

BR CLASS 33 Bo-Bo DIESEL (33 012)

D6515 Lt. JENNY LEWIS RN

D6515 was built by Birmingham Railway Carriage & Wagon Co Ltd (BRCW) at their works in Smethwick [works number DEL107] and entered service on 8th July 1960 being allocated to Hither Green depot and numbered D6515. It was one of a fleet of 98 delivered to British Railways Southern Region in 1960 which, in due course, earned an enviable reputation for reliability and capability across many of BR's regions.

It was re-allocated to Eastleigh in August 1965 and received all over plain Blue livery in August 1968. In January 1974 it was re-numbered 33012 under the TOPS system.

On 11th October 1974, the IB05 16:53 FO Paddington - Penzance failed in the Tiverton area with Brush Type 4 47027 suffering a complete loss of power. 33012 was taken off the Tiverton Junction - Fawley tanks to work IB05 forward to Exeter St Davids where 1027 *Western Lancer* took over. 33012 then worked the 6B22 20:00 Exeter Central – Westbury sixteen wagon Presflo cement train. The next day, 12th October, saw 1014 12:20 Exeter - Waterloo double-headed by 33012 & 33048. On 14th October, 33012 worked the 1V11 11:00 Waterloo - Exeter, returning with the 1018 15:55 Exeter - Waterloo.

On Tuesday 3rd May 1977, 33012 hauled the final freight train on the remains of the former 'Old Road', which ran between Brockenhurst and Poole via Ringwood, carrying a special headboard "The Last Train from Wimborne 3 May 1977". A local twice-weekly goods service to Wimborne, together with the presence there of an exhibition train company base, had kept the western stub of the line in use until then. However, exhibition trains were moved to a new base at Salisbury and there was insufficient freight traffic to keep the line open any longer.

On Friday 15th August 1980, 33012 was noted passing through Forest Hill station having earlier hauled the 17:05 East Grinstead - London Bridge. After release at London Bridge it worked light engine to Norwood Junction. The late Brian Beer photographed 33012 on the Chipmans weed killing train. It was leaving London, during its annual tour of SR lines, and about to cross the South Eastern main line from Charing Cross at Blackfriars Junction. Unfortunately the shot is undated.

In December 1981, 33012 entered Eastleigh Works for scheduled overhaul work before it was outshopped in a modified livery of grey roof, red buffer beams, black cab window surrounds and wrap round yellow cab trim. Local enthusiasts soon named this the 'Lone Ranger' livery which lasted until August 1981 after which 33012 returned to standard livery.

On 17th May 1982, 33033 was the first of the Class to reach Landore depot to take up West Wales passenger duties. The next to arrive was 33012 taking up the 13:05 Swansea - Milford Haven and 15:27 return, then the 18:05 Swansea - Carmarthen and 19:05 return empty coaching stock working. Ten class 33s were to be based at Landore with them taking over a number of services between Swansea & Cardiff including those

via the Vale of Glamorgan & Barry. Six three-day diagrams from Eastleigh allowed the locomotives to remain allocated here.

On Thursday 20th October 1983, 33012 was pictured at Hurst Green station hauling the ex 2HAL de-icing unit No. 002. In April 1984, 33012 was pictured at Bristol Temple Meads awaiting departure on the 08:30 to Cardiff Central. On 18th July 1985, 33012 was hauling an Exeter St Davids to Paignton local service.

On Saturday 30th November 1985, 33012 took part hauling various sections of "The Valley Trekker" rail tour organised by F & W Railtours from Plymouth. 25325 piloted 33012 over various Welsh routes starting and finishing at Cardiff Central. It called at various locations including Pantyffynon, Gwaen-Cae-Gurwen, Tondy and Llanelli. 33012 also provided electric train heating to the eleven coach train.

During April 1986, 33012 received an overhaul at Eastleigh Works and was repainted in BR plain Blue livery again. On 20th August 1987, 33012 was photographed arriving at Axminster with a London Waterloo to Exeter St Davids service.

However, in September 1987, 33012 was withdrawn from traffic. This did not last long as re-instatement to Eastleigh depot occurred during January 1988. On 11th April 1988, 33012 was seen at Bradford-upon-Avon station at the head of 1O42 - the 13:05 Cardiff to Portsmouth service. It hauled the same train on 23rd April.

Apparently, in February 1989, it was re-allocated to Stewarts Lane depot and, at some stage, was allocated to the Railfreight Construction Sector. The last known passenger working for 33012 occurred on Wednesday 2nd December 1992 at the head of the 2O02 14:22 Exeter St Davids to Waterloo which was piloted as far as Salisbury by 33114. It was noted double heading (lead by 33053) the 14.00 Bickley to Hoo Junction loaded spoil passing through Peckham on Saturday 12th March 1994.

33012 was withdrawn on Thursday 13th February 1997 as surplus to requirements and saw a few months use as Eastleigh depot pilot until finally switched off with a number of electrical faults. Eighteen 33's were put up for sale in early March by EWS and 17 of them were acquired for preservation including the 71A Locomotives Group purchasing 33012. It was moved to the Mid-Hants Railway at Ropley where it was stored for a while. Repairs to the electrical systems were undertaken gradually and the loco was started at Easter 1999 before moving under its own power in October 1999.

It was delivered to Swanage by road on Thursday 7th October and undertook its first loaded test run the same evening. Bodywork repairs commenced promptly, although the loco appeared at the Swanage Railway Diesel Day in red primer! It received the name "*Stan Symes*", on Monday 27th November 1999, after the Bournemouth and Swanage Driver who had achieved 60 years on the footplate. Eventually, 33012 was handed over to the SR Operations Department for driver training in March 2000, following completion of bodywork restoration and re-paint into original BR Green livery. It soon became an invaluable member of the motive power fleet.

During Spring 2002, routine oil samples showed signs of the cylinder liners leaking coolant into the engine sump. The engine was completely stripped and re-assembled with new seals during the autumn. Test runs were completed in time for the annual Diesel Day in November with small yellow warning panels being applied for this event. It was fortunate that the engine re-build had been done, because 2003 saw a 150%

increase in use by the Swanage Railway. It was not immune to the nationwide shortage of steam locomotives!

Since then D6515 has provided reliable service and has also had a bodywork overhaul which took place in late 2006. During 2008 the committee voted to allow 33012 to move to Knights Rail at Eastleigh Works for a general overhaul, including generators and running gear, and upgrading to main line requirements. The loco travelled to Eastleigh on Wednesday 14th January 2009 and stayed for two and a half years. During this time it was equipped with TPWS and OTMR allowing the loco to work on the national network. 33012 underwent a successful mainline test run on Thursday 5th May 2011 and has been based at the Swanage Railway since then. It did, however, venture to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway to participate in their 2011 Diesel Gala.

2012 was not a good year for 33012 as, on 9th May, it set off light engine for Kidderminster via Barrow Hill to collect locomotives for the Swanage Railway's Diesel Gala. At Trent Junction it set off a hot axle box indicator and, after some fitters attention, was able to limp to Nemesis Rail's depot at Burton on Trent. 33012 remained at Burton until June when it was conveyed south by road, eventually reaching Eastleigh in July. Initially it was thought that new bearings were required and these were obtained. When contractors stripped the bogie down it was discovered that the axle bearing journals were damaged, caused by a poor workshop overhaul when under BR ownership. To bring the locomotive up to current standards for mainline certification it required new axles estimated at £40,000.

D6515 was re-named '*Lt Jenny Lewis RN*' on Thursday 12th June 2014 at a special ceremony at Swanage Station. Lt Lewis, from Sherborne in Dorset, was Royal Navy helicopter observer, and a fan of Class 33 diesel locos, who died in a training accident. The Lynx helicopter she was co-piloting crashed into the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Virginia on 12th June 2002.

On Tuesday 13th June 2017, passenger services were re-established between Swanage and Wareham after a hiatus of 45 years. These shuttle services were top and tailed by 33012, 33025 & 37518 the latter two locos were chartered from West Coast Railway Company. The Swanage - Wareham shuttles ended on 3rd September with 33012 and 33025 working some of the services.

A main line test run for U Class 2-6-0 No 31806 on Friday 13th April 2018 [Swanage - Weymouth - Yeovil Junction and return] was tailed by 33012. Nine days later (22nd) 33012 ran from Swanage to Eastleigh, then on to London Underground West Ruislip depot the next day. On 29th April a Harrow-on-the-Hill - Amersham - Quainton Road special saw 33012 hauling 20142, 20227 and LU's 4-TC set. They returned later that day to West Ruislip depot via Marylebone.

2018 continued to be a busy year for the loco as, in May, it ventured to West Ruislip again where it was coupled to the 4TC again, with 20007 and 20142 on the rear. "The Purbeck Explorer" left Ealing Broadway at 10:40 on 10th May with the charter also calling at Kensington Olympia, Clapham Junction, Woking and Basingstoke en route to Swanage. This allowed the 4TC to be used by some air brake-only locos during the annual Diesel Gala. After the Gala, the two Class 20's hauled the 4TC back to West Ruislip calling at the same stations to set down passengers.

On 23rd August 2018 a return Weymouth - Clapham Junction charter required the use of 33012 after 47580 was failed prior to departure from Weymouth. A4 No.60009 was on the rear to Southampton when it took over the return by running via Romsey and Andover. At Clapham Junction 33012 took over to work the empty stock to Southall.

On 22nd March 2019, 33029 & 47851 worked seven coaches from Carnforth to Crewe, prior to working a Crewe - Weymouth railtour "*Marching Crompton II*". On the return leg, via Bath, Gloucester, Lydney & Hereford, 33012 double-headed with 33029 to haul the return with 47851 at the rear. The pair of Class 33s were then used on 24th March from Crewe - Southport and return. Branch Line Society's Tour "*The Ruby Vampire - The Second Bite*", visited Wrexham, Birkenhead North depot, West Kirby, Bidston, Chester, Rock Ferry, Warrington Bank Quay & Burscough Bridge. On 26th April, 47245 hauled 5V42 11:23 Carnforth - Southall empty coaching stock including 33012 (dead-in-train) as part of its trip back to Swanage. On 9th May, 33012 ran light engine from Southall to Swanage.

Sunday 18th August 2019 saw D6515 coupled to LU's 4TC again with 73107 "Tracy" on a tour organised by UK Railtours. It was one of a series of tours and this one was called "Swanage Sunday Special – Number 4". It ran from London Waterloo to Swanage and return. On Sunday 25th and Bank Holiday Monday 26th August it hauled the 4TC around various parts of the Metropolitan Line with Class 20's 20142 and 20007 at the other end. Trains from London Marylebone to Quainton and return on both days.

On Sunday 8th March 2020, the Branch Line Society saw 33207 and 33012 working "*The Devonian Crompton*" London Victoria – Coleford Junction leg of the tour returning later in the day to London Waterloo. 33012 returned light engine to Swanage on 9th March.

33012 travelled light engine from Swanage to Eastleigh Works as IZ33 on Monday 4th January 2021. It went to Arlington Fleet Services' facilities, to undergo thorough corrosion repairs to the upper cab structures and fibreglass repairs to both cab roofs. Dismantling commenced later in the month. The owners (71A Locomotive Group) had to contract out cab roof repairs to a specialist fibreglass repair contractor but Danny Armon had been very busy recently. Both cab roofs were repaired, strengthened and built up with new glass fibre, so that they look great and are vastly stronger now. This means they will last for many many more years before any remedial work is required.

Meanwhile, structural bodywork corrosion repairs continued with much welding of new steel panels required. By August 2021 a milestone had been reached in the cab overhaul as, by then, cutting out rusty and corroded metalwork had stopped (apart from a few minor patches here and there) with items starting to be put back. Biggest of these were the test fitting of both cab roofs, which required some fettling to both the refurbished roofs and all the new supporting metalwork, before final fitting could be considered.

By the end of October D6515 had entered Arlington's paint preparation area in readiness for the trip into the paint shop itself. This was delayed a week or so due to the need to swap the No 1 cab driver's door, with one of the Group's spares, due to the present one starting to de-laminate. Prior to 33012 going into the paint prep area, both buffer beams were fully repainted by a 71A Locomotive Group volunteer.

Work on all four of the cab partitions has now been finished, with the last job being to pop rivet the four aluminium skins into place. Each partition needed 123 pop rivets, so that was nearly 500 pop rivets in total, which was made a lot easier by borrowing an electric pop rivet gun from one of the guys in the wheel shop at Eastleigh Works. Work on the cab partitions is now fully complete, apart from bolting them into both cabs, and a final coat of paint when the cabs are complete.

Other items now complete are repairs to items mounted on cab roofs, such as the four cab roof vents. Two of these cab roof vents had serious deterioration of the aluminium tubes that hold the internal closure mechanism inside the cabs, to the point the aluminium was oxidising and crumbling. This required the crumbling aluminium tubing being cut away and new aluminium tubing pop riveting in its place, with an aluminium transition piece between the old and new tubing. Also, one of the closure mechanisms needed dismantling and rebuilding with parts from a spare mechanism.

With all work to refit the fibreglass cab roofs completed, work turned to refitting the cab interiors. The first jobs being done were the fitting of mounting brackets, for the brand new electric windscreen wipers, and the supporting hardwood structure to which all internal fibreglass window surrounds are screwed. The original hardwood structures were beyond repair, after being inside 33012's cabs since BR days. The old air powered windscreen wipers were scrapped, as they were an obsolete system with spares no longer available, so had to be replaced with electric motors.

D6515 was outshopped from the paint booth around the end of November. The 71A Group's AGM was held in Eastleigh Works on Saturday 19th February 2022. Those present were told of the progress on the overhaul with the work mostly complete. After testing, it had been hoped to return the loco to Swanage in the near future.

In the event, D6515 emerged from Eastleigh Works on Saturday 9th April followed by further dynamic testing on the depot's sidings. On Thursday 14th April D6515 pulled 50026 *Indomitable* from Eastleigh Works back to Swanage. Both locos were to work at the Swanage Diesel Gala running from 5th May to 8th May.

After participating successfully in the Gala it then travelled to the Severn Valley Railway to participate in their Spring Diesel Festival. 33012 was added to the West Coast Railway Company's (WCRC) operated convoy of locomotives running from Swanage to Kidderminster on Tuesday 10th May. The plan saw 33012 lead being coupled in multiple [blue star connections] with 31128 and hauling 37703, D4, and D182. The route was - Swanage (departing 06.10), Wareham (departing 06.56), Southampton Central, Winchester, Basingstoke, Reading West (avoiding the main station at Reading), Oxford, Wolvercote Jct, Moreton-in-Marsh, Evesham, Worcester Shrub Hill and Kidderminster (arriving at 13.19).

33012 hauled trains on all four days of the SVR Spring Diesel Gala. On Thursday 19th May, she worked one round trip from Kidderminster to Bridgnorth and return, then a Kidderminster to Bewdley and return shuttle. On Friday 20th May, she hauled two round trips from Kidderminster to Bridgnorth and back. Unfortunately, while hauling the 18.50 Bridgnorth to Kidderminster service, 33012 suddenly suffered a total loss of power while approaching Bewdley. This was caused by a broken pipe to the vacuum control circuit governor. Luckily a temporary repair was carried out to isolate the vacuum control circuit governor and plug the small-bore vacuum pipe.

On Monday 23rd May, 33012 hauled D4 from Kidderminster to the Midland Railway Centre (MRC) at Butterley. Due to certain gauging restrictions affecting D4, 33012 could not use the Old Hill routing so had to haul it up the Lickey Incline – but without problems of course. The return from MRC was much delayed by a faulty GSMR radio. It was replaced at Nemesis Rail's shed at Burton-on-Trent.

After use at the SVR, D6515 was scheduled to be a visiting engine at the Keighley & Worth Valley Railway's Diesel Gala from Friday 10th to Sunday 12th June 2022. On Monday 6th June 2022, D6515 hauled 50026 from Swanage running as 0Z33 to Kimberley Yard on the Mid Norfolk Railway (MNR) to collect 33202. Departing Wareham at 18.17, the consist was routed via Southampton Central, Winchester, Woking, Chertsey, Kew East Jct, South Acton (for a crew change), Willesden Jct, the North London Line, Alexandra Palace, Hertford Loop, Cambridge, Ely, and Wymondham arriving very early in the morning (01.34 !!!).

The trip went without problems and, on arrival at Wymondham, the WCR crew propelled 50026 onto the Mid Norfolk Railway where a MNR crew of Stewart Robinson (owner of 33202) plus James and Stephanie Garthwaite were waiting with 33202, which was coupled to the Dereham end of 50026. 33202 then hauled 50026 and 33012 to Kimberley Yard where all three locos were secured.

The following day saw the same two WCR drivers work the (now three loco) train from Wymondham to Doncaster. The 0Z21 departure from Wymondham to Keighley (KWVR), was routed via Ely, March, Peterborough, Spalding, Lincoln, Gainsborough, Doncaster (crew change), Knottingley, Pontefract Monkhill, Crofton West Jct, Turners Lane Jct, Woodlesford, Engine Shed Jct, Whitehall Jct, Shipley, Keighley Station Jct, and then onto KWVR metals.

This was a very roundabout route to avoid approximately 8 miles of ECML! The journey was uneventful until just after Knottingley, when we were stopped by a red signal and the signaller calling on the GSMR. Chris, the driver, answered the call. The signaller informed Chris that IA48 the 18.45 Leeds to Kings Cross was stopped near South Elmsall, and that our loco convoy was the closest available manned loco to rescue the train if required. In June 2022, IA48 was still formed of a Class 91 and Mk4 set, so 33012 would have been able to couple to it OK and control the air braking although it could not produce appropriate or enough 'therms' to cope with LNER's air conditioning requirements.

Chris relayed the request to WCR control, who agreed to the rescue so long as the owner's rep (James Cox) was happy with it. A plan was put in place to drop off 50026 and 33202 in appropriate sidings, and for 33012 to run light engine to South Elmsall, couple to the rear of the train and push it to Doncaster, where it would be terminated and put away. D6515 would then return to Knottingley, collect 50026 and 33202 and carry on to the KWVR. Alas, before this could take place, the signaller phoned back to say that the driver of IA48 had been able to reset the Class 91 and it would not be required!

There was sufficient slack in the schedule to make up the 30 minutes that had been lost while the IA48 rescue was being organised, to allow arrival at Keighley Station Jct right time. From there a KWVR driver gave hand signals to the final WCR Driver to propel

into Keighley KWVR Station where 33202 was started and hauled 50026 and 33012 to Haworth Loco Shed.

On Wednesday 8th June, KWVR shed staff conducted their own Fitness To Run (FTR) exams on 33012, 33202 and 50026, then the KWVR Diesel Group kindly offered to wash 33012 after it's lengthy travels. 33012 had a couple of trips up and down the KWVR on Thursday 11th June shunting coaches ready for the Gala, which allowed for their sole driver with relevant traction knowledge, to carry out conversions for the Class 33 type for other KWVR drivers. This was required as, unfortunately, no 71A Locomotive Group drivers with current Class 33 knowledge were available to visit the KWVR.

KWVR is roughly 5 miles long, with 6 stations and a passing loop more or less in the middle of the line. The timetable was intensive with 2 x 5 coach trains running the full length of the line, and a 4 coach shuttle running from Keighley to Ingrow and back. The Diesel Gala itself was remarkably busy and 33012, along with 33202 and 50026, all worked perfectly. It was also gratifying to hear compliments about 33012 and 33202, from some of their younger passengers who had never enjoyed Class 33 haulage before. Sunday evening was back at Haworth Loco Shed, for mainline FTRs and topping up of the fuel tanks.

On Monday 13th June 2022, D6515 led 50026 and 33012 from Haworth to Keighley. At Keighley Station, WCR driver Chris fired up D6515 to propel the convoy onto Keighley Station Jct. From there D6515 led the convoy on it's return to Wymondham. This used the same route except that it had the privilege of running on the ECML from Doncaster to Peterborough, instead of the previous circuitous route via Lincoln. 0Z22 departed Keighley at 09.09, then onward to Doncaster and via the ECML direct to Peterborough then via March and Ely to Wymondham (arriving 14.36). At Wymondham, the MNR crew met us at the mainline connection and drove the convoy to Kimberley Yard again for an overnight stay.

On Tuesday 14th June 2022, D6515 propelled 50026 from Kimberley Yard back to the mainline connection at Wymondham onto the mainline. The final route back to Swanage was an exceptionally long way round. 0Z33 Wymondham to Swanage departed at 07.24, then went via March, Peterborough, Oakham, Leicester, Nuneaton, Washwood Heath, Tyseley, Oxford, Reading West (avoiding the main station at Reading), Basingstoke, Winchester, Southampton Central, and Wareham, finally arriving back at Swanage at 18.20 in the early evening.

From Friday 14th to Sunday 16th December 2022, the loco underwent a periodic B4 examination. Included in this included work on the Air Brake System Feed Cut-Off Valves. These need dismantling, cleaning, checking for any damage from water condensation in the air, and then re-greasing and re-assembly. There are two of these feed cut-off valves under each of the desks in both cabs, one from each pair is part of the Driver's Safety Device system (the DSD), and the other one from each pair is part of Automatic Warning System (the AWS).

Other areas that needs regular maintenance, to ensure they remain in tip top condition, are the three electrical generators bolted to one end of 33012's Sulzer engine. The first, bolted right up against the engine, is the Heater Generator which provides the electrical train heating (ETH) to any carriages being hauled. The next is the biggest one

which is the Main Generator which provides electrical power to the traction motors to propel the loco along. The third and final one is the Auxiliary Generator, which provides all the internal electrical power for the loco (battery charging, lighting, etc.).

Keeping these electrical generators clean and tidy is paramount, as is checking that the carbon brushes are in good condition, replacing them if they are badly worn. One job that is common to any type of vehicle with a diesel or petrol engine, regardless of whether they are trains, cars, ships, planes, etc., is the regular replacement of the fuel filters. Another job common to other types of vehicle, is the replacement or cleaning of dry (air) filters.

The 2023 Swanage Railway Diesel Gala featured both 33012 and 33111 working a variety of services.

Help the 71A Locomotive Group (volunteer and/or finance):
http://www.71alocogroup.co.uk/71A_about.htm

Information compiled by Peter Sykes 7th December 2021
Updated 19th January 2024