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PRESS RELEASE

New locomotive arrival

The volunteers and staff of the Yorkshire Dales Railway Museum Trust, the owner and operator of the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway, are delighted to announce the purchase of an operational English Electric Type 1 (later Class 20) diesel locomotive No D8110 (later No 20110) from the Harry Needle Railroad Company.

The locomotive arrived on the line, being delivered by road, on 21 February, and is now being checked over, cleaned and serviced in readiness for entering service, after initial staff training has been completed.

The Class 20's were introduced by British Railways in 1957, and a total of 228 locomotives were built by English Electric between 1957 and 1968, originally numbered D8000-D8199 and D8300-D8327. No D8110 was built in English Electric's Robert Steven Hawthorn factory at Darlington, entering service in January 1962.

After completion, D8110 was first allocated to Eastfield depot in Glasgow, and still retains its automatic token catcher recess from its time spent on the West Highland Railway. Having been based in Scotland for almost the whole time between 1962 and 1986, it then moved south to England, being based at Tinsley, Immingham, Toton and Bescot, before being retired by BR in September 1990.

The South Devon Diesel Traction group at Buckfastleigh brought D8110 into preservation in 1991, and it has subsequently visited a variety of open days and heritage railways, including Plymouth Laira, Exeter Railfair, Bodmin & Wenford, Keighley & Worth Valley, West Somerset and the Paignton & Dartmouth, as well as working regularly at its base on the South Devon Railway. More recently, it has been in the ownership of the Harry Needle Railroad Company and was based on the Battlefield Line, from where the locomotive was purchased and moved to Embsay.

Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway
Bolton Abbey Station, Bolton Abbey, Skipton BD23 6AF
Tel: 01756 710614

www.embsayboltonabbeyrailway.org.uk

Thanks to the support of several Trust members, D8110 was purchased and is now solely owned by the YDRMT.

Although the locomotive is undoubtedly an attraction in its own right, strategically D8110 will also be extremely useful in enabling the Railway to have a locomotive immediately on hand to support and enhance train operations when required, for use on engineering trains, and as a back-up in the case of a steam locomotive failure.

Trust Director and Diesel Loco Manager, Danny Ferguson commented: “We are absolutely delighted to have secured our own operational Class 20 for Emsay, which will prove extremely useful to us in the future, and I am sure will prove to be a very popular and beneficial acquisition.”

Ends

Contact:

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A photograph of the No D8110 being moved to Emsay after arrival by road is enclosed with this press release. If you would like to receive an ‘exclusive’ image for publication please contact Richard Jones.

NOTES & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The **Emsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway** (or ‘Yorkshire Dales Railway’ as it was formerly known) is a heritage railway that runs over part of the line that used to run from Skipton and Ilkley. The railway between the two towns was built by the Midland Railway Company and opened in 1888. The line connected with other routes at both Skipton and Ilkley and, as well as local traffic, it was also used as key alternative and diversionary route to relieve congestion on the busy Aire Valley line. The line was originally built with double track, with intermediate stations at Emsay, Bolton Abbey and Addingham. There was one branch, a single-track line from Emsay Junction, half a mile to the west of Emsay station, to Grassington, with an intermediate station at Rylstone.

In 1923 the Midland Railway became part of the London, Midland & Scottish Railway (**‘LMS’**), and twenty-five years later, in 1948, the line was run by British Railways upon nationalisation of the country’s railway network. Like several other railways in Wharfedale, the line became a victim of the ‘Beeching axe’ and – despite vigorous local opposition – the section between Emsay and Ilkley was closed in 1965. The lines from Skipton to Emsay and just short of Grassington were retained for stone traffic from local quarries – the former was subsequently closed, but the latter – running as far as Swinden Quarry – remains open and is used regularly.

In October 1968, a group of people met in Skipton Town Hall to explore the possibility of reopening part of the line, which resulted in the formation of the ‘Emsay and Grassington Railway Preservation Society’, with the aim of using Emsay as an operating base for running steam trains to Grassington. This was thwarted as the Grassington line was retained for stone traffic, so attention was focused on the line between Emsay and Bolton Abbey, with the title ‘Yorkshire Dales Railway Society’ adopted. British Railways allowed the Society to occupy the site at Emsay on a lease arrangement, with the first steam locomotive arriving in 1970. The line was opened in stages – initially in 1979, then to Skibeden (1982), Holywell (1987) – where a new Halt was built – Stoneacre Loop (1991), and finally to Bolton Abbey (1997), giving the line we know today, almost five miles long. By the mid-1990s, the railway had purchased most of the trackbed from just short of Emsay Junction to Bolton Abbey, together with the station sites at both Emsay and Bolton Abbey. At Stoneacre, a Signal Box has been built at the Loop, allowing two trains to run on the line at busy times. Since then, a wide and interesting collection of locomotives and rolling stock have been amassed.

Responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the line is the responsibility of the Yorkshire Dales Railway Museum Trust (Holdings) Limited, a registered charity, museum and company. It has a Trading Company arm that is responsible for the shops and cafes. The Trust is governed by a Board of Directors, who set the policy and strategic direction, and has a small number of employees (full time and part time) in key positions, supplemented by occasional seasonal staff when required, although the railway is largely run by volunteers, who make an immensely valuable contribution towards our success. The Trust has a membership of around 800.

Timetabled passenger trains operate regularly throughout the year, and daily during the peak summer months. In addition, we offer a variety of other services, including our extremely popular ‘Dales Dining’ trains, special events, evening special trains and ‘Experience Days’.

Further information about the railway, and its services and activities, can be found on our website – www.ebar.org.uk.

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