

Germany September 2009

Photos from this trip can be viewed on our [Fotopic site](#)

The trip actually started on my 20th wedding anniversary, sorry Sally, when the Exiled Brummie and Metal Mickey arrived at Blyth, at just after 14:20. I loaded myself into the car and we set off for Leeds / Bradford airport and flight LS347, the 18:00 Jet2 flight to Dusseldorf. The main purpose of this trip was to attend the open day at Dessau locomotive works and the open weekend, well one day of it, at Falkenburg. Additionally I was hoping to get some decent photographs of the remaining class 298 diesels. Metal Mickey, who had been studying the moles, predicted Sun, Sun and more Sun for the entire trip and recommended shorts. I on the other hand, being a local league cricket player, understood that Sun is something that only happens Monday to Friday and the weekend would bring along a deluge worthy of Madras in the rainy season, packed for every eventuality. If I saw a mole in a Hawaiian shirt and straw hat I would not believe it!

We met Horizontal Harry at the airport and despite the 'profit of doom' warnings by Augustus Winthrope, we were sat in the departure lounge at 16:15 waiting. We were called to the gate at 17:25 and boarded straight away, Jet2's Boing 737-300 G CELF being our aircraft. The fact that we had 17:50 departure for Brussels and an 18:00 departure (I know) for Amsterdam in front of us made a mockery of our advertised 18:00 departure and so it proved with our wheels actually leaving the ground at 18:13. The plane was about $\frac{3}{4}$ full, which allowed us to stretch out. The flight was smooth and Metal Mickey took random photos of pieces of ground until the light faded. Arrival at Dusseldorf was, more or less, 'on time' Horizontal Harry's prediction that the airport would be deserted was not right but passport control proved no problem. I would like to say the same for our car hire, but I cannot, I will not go into here but it was a complete farce and resulted in us arriving at our first hotel, the Mercure Ratingen after 23:00. We missed the last restaurant service and the highlights of England's 5-1 demolition of Croatia. A beer or two eased the pain and we 'hit the sack' in readiness for the morning.

Someone parked an HGV in our room at around 06:00; I stopped trying to fight it and instead showered and put the kettle on. Breakfast was pleasant with enough choice to keep the interest; The Exiled Brummie managed a bacon butty (Oh big surprise there) as we all ate our fill. A painless checkout saw us exit the hotel into the morning drizzle (Metal Mickey's moles had rain coats over their Hawaiian shirts) and head in the direction of Unna. The traffic was heavy and this resulted in a slightly late arrival which coincided with 152038 passing with a freight. Alas this proved to be the only freight movement in the hour we stayed, although 294780 passed 'light' if you can count that. It was not at all boring as 111157 on RE29715 the 09:14 departure for Krefeld lead a small procession of loco hauled services ending with 111148 on RE29714 the 09:43 departure for Rheine.

Our next call was something of a last minute entry into the trip schedule, thanks to an article in the September issue of Today's Railways (Europe). We had no idea at all where the 'Eurobahn' depot was at Hamm Hessen, except for the vague 1½Kms west of the station mentioned in the article and we, therefore, had to do a bit of 'seat of pants' navigation to find it, but we did. We received a warm welcome from the depot staff and were allowed a full visit, the main purpose of which was to photograph their Kof diesel shunter. We were caught by surprise when there were two! MWB's V242 (ex DB 332165) had joined Kof 11093 (ex DB 332093) and both made it into our cameras.

Surprisingly the sun appeared for a moment or two, the only time it did that day, as we departed for Hamm SP. Being midweek it contained just 5 locomotives, one of which was 140374, which carried a UIC number. Next came the yard at Soest, or at least it would have been if DB had not lifted it! Our shortened stay here was brightened only by 101143 which stopped with IC2154 the 11:00 Kassel to Dusseldorf. The yard at Padderborn has not been lifted and the locomotives in it could have graced any East German yard in the late seventies. Electrics 142128 (WAB 60), 142159 (WAB 58) and diesels 202726 (PBSV 15) & 202787 (PBSV 18) were all photographed for posterity. Other than these, the main station has turned into a 'unit desert' with every service we witnessed worked by either DMU or EMU, it was time to go. The fortifications around Padderborn wagon works stopped us even seeing plinthed DMU 998164, never mind photographing it, so we headed into Kassel in an attempt to find its elusive Rbf. Despite my reservations Clara pin pointed the Rbf and we 'got the nod'

for a walk round. Diesel shunter 335007 made a good photograph and recently re-instated 202720 was standing by the signal box, but it was a line of 'just out of the box' electric locomotives that supplied most of the interest as we walked the length of them. Over in the main yard was a line twice as long, but we were not allowed access to these so we will just have to get them the hard way. On the way to Wilhelmshöhe, plinthed steam locomotive 44 481 allowed it's self to be photographed at the Henschel works. We booked into the Inter-city hotel, just by Wilhelmshöhe station, deposited our bags and did just short of two hours on the platforms. As usual most passenger trains were ICE sets, but the occasional locomotive appeared like 101139 on IC2375 the 17:31 to Karlsruhe Hbf and 101143 heading IC2153 the 19:00 departure for Halle. Rescue diesel 218812 was stabled in the station and one or two freights passed in this time too, ES64U2069, 152029, 189049/063 and 294739 doing the honors, but this was disappointing and the effects of the economic downturn are clearly being felt here. The sight of a steam locomotive arriving, in full steam, at the nearby Hessencourrier site dragged us off the station and a short walk saw us photographing steam locomotive 524544, it rounded our day off nicely!

We ate at the hotel, along with the entire occupants of a 52 seat tour bus who arrived for dinner as we did, that said the kitchen coped admirably and we did not wait long at all. Our pork medallions in mushroom sauce with tagliatelle, was very nice indeed and though the beer was not quite as good as last nights (prompting Horizontal Harry to hit the white wine) it slipped down well. After pudding the hardy bunch went back to the station, while the less hardy went back to the bar. Sleep came easily.

Unna Station (09:00 – 10:00) 111146/148/151/157 143292/304/579 152038 294780 402019 648111/115/611/615 Eurobahn EMU ET5.05/11/22/14 **Eurobahn Depot, Hamm Hessen (11:10)** Eurobahn EMU ET5.14/23 ET6.02 EX DB Köf 11093 (332093) MWB V242 (332165) **Hamm SP (11:40)** 140374 152149 189021 294785/850 **Soest Station (12:25 – 12:40)** 101143 Eurobahn ET5.02/05/09 **Padderborn Station (13:30 – 14:30)** 140537 185270 294791 425650 Eurobahn ET5.02/15/16 Westfalenbahn VT701/26 PBSV 15 (202726) 18 (202787) WAB 58 (142159) 60 (142128) **Kassel Rbf (15:55)** 185608/609/610/611/614/633/634 186184/185 189063 202720 294593/756 335007 363200 427007/057 428503 711107 **Henschel works, Kassel (16:35)** Plinthed ex DB steam 44481 **Kassel Wilhelmshöhe Station (17:20 – 18:50)** 101039/080/139/143 111059/096 120122/140 152029 189049/063 218812 294739 401052/060/064/066/069/072/077/079/080/552/560/564/566/572/577/579/580 402007/014/026/031 425707/711/717 427007/055/056 428052 452701/710/713/715 private owner ES64U2069 HLB DG202 **Kassel Hessencourrier preservation site (19:10)** ex DB steam 524544

Friday looked like being nice from the off, the moles had put on their sun hats and liberally covered themselves in factor 20 before we finished our breakfast. They had plenty of time as last night's coach load beat us down by a good 20mins and attacked the breakfast buffet like a plague of locust; we had to wait for everything to be refilled. Slightly down on our departure time, we called first at Kassel depot, it's by the main station and apart from (very welcome, for me) 335009, contained just units. As usual the tunnel emergency train was stabled in the Hbf, 714003 & 714014 doing the honors at either end of the train, and EFW's 212052 was stabled, on its own, in the holding sidings. Our next call proved interesting, the Die-Lie head office is in Kassel and so is their workshop, so we headed there to try and gain a visit. We got one, but it was not what we expected, the 'workshop' is just one road in an old warehouse, big enough for one loco (it was empty) and outside is a storage line, long enough for three locos and this held ex DB 346962 and a further, unidentifiable V60, we said thanks and departed.

Our arrival at Eichenberg coincided with the passage of 5 freight trains in the first 10mins and this kind of set the tone for the 90mins we spent there. Most freights were electric hauled, but the mixture was impressive, OBB's 1016008, SBB's 482002 & 482009 MRCE's 185553 and plenty of just plain old DB. Somehow (don't ask) we got into a conversation about constipation and Metal Mickey's cure seems to be to drink Fern tea, apparently you should have your trousers down while you drink, as there may not be time after (if anyone has experience of this, I don't want to know). After the 17th freight we left, heading for Nordhausen, on the way is the preservation site at Heiligen, and we called there. Here we found the resident steam locomotive, 94249, in the company of V60 1095 which is the number formally carried by ex DB 346095, however this is the former 'werklok' Nr 605 from Stahl-und Walzwerk, Brandenburg. The rest of the journey was uneventful, if painfully slow, and we arrived at Nordhausen just in time for lunch! The 'DB' depot there is now in private hands, it still has a smattering of DB locomotives stabled around it, but the main work seems to be on servicing privately

owned shunting locomotives. There were examples from ITB and RRB, oh and for some reason ex OBB electric 1020014! The nearby Hertz depot had 'narrow gauge' V100's in the shape of 199872 & 199874 and our final view saw DB's 294595 in the yard before we pointed our noses to Espenhein. The catering department did its bit with coffee and buns and the moles gave up the old 'I told you so' look as the sun broke through with vigor. It quickened the arrival of Espenhein, the vast railway yard here is now worked by PRESS, but occasionally lines of scrap DB diesels find their way here, but alas, not today. While we were in the area we located 'plinthed' Kofs 323228 at TDE recycling and 310942 at Scholz recycling along with a few privately operated, by PRESS and PBSV, shunting locomotives in the exchange yard.

It was time to head to our hotel now, on the way, or should that be in the way, was Leipzig and on the outskirts of Leipzig is Engelsdorf depot, we know that DB has announced its closure but we thought we should call anyway. We found the old roundhouse to be out of use (as it has been for many years) but locomotives are still stabled round the turntable and 14 were here today. These included 203114 (ex DB202415), a 'cop' in the shape of 155207 and two of the rapidly disappearing big diesels, 232093 & 232673. Photos duly taken we viewed the yard from the over bridge, 8 further numbers, then headed to Halle diesel depot to finish off the day. The foreman here was happy to allow our visit but insisted on accompanying us. Metal Mickey baffled him with his fluent German, so the foreman broke into English. He then insisted one roundhouse was out of use and showed us round just one, we were a little miffed therefore when we walked onto the over bridge and saw locos in and around the supposedly out of use roundhouse. What we could get of these bumped our total up to a meager 27; when I think of the numbers here on our first ever visit..... Once the light went we made for our hotel, we used the Mercure at Halle Peissen, which is about 6Kms from the station thus eliminating the late night walk; the rooms were 'shabby' and the choice of food 'limited' so we have made better choices in our time. The main line is about 500yds away, just far enough to stop you getting any passing numbers, but near enough to hear every passing train, so we had to drink large amounts of beer to put us to sleep.

Kassel Depot (08:00) 212052 335009 452709 612039 628225/256 646205 928225/256 946705
Kassel Hbf (08:15) 111099 427004/007/054/507 714003/014 **Ochshauer Strass level crossing, Kassel (08:45)** 294739 **Die-Lei workshops, Kassel (09:10)** ex DB 346962 **Eichenberg Station (09:58 – 12:20)** 101070 143048/926 151081/160 152016/048/051/101 185213/248/353/354/378/553 223101 427001/007/055/501/507/555 482002/502 650412 711107 OBB 1016008 SBB 482002/009 **Heilignstadter Eisenbahn (12:15)** Diesel Ko 0082 Ko816 V102317 V223339 V601095 Steam 94249 **Wipperfurth (13:08)** 143291 passing **Nordhausen Depot (13:40)** DB 152001 185222 ITL 152552 ITB 01/44/627 RBB 28/54/55/88 **Nordhausen Hartz Depot (14:10)** 187012 199872/874 with 143633 & 294595 passing **TDE Espenhein (15:35)** ex DB 323228 **Scholz Recycling, Espenhein (15:45)** ex DB 310942 **Espenhein exchange yard (15:55)** PRESS 345037 (which appears to be ex DB 345037) PRESS 346003 (not ex DB) 346018 (not ex DB) Anschluss Bahn 23 174 **Leipzig Engelsdorf Depot (17:10)** 145010/039 152096/142 155096/207/268 185138/194 189018 203114 (202415) 232093/673 362568 **Leipzig Engelsdorf Yard (17:30)** 155262 290507/535/536 294615 362596 with 143075/589 passing **Halle Depot (18:45)** 145050/061 155055/056/132/144/200/205 185356 232195 233204/521/527/636/652 290513 294702 298048/332 335249 362517 363703/737 with 114301 143249 and MEG603 (ex DB 143851) passing.

The choice at breakfast was much better than the choice at dinner and we all ate our fill, but this Mercure had not finished with us and checkout was mighty painful on Metal Mickey's wallet! His moles were, once again, applying the sun tan lotion as we headed back into Halle. First visiting the carriage depot, which surprised us with 15 numbers, before finding out that the best place to see Halle allocated class 143 electrics, was in fact Halle Hbf! We spent an hour on the platforms, got told off by the Station Security, for going passed the 'do not pass this point' sign but still managed 24 numbers, 16 of which were 143's. Once our hour was up we drove, open boot style, to Dessau in order to attend the works 'open day' here, it was not quite fully open, with the top of the yard being roped off, meaning we missed between 5 & 10 numbers, but the main Hall was open and a display of differing classes saw 45 numbers enter our books. Our first class 110 of this trip 110511, in white livery, was there; more than one preserved electric had made the trip. I particularly enjoyed seeing ex DR electric 211001 outside for once, and even the diesels had got in on the act with 130101 posing in the sun. There was even a privately operated electric in the shape of EGP's 109028, which is ex DR, being overhauled. I won a DB balloon, Metal Mickey was handed some DB 'Gummy Bears' but pride of place went to the Exiled Brummie with his red DB pen (eat your heart out Standback). This was too

much for Metal Mickey who returned and not only 'groveled' for a pen, but mugged a 3 year old for a rule shaped like a driving trailer. Once we were sure we had seen everything we could we returned to our car and headed towards Berlin and the major depot at Seddin. It was a pity after that drive that the foreman would not allow us to walk round and we had to make do with a view from the car park which netted just 32 numbers, about half of what was on. The only 'plus' for me was a photo of 298091, one of the many Berlin ones I need for photographs.

On the way to Falkenberg, and the advertised open day at the steam preservation site there, we tried to find a 'plinthed' steam locomotive at Treuenbriezen, but the industrial park it was in was locked up and did not re open until Monday; we thought the wait was not worth it. Having failed at our last two locations we feared the worst with Falkenberg, but it was open, as advertised, and the returning Mayor was welcomed with open arms! There has been a lot of work put in here since we last came, some of the steam locomotives are actually no longer rusting hulks, but are (at least) painted up and looking good. One or two of the diesel shunters actually work too! It true that there are still (many) rusting hulks of steam locomotives, with trees growing round, through and in some cases, out of them, that the roundhouse has more broken windows than whole ones and that the whole place needs years more work, but the improvement from our last visit is immense. 50 steam locomotives, 12 diesels and 1 electric now live there, believe me, it's worth a visit. We even managed some decent photos around the place, all for a 3 euro entry fee. After almost two hours we emerged from this site and did the short hop to the DB depot at Falkenberg, we know this is closed, but we also know locos still stable there and today we found 4 electrics, including 155028/201 and two diesels, of which shunter 363440 was one.

A long drive to Cottbus followed, we made a donation to the German police benevolent drinking fund on the way, and we first made for our hotel. Checking in it was obvious that this room was far better than last night and, as an extra bonus, it was 2mins walk from the works. We quickly dropped off our bags and headed back out to view the works, obviously we could not gain entry but a walk round the entire complex netted over 70 numbers. It appears that the class 298 diesels are starting to collect here, there were 12 here today in the shape of 298051/069/072/074/081/084/085/094/129/139/150/156/163 I wonder what the future holds for these? We just had enough light to make a sortie to the station, where a line of stored DMU's pumped up our numbers to around 30, before we headed back to the hotel with an excellent days 'work' behind us. The large bed or room had held a certain appeal, the larger bath held more and even the large flat screen TV looked inviting. After first Horizontal Harry and then I had 'suffered' a long soak we (reluctantly) made our way to the hotel's restaurant, where an inviting menu tickled our palate. Large Parma ham and cheese salads were followed by large mixed grills and large ice creams. Even the beer was excellent. All night we had shared the restaurant with the German equivalent of Saga holidays and the coach load of German pensioners where having the time of their lives, which ended with some sort of joke telling contest, the punch lines of which must have been the funniest on Earth as the incontinent pants were being passed around like lightning. So we had to have a final large beer in the bar, just the one before retiring to bed, our large flat screen TV and 'Match of the Day'. Goodnight!

Halle Carriage sidings (08:00) 143043/095/121/178/319/650/893/903/917/940 294907 362378
Mitteldeutsch Eisenbahn GmbH (MEG) 601(143179) 603(143851) 701(155124) with 233689 passing
Halle Hbf (08:20 – 09:20) 101106
143005/026/053/089/124/185/285/293/310/338/554/571/844/891/927/935 362938 642203/727
650548 672907/910 708333 **Dessau Works Open Day (10:00)** 109028 110511
111010/103/133/213/216 112123/141/147/153/155/176 114006 143132/857/972/973 145030/097/098
146209 152026/040/108 155123 185024/031/033/509/515/516/520 335161 381018 441001 E211001
(171001) E218031 E44044 E44108 CFL 4011 Private Owner ES64U2099 diesel 130101 with
143034/130 passing **Berlin Seddin Depot [view] (12:10)** 145011/023 152070 155006/189/239/272
185237 232184/205/529/701 233515 290003/562/591 298045/079/091/315/322/329/331 335314
362780/943 363124/664/668 MWB V1202 **Falkenberg Open Day (14:20)** Steam 22047/073
44105/140/154/394/687 411125/1289 441623 503517/18/57/68/3631/35/42/52/91/93
528008/09/13/21/23/30/35/36/37/42/44/58/72/83/85/89/92/100/102/104/117/122/126/132/133/157/170
/175/187/194 Diesel 310371/528/757 311705 312009/072 345100 346078/660 **Falkenberg DB
Depot (16:00)** 152007/087 155028/201 294602 363440 ex DB steam 525679 **Cottbus Works [view]
(17:55)** 142006 (the diesel one) 212280
232030/031/037/085/100/125/149/207/265/282/365/438/579/584/623/682/685/691 233451 234344
241801 285197 294645/726/859 295008/009/046

298051/069/072/074/081/084/085/094/129/139/150/156/163 310882 333671 335157
362544/562/748/794/798/806/910 363134/237/709/728/836/837 364763/901/906/909 365225/426
701122 702139 711004/006/008 712002/101 725005 726005 DSB 3011/12/21 PRESS 363027 (ex
DB 363159) MEG 86 (ex DB 345152) **Cottbus Station (18:45)** 112102/165/188 114010/013/038
143288/566/630/642/832 185243/359 362423/526 614013/014/036/052/067/069/070 642416/916
914004/005/007/031/041

We thought that no matter what time we went down for breakfast, we would be joined by the Saga club, but we were wrong as they arrived just as we departed. Breakfast was excellent with a large choice of delights 'all in all' the hotel proved a good deal costing just 35 Euros each for 'bed and breakfast'. We dropped round to the station where a further 298, in the shape of 298088 (which I now think is operated by MEG and should carry the number 113) was now stabled, before hitting the road to Senftenberg. This place has changed beyond all recognition, the depot entry we know and love has gone and you now have to enter from the opposite side of the line. Having eventually found the way in we were happy to be allowed a visit and even happier with 298301/303/321/324/326 which were all on the depot. Our next call was Hoyerswerda, which is now just a shadow of it's former self. There was no one to ask and just 4 locomotives to see, the bonus was that three of these were class 155 electrics, 155096/128/158. Visit over, we did the one hour drive to Dresden and the main depot, where (allegedly) they had been warned of our arrival. The foreman did not look surprised to see us and when we told him who we were he knew what we had come for, but the news was not good. The request had gone high up into the ranks of DB and he produced a letter denying us a visit on the grounds that 'all data held by DB is confidential'. What's the answer to that one? Is it DB's intention to take the numbers off all their locomotives so know one knows which loco it is? The Forman looked particularly embarrassed by the situation and gave us a list of all locomotives on the depot (here's what you could have won) then told us to stay in the car park and identify as many as we could, but that was the best he could do. The list tells us that we 'missed' in excess of 40 locomotives and the fact that 298047/100/132/311 could easily have been photographed did nothing for me. Disappointed, Metal Mickey suggested that, with the time we had 'saved' by not getting round Dresden, would we like to visit the preservation site at Nossen, this brought a unanimous yes! What an ace this proved to be as the site was actually holding an open day with more than one locomotive in steam, spaced nicely to photograph. We would not have called here if it had not been for our 'bad luck' at Dresden, but, I for one was glad we did. We moved on and it started to rain, the moles, in Hawaiian shirts, put their brollies up and the extensive re-building in Zwickaw saw us struggle to find the stabling point. We expected to find no living soul here; we were wrong as the foreman was hard at work. He was happy to allow our visit, in a mild monsoon, and we were most surprised to find the remaining (except preserved) ex Blankenburg class 171 electrics, 171003/004/005/009/011/013/014 still in (one of) the old roundhouse. As trees have now grown through the tracks that go in and the turntable has been partially dismantled, it's going to be a major job to get them out! Counting the 171's there were 22 numbers here, much more than we expected. A further long drive followed, Harry nodded off, the rain stopped and coffee was served, all before arrival at Saalfeld. Permission was granted for a full visit, we were after the remaining, but now withdrawn, class 204 diesels, but PRESS 293021, ex DB 201881 was the first V100 we found. In fact V100's were there in force as DB's 203442 (202442) 203496 (202496), 204592/605/607/641/671/803/805, (the entire Saalfeld class 204 fleet) and PRESS 204011 (202844) and 204031 (202326), were also 'on shed'. Many photographs were taken and these may well be the last we get of this class, before we said our thanks and went 'down the road' to the nearby wagon works. Here is a 'store' of unserviceable big diesels and 39 were identified today. Our final drive today took us out of Saalfeld on the road to Wurzburg, which was 'closed' in at least two places, resulting in diversions onto pavements, roads with no tarmac and even peoples back gardens before we arrived at our hotel in Coburg. The reception was manned by a Boris Johnston look alike; I had to do a double take when booking in to ensure I was not being given the London congestion charge! Our room was excellent, almost as good as last nights. The hotels bar and restaurant were both closed but 'Boris' directed us to the nearby eating places and we all enjoyed the local dishes on offer, along with the local brew. Our longest (driving) day over, sleep arrived easily.

Cottbus Station (07:40) 112113 114024 143832 155016 185078/243/258/269/288 298088 (MEG 113)
362423/526 **Senftenberg Depot (08:30)** 152027 155070/103/135/167/191 185281 232255/703
233206 298301/303/321/324/326 363163/166 **Nardt (09:20)** 152902 **Hoyerswerda (09:40)**
155096/128/158 232618 650084 with 143126 passing **Dresden Depot [view] (11:00)** 145038
152160/169 155081/141/269 180003/005/009/013/015/016 185169/207 189008/009/014/017/053

232524 241008/353/802/803/804 294653 298047/100/132/311 363631 OBB 1116231/238 CD
372006 Private owner, ITL 185548 186142 dispolok ES64F4200 with RHB 143041 passing **Nossen
Preservation Site (12:10)** ex DB Steam 35113 503610 528029/8047/8131 Diesel 232004 234304
310498 industrial locomotives MBG 1 WFL 1 & WFL 5 **Zwickau Depot (14:00)** 155222/250
171003/004/005/009/011/013/014 185227/280 241697 290506/517/570 294738/827/895 362903
363212 PRESS 204022 (ex DB 202317) 346019 **Saalfeld Depot (16:00)** 203442 (202442) 203496
(202496) 204592/605/607/641/671/803/805 232173 290189/505/515/564/637 362855/911 641026
PRESS 204011 (202844) 204031 (202326) 293021 (201881) **Saalfeld wagon Works (16:20)**
232014/146/165/182/228/253/260/334/362/371/395/403/421/424/453/455/464/466/471/494,
232514/520/533/539/544/566/581/612/626/634/646/647/648/649/663/670/681 234144/468

Monday arrived far too early! Breakfast was nice, without being excellent and checkout was totally painless, it's a bit 'out of the way' but as hotels go I would not turn it down. Emerging into the daylight it was obvious that the Hawaiian shirted moles were in danger of getting damp. We had to 'negotiate' our way out of the one way system, then did the short drive to the small preserved line at Hofheim. They have one ex DB locomotive here in the shape of Köf 323922, we easily found and photographed it, just before it started to rain, then headed off to Würzburg. It rained for most of the hours drive here, but stopped as we pulled into the station car park. We had decided to visit the station here instead of the depot because, we had never spent any time on this station before and all the covered roundhouses were now out of use at the depot, meaning everything on the depot could be viewed from the station. The hour we spent here produced three freights in the shape of 182571 (ES64U2071), 185386 & 189037, three shunters, 362510, 362564 & 363195 and the rain! Viewing the depot found 6 electrics and the tunnel train with 714007 at one end and 714009 at the other. We were on a 'long drive' to Mannheim now, ex DB steam locomotive 052 908 was located at Lauda and we visited Heilbronn, just to break up the journey really. We found a new depot being built by the station and 363692 shunting the yard, before we arrived at Mannheim depot. To cut a long story short our requests for a visit fell on deaf ears and as it was raining we decided against standing on the footbridge, instead moving on to Mainz. Here we did 2½ hours on Bischofsheim station, plenty of freight passed, ITL operated 186149, SBB's 482018/038 and a long coal hopper train hauled by 151108+151010 being the 'pick'. However the rain never stopped, varying from light drizzle to mild hurricane, it was so heavy at one time that three moles, in Hawaiian shirts and sunglasses, sailed past in an upturned Wellington boot! I'd like to say we got some good photographs, but I can not, we could not leave any earlier because the rain was so heavy, so we had (Tizer) tea (don't ask) and cakes, supplied by the catering department, on the station. Eventually the rain slowed to a mild downpour and we made for the car. The exiled Brummie negotiated Mainz's one way system and we arrive at the brand new Inter-City hotel by the station. We thought it our duty to try this new hotel and let you all know how good it is. Well as you would expect, everything was nice and shiny, the rooms are spacious and the double glazing provided excellent, and much needed, sound insulation, our room overlooking Mainz's version of the M25! After dropping off our bags we headed to the Hbf a good 2min walk away, where we saw out the daylight. NBE's 212256 was at work in the yard, 101020 passed through with IC2311 the 18:39 departure for Stuttgart, 101033 did likewise with IC2318 the 19:20 departure for Dortmund, but highlight was 110300 which did RE12104 the 18:52 departure to Koblenz. As we left, in semi darkness, Wincanton operated 203131 (202689) trundled through the station. You may think that was a nice end to the day, alas a large party of English made sure it was not. The party, of about 50, was from Johnson & Johnson (a family company, if you remember your adverts) they had come all the way to Germany (would you believe) to look at some dead bodies, we obviously don't have these in England. They descended on the hotel restaurant about 7mins after we did. The hotel was under prepared for this having only two waiters on duty and a broken beer pump, a complete farce followed as dinner took over two hours to arrive. Horizontal Harry and myself only just getting back to the Hbf in time to see CNL421/401 the 17:01 Amsterdam to Vienna/Milan which was hauled by 189033. Returning to the hotel we found our fellow English (both men and women) staggering around drunk. The dinning area littered with half drunk, or in some cases not even touched, bottles of wine, all of which were provided by the company, I'm in the wrong job me! Embarrassed by our country men, we did our best to remain innocuous, had a final beer and retired to bed.

Hofheim (08:35) ex DB 323922 **Würzburg Hbf / depot [view] (09:40 – 10:40)**

111106/166/173/206/207/218 112169/204 143012/077/123/240/887/961 146240 182571 185386
189037 362510/564 363195 403557 411707 612064/082/093/564/582/593 628232 704004 705001
714007/009 928232 Lauda (10:42) ex DB steam 052908 **Heilbronn (12:00 – 12:30)** 111075

143012/106/880 146227 152076 185170 218484 294684/815 363692 628315 642704 928315 Private Owner LW 203001 (ex DB 202390) **Mannheim Yard (08:10)** 185386 363172 **Mainz Bischofsheim Station (??:?? - ??:??)** 101139 110295 120146 143076/107/168/170/231/238/267/637/647/825/873 151010/108 185045/153/182/230/233/289 189037/048 294589/620/642/657/744 411032/522 420233/260/261/264/265/272/280/284/287/288/294/295/297/298/302/307/313/314/316/318/322/325/31/332/333
420337/347/349/356/384/761/780/795/797/800/847/884 612007/138/546/551/625/643 SBB 482018/038 Private Owner DBG 203304 (ex DB 202416) ITL 186149 **Mainz Hbf (18:25 – 19:25)** 101020/033 110300 143076/181/647 218408/412 403506 411024/032/568 420295/298/322/332 425156 460002/016 612118/120/126/139/148/618/620 628466/469/901/902/906 629001/002/006 928466/469 Private Owner NBE 212256 Wincanton 203131 (ex DB 202689) **Mainz Hbf (22:10 – 22:45)** 101111 143181 146012 189033 411061 420265/307/356/384 612004/143/504/643 628906 629006

Unsurprisingly very few of the party on the 'office jolly' joined us for breakfast, which was excellent. Checkout ran smoothly and we even exited the car park without problems, however the projected 18min drive to Wiesbaden Ost yard took twice that time! I'm unsure if it was worth the effort as only two locomotives were there, but the two were 212133 and MWB V1253 or ex DB 212285, so maybe it was. Next came Rüdeshheim-am-Rhine, where I expected plenty of freight and the occasional class 110 on passenger, I was totally wrong on both counts. We stayed exactly 100mins, got exactly 7 freights and exactly 0 class 110's. The highlight was the coffee we had at a nearby café, although we were passed by Schienen Güter Logistik (SGL) owned V150.03, which is ex DB 710963, which made the stay slightly better! We moved on to Koblenz, found a parking bay by the Hbf and stayed for two hours, this was much better. We got on the platform around the same time as IC2013 the 06:00 Magdeburg Hbf to Oberstdorf arrived behind 101122, CrossRail's 185594 followed it through with a freight, then 101011 arrived at the business end of IC2114 the 09:37 Stuttgart to Hamburg Altona and this set the tone for the entire stay. There was plenty of freight action, including 140858+140790 on a coal train, to photograph but I concentrated on class 181 electric, 181218 which arrived at the head of IC335 the 10:24 Luxembourg to Norddeich Mole, giving way to 101135, then taking over from 101113 on IC336 the 08:34 Emden to Luxembourg. This is still a tremendous station to spend time on; something always seems to be happening.

We left at 14:00 and called at Nuweid, here we found shunting locomotive 294644 and EFW's 'warship' 221122 in its maroon livery. Next came the private Brohltal Railway, which has an ex DB shunter in the shape of 360573, it was at home today along with 364403 (BSM, Mannheim), still wearing its DB red and white livery. We crossed the river via the Bad Breisig to Bad Hönningen car ferry and made for Bad Hönningen station, here we found why Rüdeshheim-am-Rhine was so poor, all the track was dug up! EFW's 232088 headed an engineers train but freight was waiting to pass, in the shape of ITL's E186148 and DB's 185203, but passenger trains were (rightly) taking preference. It was too late to change any plans now, so we headed to Linz anyway and took the chance to re-pack our well travelled bags for the flight home. Very little passed but one thing that did was 212034 in a shiny new coat of DB red and carrying just DB markings, last I heard this was employed by DB Fahrwegdiensie GmbH in Berlin, but if you know better please let me know. The drive to the airport went so well we threw Neuss Yard into the mix and this proved to be an 'ace' with 12 locomotives in the yard and a further 3 passing. It's just a pity (for me anyway) that 140037 was out of camera range. We arrived at Dusseldorf airport in plenty of time, Jet2 got the flight to Leeds there in plenty of time too and we returned home without any problems thanks to Metal Mickey's driving. In conclusion all the major depots we tried to visit turned us down, (a sign of the changing times?) but we still had an excellent trip, with old favorites and new places visited. The old East of Germany has all but lost its old identity and you have to search hard for it now, freight still has major flows. There are just not as many and new locomotives mean the old classes have all but gone, an exciting new era or a change for the worse? Go, and decide for yourselves.

We have one further trip planned this year, so watch for that report, in the meantime it's a big thanks to all the guys who shared this one with me, lets do it again sometime, please.

Wiesbaden Ost Yard (08:10) 212133 MWB V1253 (212285) **Rüdeshheim-am-Rhine (08:50 – 10:30)** 140680 143133/198/561/971 145051 152052/159 189027/048 701165 SBB 482020 Private owner SGL V150.03 (710963) **Koblenz Hbf (12:00 – 14:00)** 101009/011/026/113/122/135 120146 140790/858 143009/031/064/073/168/280/561, 143822/833/906/932 145072 146009/016 151007/108 152122 181209/218/223 185594 189097 425523/593 460008/011/017 640109 643011/517

648151/155/164/851/855/864 SBB482019 **Nuweid Station (14:15)** 143255 294644 425023/093 private owner EFW 221122 NI 481004 **Brohltal Eisenbahn Gesellschaft (BEG), Brohl (14:55)** ex DB 360573 364403 **Bad Honningen (15:15)** 185203 425031/608 private owner EFW 232088 ITL 186148 **Linz (15:45 – 16:15)** 143194/255/932 212034 private owner Viola 37510 with Eifelbahn Verkehrsgesellschaft mbh (EVG) 323149 360109 & 798752 visible in the nearby EVG depot **Neuss Yard (17:55)** 140037 151062/083 152033 189062/073 225117 294720/758 SBB 481005 private owner ITL 285108 SLB ES64U2024 with 111120 112138 & 143617 passing.