

BR MK I TOURIST SECOND OPEN No. 4842

Built for British Railways at their Carriage & Wagon works in Wolverton on the northern boundary of modern-day Milton Keynes. 4842 was constructed as part of Lot No. 30525 which comprised 50 carriages. They were ordered by BR on 26th August 1958 and the last vehicle was completed on 23rd April 1960. It is believed 4842 would have been outshopped around the end of 1958 or early 1959.

The BR TSO carriages had, by this time, evolved into a slightly different standard design (Diagram 89) which lasted for several more years during which many hundreds more TSOs were built. It seems passengers had become to prefer the open, rather than compartment, stock.

They were still all fitted with 64 seats arranged in open saloons of 16 'bays' of 4 seats and steam heated radiators underneath them. Wooden wall panelling had been replaced by Formica laminate panelling. Two toilets were fitted at one end either side of the coach end vestibule/corridor connection but tungsten filament lamps gave way to fluorescent tube lighting. The vehicle was carried on two BR I bogies which were vacuum braked.

At some stage in its main line career, BR overhauled the vehicle and took the opportunity to install air braking and Electric Train Heating thus making the coach both Dual Braked and Dual Heated. Its BR I cast steel bogies were also replaced by the BR B4 type. The B4 bogie was introduced by BR, after extensive trials at its Research Centre in Derby, during 1963. It was a fabricated steel design and much lighter than the Commonwealth version. It weighed just over 5 tons with a maximum speed rating of 100 mph (160 km/h).

TSOs were used widely across BR network and formed part of the nationwide Inter City services network. It was believed to have been withdrawn, due to more modern stock being introduced, in the early 1990s – a working life of around 30 years.

4842 was purchased from BR and moved to the Swanage Railway where it was stored awaiting its turn in the restoration queue. It was sent to Rampart Engineering in Derby for external repairs and refurbishment during September 2002. It returned to Swanage in March 2003 for interior refurbishment to be completed.

It has been in one of the operational sets ever since apart from periodic repaints, maintenance, etc. More recently it was registered with the Office of Roads and Rail for main line use and was first deployed in the consist on the successful test run of Maunsell Class U No. 31806 to Yeovil Junction and return on 13th April 2016.

Information collated by Peter Sykes 17th September 2021

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