

GWR Composite 6045 Appeal

1923 saw the start of construction of the famous Castle Class locomotives but it also marked a step change in carriage specification at Swindon.

Charles B Collett had taken over as Chief Mechanical Engineer and the grouping of railways in the 'big four' had taken place requiring the integration of pre-grouping stock and practices. It marked the virtual end of the 70 foot long stock period (since 1910), the return to chocolate and cream livery and the building of stock with 'bow-ends'. The outward appearance was just as distinctive as the Churchward 'toplight' design that it superseded. The build programme during this six year period saw a new vehicle being produced on average every two-and-a-half days which resulted in every main line service being composed of modern stock by the end of the 1920s.

The idea behind the bow ends was to reduce the length of the corridor connections between coaches following complaints from nervous passengers swaying on the gangways. The new stock was all steel panelled, having oak framing and a full-bodied appearance with cleaner lines and a higher waist line than the 'toplight' vehicles. They lasted as the basic GWR design for almost 30 years. They were the first choice for the important expresses including the Cheltenham Flyer and the Bristolian until the late 1930s and lesser services beyond that date.

From 1925 until the late summer of 1929 the basic design of a steel panelled, oak framed bow-ended coach with inset windows, high waist and clean exterior was applied to 57 foot coach bodies on 7 foot bogies. Over 500 vehicles were turned out to diagrams C54/5 (thirds), D94/5 (brake thirds) and E127/8 + E132 (composites – E128 were brake composites). Improvements included the 'suspended gangway' in 1926 replacing the 'scissors gangway'.



The suspended gangway improved on the steel concertina by suspending the gangway from two steel rods which hung down from overhead brackets. A further development was the fitting of slam locks introduced with Lot 1371 from August 1926. The lavatory windows, hinged from the bottom and opening inwards in the early lots, were changed to a ventilator and a fixed window arrangement from 1928.

Corridor Composite 6045 is unique among the survivors. It was completed in August 1928 as part of lot 1382 to diagram E132 in a build of 56 vehicles. It was made up of four 1st class compartments seating 24 and three 3rd class compartments also seating 24. There were toilets at each end and doors on the non-corridor side to each compartment. The first class was upholstered in dark brown moquette and the third class in red. It was acquired at the end of 1972 when based at Bristol and moved to the SVR arriving on 6th January 1973. It has therefore been patiently waiting in the queue for restoration; requiring a new floor, framework and roof repairs, a new interior and toilets.

The Association have already made good progress including replacing main framework and compartments. Funds are needed for the bogie overhaul, batteries, new step boards, mahogany and walnut trims, varnish, paint and external furniture.

Currently, our estimate of the amount needed is £30,000. It is hoped that the restoration can be completed in two to three years depending on the availability of labour and financial resources. It will be turned out in the late 1920s livery with full regalia.



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Please complete and return to:

Rob Massey – Secretary, 9 Shandon Close, Harborne, Birmingham B32 3XB

Donations

I would like to make a donation of £ towards the restoration of 6045.

Please make cheques payable to 'Great Western (SVR) Association'.

Name:

Address:

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Donations can also be made online via the Charity Aid Foundation website – please see: www.gw-svr-a.org.uk/how_to_help.html

Standing Order

Please pay from date until further notice £ per month in favour of the Great Western (SVR) Association.

The HSBC Bank, 31 Church Street, KIDDERMINSTER, Worcs, DY10 2AY

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