



All in a Day's Work

Saturday
24th
September
2016

Sunday
25th
September
2016

Didcot Railway Centre
Living museum of the Great Western Railway

All in a Day's Work

In September, we finish our season of galas off with our most diverse event of the year. We will be open from 10:30 until 17:00 (last entry 16:00), with passenger trains running on both our demonstration lines, as well as demonstrations and tours of many other aspects of running a railway.

While we will make every effort to run everything as described herein, some alterations may be necessary for operational reason, or other factors outside of our control.



Coal Stage



In order to run, our steam locomotives need to be kept supplied with coal, and this poses some logistical challenges. Fortunately, the Great Western Railway

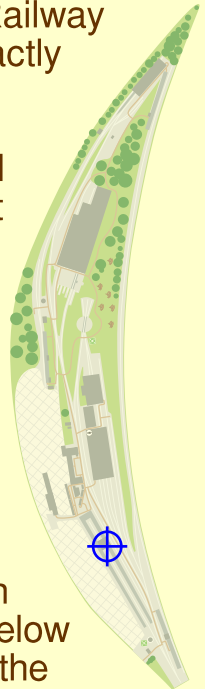
solved them for us in 1932, and we still use exactly the same solutions today.

Look to your right as you come into the site and you will see a gate, through which rails lead out to the national rail network. It is through this gate that a wagon full of 12 tons of coal arrives.

The wagon is then pushed up the slope into the coal stage, where the coal is shovelled into coal loading tubs. Each tub holds around half a ton.



The locomotive then comes up the line below the coal stage, and the tubs are pushed out above it, where they can be tipped up, and the coal falls into the locomotive's bunker.



Steam engine no. 1931 and diesel loco no. DL26 will each take a wagon up and down the coal stage ramp each morning and afternoon.

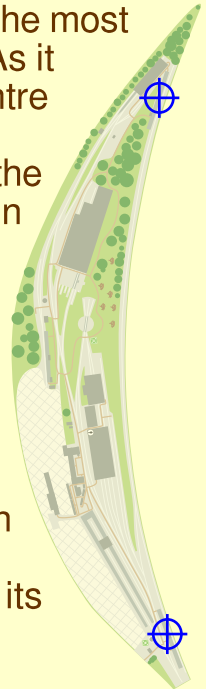
Main Demonstration Line

As you enter the site, Eynsham station is straight ahead of you. From here you can catch a train along our half mile main demonstration line, to Oxford Road station at the other end of the site.



Your train will be pulled by "Teddy Bear" D9516, the most modern locomotive on the site. As it was built in Swindon Works, centre of the Great Western Railway's engineering, it has some ties to the GWR despite having been built in 1963, 15 years after the GWR was absorbed into British Rail.

The train will be formed of two carriages: Number 7313, a 'Collett Composite', is the older of the two, built in 1940. It has been re-upholstered in a 1940s pattern, and wears a "wartime economy" brown livery. Number 2202 is a 'Hawksworth Brake Third', built in 1950, and is the only example of its type to retain a largely original interior.



Passenger trains run approximately every 10 minutes on the main demonstration line, between 10:30 and 17:00.

Branch Line



Our branch line runs from Didcot Halt, near the middle of the site, to Burlescombe, where it connects with the main demonstration line at the far end of the site. This quarter mile line, will alternately run two trains through the day.

Built in 1908, Steam Railmotor no. 93 is the

oldest vehicle we will be operating. Unlike a conventional locomotive, the engine is incorporated into the body of a carriage, and mechanical linkages allow it to be driven from either end without needing to be turned: Perfect for branch line working.



Dating from 1933, the Diesel Railcars were the earliest Great Western diesels. They were an evolution of the Steam Railmotors, being able to run in both directions and driven from either end. Our no. 22 was built in 1940.

Passenger trains run approximately every 10 minutes on the branch line, between 10:30 and 16:45.

Shunting



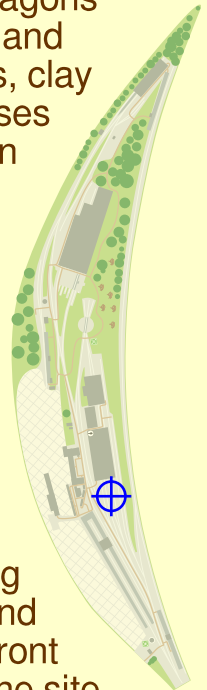
For railways, passengers are only half the story: equally important is freight. There are more than 50 wagons at Didcot, and while some are generic, many are specialised for a

particular purpose. Around the site you'll find wagons designed to carry water, milk and oil; fish, flour and cattle; coal, ballast and sleeper; and even glass, clay and naval gun barrels. The banana van even uses steam from the train's "steam heat" pipe to ripen the fruit during the journey!



Shunting is the process of sorting wagons into trains, so that they can be taken to where they need to go. Visiting locomotive no. 1931 spent its working life shunting

for the West Midlands Beet Sugar Company, and will be performing shunting demonstrations in front of the engine shed, near the main entrance to the site.



Shunting demonstrations will take place throughout the day, between other movements.

Steam Crane



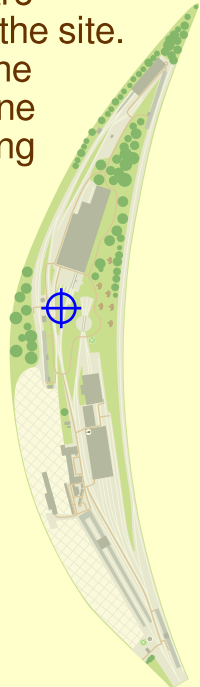
Rail-mounted cranes were used by the GWR for many tasks, including building track, moving freight around, and rescuing derailed locomotives.

Nowadays, not only are they subjects of preservation in their own right, but they are essential to running the site. Our 5 ton diesel crane and 6 ton steam crane are used for unloading

deliveries, moving building materials around the site, dismantling locomotives, and much more besides.



The crane team will demonstrate how the steam crane is used to lift and transport heavy loads in the area in front of the carriage sheds.



Steam crane demonstrations will run throughout the day, between 11:00 and 16:30.

Frome Signal Box

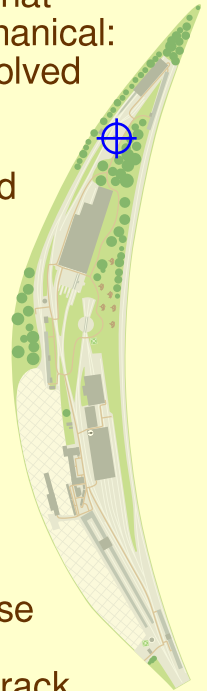


Frome Mineral Junction has been restored to 1870s condition, giving a different feel than most preserved signal boxes. As well as superficial differences, such as an older style of track layout map, the main distinguishing feature is that everything is purely mechanical: there are no electrics involved in the signalling.

These means that not only are all the points and signals mechanically worked, but there is not even a shelf of electrical instruments to tell the signalman what is happening. A consequence of this is that all of the signals are within sight of the signalbox, so that the signalman can check them by eye.



Outside the box, many of the signals, especially those relating to the broad gauge track, are also of a less familiar, older design.



Tours run continually between 10:30 - 13:00 and 14:00 - 16:30, and take approximately 10 minutes.

Radstock Signal Box



Restored to 1930s condition, Radstock is the more modern of our two signal boxes.

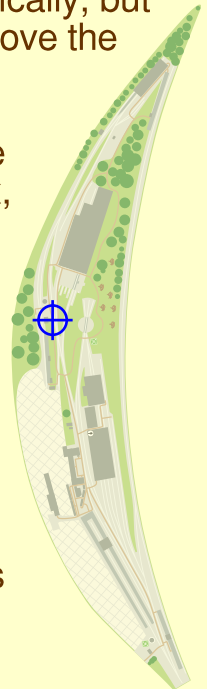
All the signals, points and the level crossing are all still controlled purely mechanically, but

there is now a shelf of electrical instruments above the levers.

Some of the signals controlled by Radstock are around the corner, out of sight of the signal box, and it is with these electrical instruments that the signalman is able to tell what the signals are displaying.

One of the points controlled by the signal box is also out of sight, and other instruments tell the signalman whether a train is on or approaching the points.

Radstock also controls the gate by which trains enter and leave the branch line, as well as the level crossing across it.



Tours run continually between 10:30 - 13:00 and 14:00 - 16:30, and take approximately 10 minutes.

Locomotive Workshop



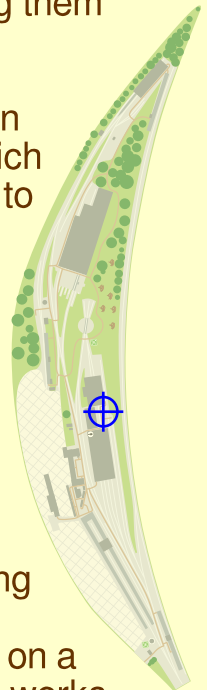
A freshly-restored steam locomotive will be in service for up to 10 years. After this, it is time for its next overhaul, and it is in the loco works that engines are stripped down, checked and repaired as necessary, getting them

ready for their next 10 years of service.

Amongst the locos currently being overhauled in the works are no. 4079 'Pendennis Castle', which in 1925 beat one of Flying Scotsman's siblings to be declared the "most powerful express locomotive in Britain"; and 'County of Glamorgan', a new build which, when complete, will be the first of its class to exist for more than 50 years.



See these and many more, as well as discovering King George's new secret identity, on a tour of the loco works.



Tours last 30 to 45 minutes, and start at 11:00, 12:00, 13:00, 14:00, 15:00 and 16:00.

Museum, Refreshments, Shop



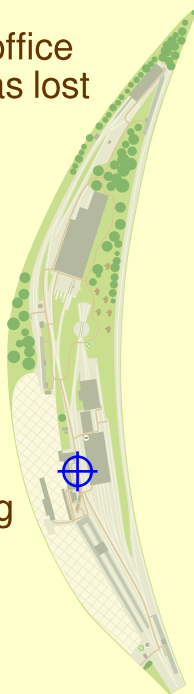
Near the middle of the site, a cluster of buildings provides facilities such as toilets and baby changing.

Call in at the enquiry office for any matters such as lost property or first aid.

The Great Western Trust museum displays a collection of numerous smaller exhibits, ranging from lamps and uniforms to headboards and model locomotives.

In the refreshment room, you will find a variety of hot and cold food and drink for sale.

Finally, the shop sells a range of items, including railway books, videos and models, as well as souvenirs such as greeting cards, badges, and pens and pencils.



<http://didcotrailwaycentre.org.uk>

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DIDCOT RAILWAY CENTRE

