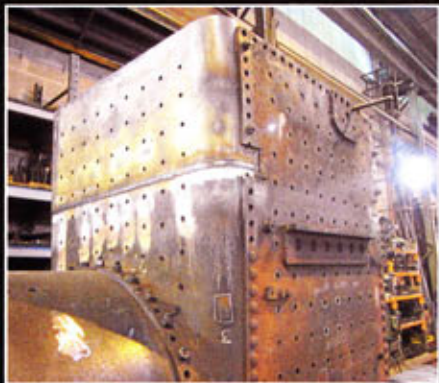
A glance underneath reveals that *Dunrobin* is fitted with a bell – the one Canadian feature that the locomotive will retain following its restoration. The bell is worked from a cord in the cab. PAUL JARMAN



This close-up of the boiler shows that the barrel has been replaced at some point in the engine's life. Note the conical rivet heads and the way in which an original section of the barrel, with dome on, has been retained. PAUL JARMAN



This is the original cylinder block, removed to enable its study, survey and replacement. Note the extensive corrosion, visible patches and thin ribs. PAUL JARMAN



The firebox outer wrapper is receiving new plating work all around below the level of the expansion brackets. The inverted firebox is seen here after new throatplate and doorplate sections had been welded into place. PAUL JARMAN



58A was delivered directly to Beamish and is currently in receipt of mechanical attention. The very dry conditions in Canada have preserved it beautifully and no more than a basic overhaul is required to the underframe. The body requires more attention, with some areas having dried out in the low humidity. This work will be carried out in 2014, as will a full repaint, interior deep clean and some other conservation work to the interior. PAUL JARMAN

Footplate dignitaries

THE main body of the article has alluded several times to *Dunrobin's* passenger-carrying cab and the dignitaries that have been carried on the footplate. The list is an impressive one, and well recorded, for guests were invited to sign a bronze plaque mounted inside the cab. Thus we know that the following were once carried aboard on their travels to and from Dunrobin Castle, their status amply illustrating the Duke of Sutherland's standing. There were four kings (though some were princes at the time of travel): George V, Edward VIII, George VI and King Alfonso of Spain. Kaiser Wilhelm II was a passenger, as was Neville Chamberlain. In Canada the list grew, Queen Elizabeth II and Princess Anne adding their names to the roll. It can be imagined that this list is by no means complete and that it will continue to grow in time.

There is another locomotive named *Dunrobin*, which can be found working in Scotland and which represents another element of the Dukes of Sutherland's link with railways. The Trentham Gardens estate is today a popular attraction near Stoke on Trent. Trentham Hall was the principal home of the Dukes of Sutherland but in 1912, following the rejection of an offer of the property to the people of Stoke, the 4th Duke demolished the hall, leaving the Italianate gardens and parkland intact.

In 1934 a one mile long two-foot gauge pleasure railway was opened in the grounds and was eventually equipped by three locomotives built by E E Baguley of Burton, well known for its internal combustion steam outline equipment. The first supplied was 0-4-0PM 2083 *Brora* followed by 2085 *Golspie* in 1935. A more powerful 0-6-0PM, No.3014 *Dunrobin*, was supplied in 1938. In 1986 *Brora* was moved to Dunrobin Castle where it was restored and is today displayed at the station there. The railway at Trentham closed in 1988 and the rolling stock was relocated to Alton Towers in Staffordshire. *Golspie* had become *Trentham Express* and *Dunrobin Trentham Flyer*. The railway at Alton Towers itself closed in 1996. *Golspie*, then out of use, was moved to the Amerton Railway in May 2000 and *Dunrobin*, original name restored, today operates at the East Links Country Park at Dunbar, East Lothian, having arrived there in April 2000.

The author has drawn on several key sources for the contents of this article, including copies of original documents obtained for a private collection from BR. Of great use has been the definitive work of Cormack & Stevenson, *Highland Railway Locomotives*, as well as numerous issues of *The Highland Railway Journal* (particularly issues 50, 57 and 83) which is published by the very active Highland Railway Society. Collections of research and writings by Mr Neil Sinclair and Mr David Davies (who documented *Dunrobin's* life in Canada) have also been of immense value. In due course a comprehensive history on the Duke of Sutherland's private train, including *Dunrobin*, is planned for publication.



A photograph which sums up *Dunrobin's* life in Canada – it is seen crossing Niagara Canyon while on the centennial tour in 1966. KEN CRINGAN

technically the owner of *Dunrobin*, but it seemed that no record of this existed. Fort Steele was the recipient of what was essentially a loan, but from an owner that could not establish ownership. After several months, and just when it seemed the deal may fall through, the Friends of Fort Steele were able to secure title of the engine by offering the BC Government the alternatives of proving they owned *Dunrobin* or accepting that the engine and coach had been abandoned and were therefore, by default, the property of the park. Within weeks the matter resolved itself, the deal was secured and plans could be made to repatriate the pair.

In February 2011 I travelled out to Fort Steele to view what we were purchasing. Entering the traditional wooden engine shed, layered in deep snow and with the temperature at -22, I was confronted by an engine that I never thought I would set eyes on! For a week I was the guest of Bob Whetham who was instrumental in the Friends of Fort Steele selling *Dunrobin* to us, and for a week the Fort Steele railway engineer, Ken Moan, and myself stripped off the Canadian additions (air pump, electric lighting, steam generator, buckeye coupling and air brake fittings – all added in the mid 1970s) and also removed valuable items such as nameplates etc. in readiness for shipping.

Moveright International undertook the role of collecting *Dunrobin* and 58A, moving them by road to Calgary then by rail (Canadian National) to Halifax – an epic journey across the vastness of Canada. At Halifax they were loaded on to the *Atlantic Companion* and shipped to Liverpool, arriving on May 19, 2011.

An enquiry from Duncan Ballard at the Severn Valley Railway resulted in agreement to move *Dunrobin* directly to Bridgnorth, where a contract for the engine's dismantling, professional removal of the asbestos lagging on the boiler and assessment of its condition was agreed. 58A moved directly to Beamish for overhaul, though the vacuum cylinder was removed and despatched to Kidderminster carriage works for overhaul. The aim of the initial stripdown was to ensure that we could obtain realistic and accurate costs for the restoration of the engine. This alone cost over £25,000 but ensured that most of *Dunrobin's* secrets were unlocked and thus enabled a detailed process of tendering to be carried out.

The restoration of *Dunrobin* has been broken down into four phases, with each having

sub-phases. This was to enable the management of the project from both engineering and financial points of view and thus far has proved to be very effective.

Phase 1, the overhaul of the boiler, was to be started first as this would take the longest, each subsequent phase being timed to conclude at a point most advantageous to maximising the length of the boiler certificate. The SVR won the contract for the contract restoration work, though to save costs some phases were brought back into Beamish's management, including procurement of a new cylinder block, the original being in appalling condition and beyond effective repair. David Elliott was appointed to manage this aspect of the project, his experience with *Tornado* and subsequently the replacement cylinder block for the J27 and new block for the G5 giving him a great deal of experience in this area. The superstructure for *Dunrobin* will be restored at Beamish before return to Bridgnorth for assembly onto the overhauled rolling chassis (this being Phase 3).

Work to date has centred around the boiler. This has received a new barrel (in two sections, per the original), new sections to all four sides of the outer firebox wrapper beneath the expansion brackets, repairs to the copper inner firebox and new girder stays. It will require a new front tubeplate and, of course, new tubes. The aim at the start was to ensure that the work carried out will see *Dunrobin* through the first 10 years of its new working life and also well into the second 10-year period, with minimum work at the interval. This was the reasoning behind the decision to replace the cylinder block.

It is likely that once *Dunrobin* and 58A stand as a working train at Beamish's NER station they will have cost Beamish around £480,000. For a complete working train with a long life expectancy this represents good value for the museum and it is hoped that the opportunity *Dunrobin's* passenger-carrying cab gives can be utilised. It is highly likely that it will visit other heritage railways and I would very much like to see it operate in Scotland once again as well as in the south of England – two areas synonymous with its past life. As for when it will be completed, this remains to be seen and is dependent on funding derived from Beamish's own trading activities. Late 2014 remains an ambition, so early 2015 would seem realistic at the current rate of progress. To keep up to date with progress, visit www.beamishtransportonline.co.uk ■