

## 61662 NEWS UPDATE No. 26 (February 2014)

The wettest January on record in the UK has resulted in some serious flooding in the Thames Valley and Woking areas. This has made it difficult for people to travel and the continued rain has made painting impossible so work parties have been postponed until the weather improves. We've been down to the site to check the situation and by and large, everything remains secure. There has been some storm damage to the temporary fencing we'd put up but the tarpaulin we'd used to cover the unpainted side of the Tender had barely been disturbed by the wind and gales. We are very fortunate that the Mizens site is still above the water level and our work parties will start again soon. These photos show how things looked towards the end of January. The view on the left is typical of local roads in the Thames Valley at the present time.



In the meantime our Sales & Publicity Stand has very kindly been invited to attend the West Somerset Railway's 'Spring Steam Gala' which will be held from Thursday 27th - Sunday 30th March 2014. This Gala will feature visiting locomotives as used on the old Southern Railway's 'Withered Arm' and a recreation of the 'Atlantic Coast Express' will run supported by the WSR Home Fleet Steam Locomotives.

### **The following information has been taken from the WSR's website :**

*A new group of visitors to us are the representatives of the project to build 61662. This will bring back to life an LNER B17 4-6-0 from the group of 25 of the class known as the "Footballers", simply because they were named after football clubs in towns and cities which were served by the London and North Eastern. This batch of the engines was particularly associated with the Great Central line and the locoshed at Leicester from which one diagram took them via Banbury to Swindon. 61662 was named "Manchester United". (the writer would have preferred 61651 'Derby County' but let that pass). The final examples of the B17's were taken out of service in 1960, early victims of the dieselisation of the former Great Eastern lines which had become their area of operation. Many of the nameplates which featured a cast football and the club colours (including hoops and stripes where applicable) in a section beneath the name itself were presented to the clubs after the locos were withdrawn. Hopefully we will see 61662 on the WSR in the future when it will be the first of its type to come to Minehead'.*

After such an impressive write-up we need to provide a good showing at Minehead and we are appealing for donations of your surplus books, model trains and railwayana to sell on our Stand. All proceeds will of course go directly to the 'Engine 61662 Appeal'. Members and friends are also urgently needed to man our Stand and possibly give out information leaflets to interested parties, if you have any free time during the four days of the Gala, even for just a couple of hours, please let me know if you can help.

The West Somerset Gala will be one of the top such events in the UK this year and full information can be found online by clicking on the link below or by calling 01643 704996.

<http://westsomersetrailway.vticket.co.uk/>