

RAILBUS W79978 RESTORATION UPDATE August 2022

W79978 at the S&CR diesel gala.

The restoration project had its public launch at the Swindon & Cricklade railway diesel gala on July 2nd and 3rd. The event was well attended with lots of interest shown in the railbus and the restoration plan.

One of the visitors was Stephen Randolph, who as a boy used to travel on the railbuses from his home in Tetbury.



In the picture above Stephen can be seen standing next to the railbus on the last day of train services on the Tetbury branch.



And here he is again, alongside W79978. Over fifty years separate the two pictures!



Unfortunately, due to problems with the vehicle's compressed air system, it was not possible for the railbus to be operational, however visitors were able to go inside the railbus and to see at first hand the extent of work required.



Replacement destination blinds with appropriate destinations have been fitted, the originals were removed many years ago.

Restoration progress

Over the last two months, work has concentrated on rectifying the problems with the air system which prevented the railbus from being operational at the diesel gala.

More than twenty metres of corroded steel pipe have been replaced, control valves overhauled, and additional filters installed to prevent moisture and dirt contaminating the system.



Replacement pipework and additional filters on the air system below the floor of the railbus.



W79978 at Blunston Following several days of work on the air system, the railbus successfully completed two trouble-free round trips between Hayes Knoll and Blunston on Friday 12th August.

In the last couple of weeks, the mechanism for the power operated sliding passenger doors has been repaired and tested, the cab doors at No.2 end have been repaired and the fuel tank filler modified to its original position.



With the interior trim panel removed, the lower runner for the sliding door is visible along with a significant amount of corrosion. The loose debris has been removed and the door runners serviced to allow the doors to function correctly.



The cab interior door had suffered water damage and the plywood facing panel was detached from the frame. To enable repairs to be carried out the door has been removed. It is seen here with clamps holding the panel in place while the glue sets.



The fuel tank has been replaced at some point in the past with a non-original design, probably a DMU heater fuel tank. This resulted in the filler cap being behind the valence panel, making refueling difficult. The filler has been modified to be in its original position.

To donate to the project or if you want to get involved with the restoration.

Visit the Swindon & Cricklade Railway website, scroll down the home page where you will find a “Find out more” button. Click on this to see the various ways to donate. There is also a “Donate with Paypal” button.

When donating please use the reference “Railbus”. You can also use the “Contact us” box to let us know your donation is for the railbus.

To find out more about the project or to Volunteer to help, please use the “Contact us” form.