

PULLMAN OBSERVATION CAR 14

Car 14, Pullman Schedule no. 114, is one of a pair of Observation Cars rebuilt, from older cars, for the Southern Railway's new all-Pullman Devon Belle train. This ran between Waterloo and Ilfracombe in the summer timetable on Fridays and Mondays between 1947 and 1954, with a portion to Plymouth until 1949. Each train of 12 – 14 Pullman Cars was scheduled to be hauled by Bulleid's streamlined Pacifics in their Malachite Green with yellow stripe livery. The addition of red and yellow name boards on the locomotive's side sheeting made a stunning sight in the bleak austerity years following World War 2.

Leaving Waterloo and Ilfracombe at mid-day, the two rakes took around 5½ hours for the 226 miles 39 chains journey. However, as the Observation Cars were always marshalled at the rear of trains, in each direction, this entailed them being turned at each end of every journey. It should be noted that Pullmans, being American in origin, are correctly referred to as 'Cars' – never 'carriages' or 'coaches'.

On the floor of the entrance door each side, the constructor's nameplate is fitted showing the well-known firm of Claytons of Lincoln and the date of 1921. This denotes the date of construction by that firm of Car 14 as a 'J type' 3rd Class Kitchen Car using the chassis of a former London & North Western Railway Ambulance Coach built in 1918. The 'J type' classification denoted its L&NWR chassis, steel 4 wheel bogies, screw couplings and bellows gangways. More typical features of contemporary Pullman design and construction, retained to this day, are the inward opening doors to the vestibule area and the lower body sides being constructed with wooden match boarding. In this guise it had a Kitchen and Pantry at one end with seating for 47 passengers with a toilet at the far end.

During 1937, Car 14 entered the Preston Park Works for refurbishment into a Bar Car. Ten years later, in preparation for the new Devon Belle service, Car 14 (along with sister Car 13), was rebuilt in 1947 by the Pullman Car Co. workshops into an Observation Car. The original L&NWR chassis and bogies were retained but completely new bodywork constructed which was given a (then) modernistic treatment of Pullman livery. Internally, the finishes were kept simple and individual sofa style seats, accommodating 27 passengers, were provided. As an added amenity, light refreshments were served to seated passengers from an art-deco style bar.

On Tuesday 29th April 1952 a special train ran from London Charing Cross to Grain, on the Hundred of Hoo branch, carrying officers and invited guests of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC). It was commissioned formally in 1953 and had a maximum processing capacity of 11 million tonnes of crude oil per year. Incidentally, AIOC changed its name to the British Petroleum Company in 1954.

This train was chartered by AIOC to view the works underway at its new refinery in Kent. It was hauled by Maunsell Class N 2-6-0 No. 31827 and comprised eight Pullman cars from one of the Devon Belle rakes including an Observation car although records do not confirm which one was used (Car 13 or 14). It was believed to be the first time an all-Pullman train ran over the Hundred of Hoo branch.

The locomotive was turned on a triangle of lines within the refinery's sidings as it was too long for the turntable at nearby Allhallows. The Observation coach was also turned as it was noted at the rear of the train in both outward and return workings.

After the Devon Belle ceased operation on Sunday 19th September 1954, the Pullman Car Co. used the sets, complete with Observation Cars, for a series of midweek Cathedral Specials on the Southern Region. These were organised jointly with travel agents Thomas Cook & Son Ltd with whom Pullman had a common Chairman – Stanley J Adams.

In 1954 a seven vehicle rake of Pullmans, including car 14, went to Castle Bromwich to stand alongside the site of the British Industries Fair (BIF) for use as an exhibitors' club between 3rd and 14th May. The BIF was a government-backed organisation promoting British goods worldwide. As the train was stationary, arrangements had to be made for mains electricity, water and drainage facilities all in compliance with local authority requirements. A picture of it stabled at Castle Bromwich appears at: <https://rcts.zenfolio.com/coaching-stock/pullman-car-company/hA11D2073#hA11d2073>

Later the same year, businessman and comedian Kenneth Horne accepted the position of managing director of the BIF taking up his position in July 1955. Much of the work involved liaising with foreign buyers and delegations. He also accompanied HM Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on their visits to the annual fair. In 1956, however, the government withdrew its funding and the BIF closed.

Reverting back to matters Pullman. A commission on takings was paid to Pattinson-Hughes, official event caterers, with all supplies being sent by road from Pullman's catering base at Battersea. Additionally, staff were all London-based so had to lodge locally for the duration. For the last two years of BIF existence the annual Pullman presence continued at Birmingham until the BIF finished in 1957. Over those four years, local businessmen started lobbying for their own Pullman trains. Their wish was to come true – eventually - with the inauguration of the Birmingham Pullman in 1960.

On 12th May 1956, publishers Ian Allan Ltd organised the Pennine Pullman rail tour. It contained 8 Pullman cars including, it is believed, Car 14 at the rear plus two BR Mk I coaches for increased seating capacity. The train started from Marylebone and travelled over the former Great Central Railway to Sheffield Victoria where A4 pacific 60014 Silver Link gave way to electric loco E27002 across the Pennines through Woodhead Tunnel. The next part of the journey was hauled double headed by Robinson D11/1 class engines 62662 & 62664 with 60014 taking over again from Rotherwood Exchange Sidings (at the eastern end of the Manchester-Sheffield-Wath electric railway between Orgreave Lane and Retford Road, south east of Sheffield near Rotherham) back to Kings Cross.

In 1958, both Car 13 and 14 were sold by the Pullman Car Co. to British Railways which used them on holiday services in North Wales and Scotland respectively. Car 14 acquired the new number SC281 and a repaint into unlined maroon livery. It went straight to be used on scenic Scottish lines such as Inverness to Kyle of Lochalsh and from Glasgow to Oban. Car 13 had been renumbered M280 by BR for use in Wales and then Scotland.

Service with BR ceased when both cars were withdrawn in 1967. Car 13 was purchased by the Dart Valley Railway and it's present home is still at Paignton on what became the Dartmouth Steam Railway & River Boat Company's line to Kingswear.

Car 14's subsequent history was more varied. Early in 1969 a complete train was prepared, for the Flying Scotsman USA Ltd Exhibition Tour, by Cooks Display Productions Ltd. in Twickenham. In all, Cooks dealt with 4 ex-LNER Full Brakes, a BR Mk I BCK and Devon Belle Observation Car 14. In addition to interior work, such as wall panelling, display cabinets, etc., the exteriors were all painted to match the Pullman Umber and

Cream livery.

Although Car 14 had been repainted from BR unlined Maroon into Pullman livery it still carried its latter BR Scottish Region number of SC281. It has not proved possible to find out if any work was needed to two Pullman Cars *Lydia* and *Isle of Thanet* before despatch to America nor where it would have been undertaken. It is almost certain that a complete exterior repaint was necessary and, possibly, the Preston Park Pullman Works at Brighton might have carried out the work. Incidentally, both *Lydia* and *Isle of Thanet* had formed part of Sir Winston Churchill's funeral train on Saturday 30th January 1965.

On Friday 19th September 1969 the World-famous LNER Class A3 Pacific loco 60103 *Flying Scotsman* was loaded aboard Cunard Line freighter *Saxonia* at Bootle Docks by the Mersey Docks & Harbour Board floating crane *Mammoth*. Additionally, Pullman Cars *Lydia*, *Isle of Thanet* and Car 14 plus 5 other vehicles [BR Mk1 BCK No. E21177 (crew/admin) and four Ex LNER vehicles - Thompson Full Brake E104E (reception); Gresley Diagram 327 matchboard sided Gangwayed Brakes E70636E (Exhibition Car A) and E70632E (Exhibition Car B) plus Gresley Pigeon Vans E70497E (Exhibition Car C) and E70758E (Exhibition Car D)] were also despatched to America on a separate vessel.

The 9 coach train formed a part-Government sponsored 'Buy British' export promotion tour of North America with Car 14 being used as a "business" or hospitality car for dignitaries and the like. Another part-sponsor was the US Southern Railroad and much work, behind the scenes, was undertaken by its then President Mr. W. Graham Claytor Jr.

The train toured over much of the USA as well as parts of Canada and was exhibited at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto, Ontario during 1970. This annual event still takes place at Exhibition Place during the final 18 days leading up to and including Canadian Labour Day, the first Monday in September. During the Winter of 1970-71, 60103 was stored in the nearby Spadina roundhouse. The carriages were stored at Canadian National's Bathurst Yard in Toronto with Pullman *Lydia* and Car 14 stored at the Procor siding in Bronte (Toronto area).

Unfortunately, the tour hit financial problems in 1972 whilst the train was in San Francisco. 60103 *Flying Scotsman* was purchased by Sir William McAlpine in 1973 and brought back to the UK but all the coaches were left on the quayside. Pullmans *Lydia* and *Isle of Thanet* were delivered to the US National Railroad Museum at Green Bay, Wisconsin. They were exhibited there for many years before being purchased privately, and repatriated to the UK in 2000, for eventual use at Swanage it is hoped. Some other vehicles were purchased and adapted by the former 'Victoria Station' chain of railway-themed restaurants ending up at the Universal Studios site near Los Angeles.

Car 14 was also bought by the 'Victoria Station' chain and used as their headquarters at 140 [not 150] Chestnut Street, San Francisco. This was in the Northwest waterfront area of the city where old buildings were being restored and converted. One of these conversions involved a warehouse which had its own rail siding, off the old Belt Line, so they arranged to have Car 14 shunted into position before tracks leading to it were removed.

Originally it was used as a conference room but, when the restaurant chain failed, the building became CNET headquarters, and the car was used as their "green room". Incidentally, CNET (short for "Computer Network") is an American media website that publishes reviews, news, articles, blogs, podcasts, and videos on technology and consumer

electronics globally. Car 14 sat on its own wheels, with a glass structure 'tying' it to the building and they cut a door way in the car's side.

When CNET moved out in 2006, Swanage Railway heard of this and contacted the owners immediately. The building's owners donated the car to the Swanage Railway Trust charity with arrangements made to extract it and begin the 8,000 mile journey home.

It started with a 500 mile journey by road to the port at Long Beach, California before being loaded onto the Wallenius Wilhelmsen ship *MV Taiko*. It sailed at 15:00 on Monday 22nd January 2007 and, after traversing the Panama Canal, arrived at Southampton on 26th February. It was taken by road direct to specialist carriage restorers Rampart Carriage & Wagon in Derby. After completion Car 14 finally reached the Swanage Railway on Friday 16th May 2008, with formal commissioning into service planned for Sunday 22nd June.

Restoration work included stripping off external fittings applied to it in San Francisco as well as removing the US coupling frame, stripping asbestos from the interior by a specialist contractor and closing the door opening cut into one side. Other repairs included the roof and damaged areas of bodywork. Original pattern buffers were installed, to the observation end, and a renovated gangway connection was refitted. The body was lifted from the underframe to allow it's overhaul and, at the same time, the opportunity was taken to inspect and overhaul both bogies with the tyres being re-profiled.

The coach exterior was repainted to its original livery while a complete set of new seats, as close to the original design as possible, were manufactured. The interior was totally refurbished with new carpets and lighting installed. The original 'art deco' style bar had been stripped out prior to its shipment to America but there are plans to re-instate it with a curved screen and map of the (UK) Southern Railway system. To date, well over £100,000 has been spent on transport, shipping, restoration and fitting-out. The new seating costing £18,000 alone!

None of this would have been possible without the generosity of many people, principally former owners Ron Kaufman Companies Inc. who donated the vehicle to the Swanage Railway Trust, the US railroad enthusiasts who assisted with extracting the coach from it's San Francisco base and arranged transport stateside; and principal benefactor Alan Moore, who cut the tape when Car 14 was formally commissioned for service at a ceremony held at Swanage Station on Wednesday 16th July 2008. Car 14 entered service immediately with invited guests on the 11:10 departure from Swanage and, then, for general service on the 12:30 train.

Severe winter weather in early 2014 caused some damage and Car 14 was sent for repairs to the Derby Road depot of Nemesis Rail in Burton-on-Trent returning on Tuesday 27th September 2016. Further refurbishment works were necessary prior to 60103 *Flying Scotsman*'s visit to the Railway in March/April 2019 – 50 years after venturing to the USA. Car 14 was included in the 7 carriage rake hauled by 60103 on 5 days between Friday 22nd to Wednesday 26th March. Afterwards, *Flying Scotsman* (coupled to Car 14) went on display at Corfe Castle until Wednesday 10th April.

Currently the Swanage Railway has no covered accommodation and, as Car No. 14 didn't meet COVID 19 restrictions for public services in 2020, the vehicle was relocated for storage. Car 14 was kindly kept undercover at the Locomotive Storage Limited site in the former Hornby model railway warehouse in Margate, Kent. It moved on the Monday 8th March 2021 to join another Swanage Railway vehicle - the Churchill Catafalque Van No.

2464. The One:One Collection museum is being created to display iconic items of railway interest.

Since service provision had returned more-or-less to normal after the COVID restrictions, Car 14 was returned to Norden on Tuesday 21st June as a return load on the lorry which had taken Bulleid coach 4365 to Margate the day before.

Some exterior maintenance, followed by a complete repaint, were needed whilst the seating moquette was replaced after several years of service at Swanage. In a change from the original layout, where all seats normally faced to the rear of the train, some double and single seats were turned 180° to create face-to-face seating for 2s or 4s. This has been of some benefit to parents/guardians wishing to keep an eye on younger children!

All this work was undertaken inside Swanage Goods Shed under much pressure. The impetus being to get everything ready in time for another period in service behind visiting 60103 Flying Scotsman. Car 14 was finally outshopped on Friday 21st October 2022 in readiness to enter passenger-carrying duties the following day.

After this short period of association again with Flying Scotsman, Car 14 subsequently settled down to the more hum drum, but no less important, role of carrying passengers along the Swanage Railway allowing them to view the rolling Purbeck scenery.

At times the number of seats available in Car 14 had been outstripped by demand. So, early in 2023 the Swanage Railway managed to re-design (slightly) the interior layout. Seating for an additional three persons, to the same design, was contracted to the creators of those currently existing. They were scheduled to be fitted by early June so that capacity would be increased to 29.

Another new development for 2023 is the introduction of 'Champagne Afternoon Tea' in Car 14 on selected Sundays during the Summer. The refreshing and tasty afternoon tea is to be served by attentive and helpful attendants dressed in Pullman uniforms.

Information compiled by Peter Sykes 26th October 2021
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BROCHURE DETAILS FROM CAR 14's TIME IN NORTH AMERICA

The official US tour brochure noted that:

OBSERVATION CAR

The elegant Edwardian Observation Car, the last of the nine cars on the Flying Scotsman train, still has the panoramic windows and style of more than half a century ago. Inside, however, it has been transformed into a replica of an old English pub - "The Fireman's Rest" - with its velvet trappings and old mahogany bar. Here Eric Williams, Alan Pegler's impeccable butler, will preside over the proceedings serving the drinks in an atmosphere that will be typically British. It is not only the atmosphere that will be British. All the drinks to be served will be the most famous British beers and spirits. The utmost care has been taken to ensure

that the Watney's ales and lagers will be served in ideal conditions, whilst the world famous Cutty Sark whisky and Burroughs Beefeater Gin will be served exclusively with Schweppes mineral waters. The cigarettes will be by the House of Dunhill. Unfortunately, in order to comply with the American licensing requirements the Observation Car cannot be open to the general public. It is restricted to Flying Scotsman exhibitors and their guests and will become one of the most exclusive clubs to have operated on the mainline railroads of the United States.

JUST HOW DID THE SWANAGE RAILWAY GET CAR NO. 14?

by IVAN K. GODFREY, QBE



Photograph © R. Taylor.

A long story.

The repatriating of CAR No. 14, (left behind after the financial failure of the 'Flying Scotsman' Trade Tour of 1969) goes back to 1982. This was whilst I was working on CAR No. 13 on the Paignton & Dartmouth Steam Railway in Paignton, Devon. I first mooted the idea of returning CAR No. 14 to its native soil in 1982, I was able to give CAR No. 13 a makeover & marketing together with a select band of volunteers, however I was not permitted to restore CAR No. 13 to its original livery.

At that time the location of CAR No. 14 was known as 140, Chestnut Street, San Francisco, CA, USA and being used as a restaurant with a section of the body side adjacent to the building interior cut to allow the fitting of a side door.

After I left Paignton the idea was put on the 'back burner' for a number of years until one day I saw an article in the Pullman Society journal about 2002. At that time, I was living in the West Indies on the island of Grenada. This fired the idea up again. Over the course of the next two or three years, I wrote to & contacted several people who I believed may have been interested in and had the means to repatriate the car and restore it to use.

Several people had negative information on the condition of CAR No. 14. Correspondence from Sir William McAlpine, who repatriated 'Flying Scotsman', was told at that time that CAR No. 14 was 'a basket case and not worth bothering about'! This was contrary to what I believed and subsequently has proved to be the case, that CAR No. 14 was in fact in remarkably good condition.

Author Chris Awdry had heard the Car was near the 'Queen Mary' in deplorable condition! Amazing how misinformation gets about.

At one time the Venice Simplon Orient-Express was interested in using CAR No. 14 'on less intensive rail systems' to quote CEO August, 2004. Alas his personal assistant scuppered that idea whilst he was away.



Photograph © R. Taylor.

A dialogue then developed with the Bluebell Railway in Sussex, but nothing came of it at the time. They were, however, very interested. A very good photo appeared in 'Coupe News' in August 2005. Again, I contacted the Bluebell Railway and was informed they had someone 'negotiating for it in the USA'. It later turned out, it seems, this was not the case.

In 2006 whilst living in Mexico I decided as no progress had been made, I'd 'have a go' myself. On Terry Bye's 'existing Pullman list', for CAR No. 14 a typo had been made and listed the car as being at 150, Chestnut Street, San Francisco. I'd always believed it to be at 140. So, as I knew 140 was unoccupied, I tracked down the firm at 150 and called them. CAR No. 14 was indeed outside 140 next door. As luck would have it, they had the same owners as 140. They gave me the name & telephone number of the owning company.

Having prepared my presentation, I called the owners and was received in a very positive manner. A telephone conference took place with two of the firm's partners. One being the senior partner who rescued the vehicle off of the Streets of San Francisco. Had it been left to him; he would have given me the vehicle there and then. However, the Junior partner wished to hang on a while to see 'IF' a prospective client wanted the vehicle in the lease. From the tone of the conversation, it looked highly likely the 'IF' factor would fall in my favour.

The following day Emails were exchanged. My proposal stating the CAR should go to the Bluebell Railway. The owners setting out 'Terms & Conditions' which I agreed to (these did not change). The CAR itself coming 'Gratis' however the receiving party was to pay for the removal and reparation of the building front after CAR No. 14's removal.

The Bluebell Railway were now informed of the situation of CAR No. 14's availability. However, at

this point they started to get 'cold feet'. Due to the fact of lack of available funding and they had spent too much money on Pullmans over recent times. Pullmans being rather expensive to restore correctly! So, the exciting search was on to find an organisation to receive CAR No. 14.

An approach was made to the National Railway Museum at York. The less said about the crass response from there the better. An initial list of Heritage Railways was drawn up to fit certain criteria, these being: -

A. They had the means, ability to repatriate and restore as near as practical it to original running condition.

B. They had a line worthy of such a vehicle. this cut down the list considerably.

The following organisations received an Email with the subject 'Carriage Available'. They were: - The West Somerset Railway, Severn Valley Railway, South Devon Railway, Gloucester and Warwickshire Railway, North Yorkshire Moors Railway and the Didcot Railway Centre.

Only the North Yorkshire Moors Railway responded and quickly, however they failed to negotiate in the correct manner. So, I kept them on a string while I searched for someone else. The Keighley & Worth Valley & Llangollen Railway were also sent Emails, but I had no response.

A few days later I looked again and came up with the Swanage Railway and the Bodmin & Wenford Railway, the latter solely as I knew they had access to funding. The Swanage Railway, as they had a line that ran through an area of outstanding natural beauty. Plus, it was a SOUTHERN line. Only the Swanage responded.



Photograph © R. Taylor.

There followed further dialogue with the owners. On July 6th, 2006, I introduced Swanage Railway's Deputy Chairman Steve Doughty to the owners. As there was third party interest still in the vehicle with the possibility, they would visit San Francisco to check out CAR No. 14 if they tracked it they located it. Another organisation was very upset when the news broke that the rebuilt Swanage Railway was the line to receive this landmark vehicle.

A 25-year-old ambition has come to fruition and running as envisaged in authentic 'DEVON BELLE' Express livery on a very worthy SOUTHERN line. Just to conclude.

The removal of CAR No. 14 from the location and transport to Long Beach for shipment was carried out by a very interesting gentleman, located by me, by the name of Sam Sause. Sam made the job possible for half the cost of other quotes. With help from a couple of volunteers from the local railroad museum (Cris Hart and Randy Hees). Check out Sam's website www.grandtransport.us Here you will see a photo of CAR No. 14 on a truck.

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