

45132



45132 began life as D22, built at Derby Works and released to traffic in April 1961, initially allocated to Derby Shed. However it spent several periods on loan to other depots for crew training, including Tinsley, Neville Hill, Holbeck and Gateshead. Originally the loco was

fitted with split headcode boxes either side of the nose ends and was finished in all over green livery. The loco gained small yellow end warning panels in 1962 and by 1968 was painted in the standard BR blue livery with full yellow ends. The loco was dual braked during overhaul at Derby in 1971 and in 1974 underwent ETH conversion to become 45132, allocated to Toton Depot. It was the last of the 14 Class 45/1s fitted with split boxes to have them removed during Heavy General Overhaul at Derby, being released from works on 12/06/81. The loco then settled back in to traffic working top link Midland Main Line expresses, until ousted by HSTs and was then kept busy on more secondary services to/from St Pancras, on the North Trans Pennine route and of course on cross country services, parcels and freight. On 23rd November 1986 it was transferred to Tinsley depot with the other surviving 45/1s. On 08/05/87, 45132 worked 1P13 17:35 St Pancras – Derby but was failed at Kettering with a defective triple pump. This turned out to be its last working, as it was withdrawn at Tinsley depot on 11/05/87. Repairs had not been authorised due to a surplus of 45/1s created by the timetable change that month, which spelt the loss of the Trans-Pennine diagrams (this was the same story with our own 45133!). On 21/05/87 the loco was hauled with 45133 and 45118 to March for storage in the yard, joining many other classmates open to the elements and the attention of vandals. Fortunately it was recognised that the loco was virtually intact and not too difficult to repair and agreement was reached in 1989 for it to be moved near the entrance to the depot for safekeeping.

Meanwhile, one day in 1991, prospective owner Roger Bray was on the footplate of steam loco 76017 on the Mid Hants Railway when it was failed and replaced by D5217. As the Class 25 struggled up the bank, John

Bunch, the Loco Superintendent, commented to Roger 'when are you going to buy us something more powerful?' Roger then turned his thoughts to buying a type 4 diesel and basing it at the Mid Hants, so he made enquiries as to what was available. 45132 had actually just been sold to Booth's scrapyards in Rotherham but had not yet been collected. A fitter from Eastleigh inspected the loco at March and agreed that not much work needed doing. Agreement was reached with Booth's to sell the loco to Roger and it was hauled to the Mid Hants behind 47214 on 5th March 1992. Work soon commenced on restoration and fault finding. Engine leaks were traced to faulty transition rubbers, which were all replaced. All 96 battery cells were rebuilt by Roger, John Brook and Dave Franklin. As cells were finished, they were refitted to the loco and eventually there were enough to turn the engine over. One day Roger was on the roof near the exhaust when the engine turned over and fired into life, showering him with soot and debris! Engine room grilles were removed and taken to Newbury on the roof of Roger's Ford Escort for shot blasting. Finally, the loco was resprayed and handmade numbers and logos added. Exactly 2 years after arriving at the railway, 45132 made its debut in preservation at a diesel gala on 5th March 1994.

The loco was then intensively used, proving very useful to the railway. During the mid 90's the loco featured on Film and TV three times – 'The Canterville Ghost' with Patrick Stewart and Cherie Lunghi in 1995, a BBC drama 'The Great Kandinsky' with Richard Harris and Michael Carmichael and an Alliance & Leicester ad with Hugh Laurie and Stephen Fry (although only coaches were seen).

Disaster then struck on 3rd March 2000 when the main generator banding burst whilst the loco was hauling some dead locos and coaches up the 1 in 60 gradient from Alton. It soon became apparent that the damage was severe and would be expensive to repair. Whilst out of service and fundraising for the generator was ongoing, work continued on restoration, including rebuilding of the No.1 nose end and reinstatement of the split headcode boxes at that end. The generator was lifted out on 29/07/08 and sent to Bowers Electricals for repair.

45132 departed the Mid Hants Railway for a new home at the Epping & Ongar Railway on 15th September 2014. When the generator returned from Bowers it was reinstalled and all the hard work reassembling the loco finally completed. To the delight of the owner and volunteers the loco was started up on 26/03/19 and moved under its own power the following month.

A series of commissioning and light loco runs were undertaken during the summer of 2019 and then a loaded test run was planned. Unfortunately, during such a run on 17/08/19 a defect on the generator again became apparent and the loco was stood down. The only thing for it was for the generator to go back to Bowers for investigation and so it was lifted out the loco again on 22/11/19.

Hopefully it will not be too long before we enjoy 45132 hauling trains again. If anybody is able to offer any assistance to Roger, or if you have photos or details of 45132's workings, please get in touch with him at 45132.d22@gmail.com

