

Holland and Germany, March 2007

The early start to this, our first trip of 2007 did not surprise me, because it was me that had booked the flights! So, at just before 04:00 on Thursday the 8th March the exiled Brummie arrived at Blyth with Augustus already in the car, here he was joined by Metal Mickey and Myself, the ex-branch official, and off we set for Leeds / Bradford Airport Jet2 was to be our carrier today and we were heading for Amsterdam on their 07:10 departure, having dragged these retired gents away from diagnosis murder (staring Dick Van Dyke), I was hoping for a straight forward trip with some interesting subjects to photo. Augustus had dragged a 'freight hot spot' from a recent DVD release, and Neu – Eichenburg was now on our list. We also intended to visit Köln Gremberg depot (as the entire Köln fire service was there last time we attempted to visit), Oberhausen Depot and the interesting stations at Tilburg and Zwijndrecht. Another Augustus production was the 'on – line check in' Jet2 now have, I will not bore you with the four day story of our attempt to complete this exercise and I recon it saved us no time at all on our arrival at Leeds / Bradford. We departed bang on time, the plane was quite full, the smooth 45min flight was over in, well 45mins and we landed bang on time at Amsterdam. The taxi was almost as long as the flight and the walk to baggage reclaim, via passport control took longer than the drive to the airport!

Europecar had us underway in under 30mins and despite the Dutch traffic the drive to Zwijndrecht took a surprisingly short time, we walked onto the platforms at 11:25 and a stay of 2 hours 15 minutes at this busy location produced 59 numbers. There is always a liberal sprinkling of freight through here and today was no exception, NS electric 1601 & 1602 both passed with intermodal workings, 6480 lead 6471+6406 down the hill with an Iron ore working, Railion's 232905 stormed up the bank, on a heavy freightliner and SNCB electric 2553 worked towards home from the yard at Kifjhoek. Add to this the almost constant passenger workings, many loco hauled, and you can see why we rate the place. Time, as it has a knack of doing, caught up with us and we departed for Tilburg. The drive was easy enough, not so finding a parking space, however having achieved both the main loc works at Tilburg was viewed, producing // numbers before we made the Venlo end of platform 3 our home for the final hours of daylight. Once again there was plenty to hold our interest, ACTS 5812 (ex BR 58044) passed with a intermodal, ERS 6607 (a class 66) did likewise, SNCB' diesel locos 7773+7790 shot through heading for Germany and NS provided 6515 on a short trip working, 6510+6520 on an empty ore working and 6416+6452 running light, all the loco hauled passenger workings stop here allowing us to gather many decent photos before the fading light forced our departure. We drove into Germany where the Holiday Inn, Neuss, Nowherenearthestation, allowed us to rest our weary heads. I was rooming with Augustus tonight and the last time we had roomed together his alarm clock developed a mind of its own, hence I was so looking forward to this night. The hotel, despite its lack of closeness to any railway, was in fact excellent, the restaurant provided an excellent dinner and we shared a beer or two before retiring early in readiness for tomorrow.

Zwijndrecht (11:25 – 13:40) 519/22/29/30 821/32/54 920/32/40 1601/03 1711/38/47/74/81
1833/34/37/40/42/50/51 6405/06/07/40/51/71/77/80 7709/11/18/21/24/31/45 8645/57/61/74
8701/03/13 9406/17 DB232905 SNCB 1183/87/88/91 2553 Thyalis 4540 ACTS 7104 Rail4Chem
1202 2008 unknown V201 **Tilburg Works [view] (14:50)** 301 1605/18/20 1725/43/68 2368 3107
6462 Rail4Chem 1201 **Tilburg Station (15:05 – 17:00)** 467 809/19/20/30/50/56/73/75/76/82/83/88/92
911/19/28/29/43/50/51/52/58 1602/03 1747/54/57/65/71/74/75/79/81 1833/40/42/56 6416/52
6510/15/20 SNCB 7773/90 ACTS 5812 7103 ERS 6611

With no Standback around for breakfast the bacon and eggs were still available when Augustus and I made it down, Augustus's alarm clock had behaved itself, only going off at the required time (it did make up for this later in the trip by going off constantly in his bag). We ate our fill and headed to the station at Neuss, despite it's size very little happened in the time we spent there, just one freight arrived, headed by 185252 and the only decent photo I managed was of an EMU!! Before leaving Neuss we visited the yard, which produced 12 numbers including Müldorf allocated 255060 at the head of a stabled scrap train, It was then time for our three hour drive to Neu – Eichenburg and Augustus's 'freight hot spot'. I would like to entertain you with the witty repertoire of jokes we shared on the drive but I can not, most of the car's occupants chose this drive to catch up on their sleep

leaving me with just the Sat – Nav to talk too. I entertained myself by finding an English speaking radio station which played constant ‘oldies’ and by trying to get the car above 140mph on the long unrestricted sections of the autobahn. Eventually we arrived, everyone awoke immediately, pretending to have been awake all the time and WAB 61 (ex DB 142118) marked our arrival by running light through the station before we could get our camera’s out. Without being breathtakingly busy the station provided plenty of interest, freight passed at regular intervals and motive power was varied with many private operators rubbing shoulders with DB. 18 freights passed in all during our 3 hour 30 minute stay but most of our interest was in the light engine movements which tended to involve ex DB locomotives now employed by other companies. We were joined at the end of the platform by a young collage gent who was massively interested in what we were doing, after trying German we settled on English and he spent a good hour talking to us about what we might see. This conversation was broken only by passing trains and his sister, who phoned him and would not believe he was talking to the exiled brummie (obviously his fame precedes him!).

Just for the change more than anything we decided to go into Kassel, book into our hotel, the Inter - City by the station, and venture onto Kassel-Wilhelshöhe Hbf for the final 90 minutes the light would allow. This proved much more interesting than we imagined it would with eight freights passing through to break up the ICE serviced which seemed to arrive every 5 minutes. We left when it got too dark to photograph, the hotel provided dinner, which was nice without being outstanding and a final 30 minute session on the Hbf rounded off our second day.

Neuss Hbf (08:10 – 09:00) 110398 111009 112157/158 143003/215/330/588/597 151027/148 152065 155141/178 185158/252 294399 423248/250/254/255/261/290/294/300 628535/662 643550 928535/662 Private Owner DMU 1003-1+2, 1008-1+2, 1009-1+2, 1011-1+2 1012-1+2 **Neuss Yard (09:10)** 139132 140044/644/805/843 143330 151027/068/145 152143/158 225060 **Neu – Eichenburg Hbf (12:30 – 16:00)** 143084/291/891/930 145009/021/056 151134/157 152017/019/070/128/149 182019 185104/149/242 189028/068/079 401064/564 SBB 482022 Cantus EMU 427001/003/004/057 428003/051 TX Logistic 185511 R4C 185533 Adam 11 (202597) HGB V100-03 (202488) Eurfurter Bahn DMU VT003/004 WAB 56 (142287) 61 (142118) dispelok ES64U2097 **Kassel – Wilhelmshöhe (17:05 – 18:35)** 101038/046/093 111104 143021/320 145073 152092 155171 185010/107 189079 218838 294644 295064 401002/005/010/015/051/060/062/066/082/084/505/507/515/519/560/562/566/582/584 402006/036/038/040/045 646208 946208/713 Cantus EMU 427051 428052/053 DG201/02 RBK704/09/13/18 E109029 Dispolok ES64U2006 **Kassel – Wilhelmshöhe (22:00 – 22:30)** 101128 111070 140783/798 152128 185006 401014/064/088/564/588 646211 946211 Dispolok ES64U2008.

Breakfast at the Inter–City is always well worth the effort and today was no exception, between us we sampled everything they had to offer, including last nights puddings, before a totally painless check out had us underway at 8am. We call first at the fledgling preservation centre close to Wilhelshöhe station, Metal Micky had seen pictures of a Köf diesel shunter there and was desperate to identify it. As you would expect this early on a Saturday it was closed. Conveniently the Köf was outside, on full view, it had no numbers painted on it but its works plate told us it was built by Deutz with the works number 46391, recent investigation would suggest it was not ex DB, unless you know better? The trip was not wasted with 203003 (202732) 203005 (202461) 212326 all ex DB and all now working for Die – Lei GMBH stabled within the preservation site. With these safely in our books we headed of the depot at Kassel Hbf, again it was closed, totally empty, not a soul about, all that was missing was the tumble weed blowing across the car park! We helped ourselves here, our task being made easier by the fact that nobody had bothered to lock the doors. The depot and station kind of intertwine here and in all we recorded 22 numbers, these included DB emergency tunnel rescue loks 714010 + 714014 and HGB V100-03 (202488) for the second time this trip. An attempt to find the way into the Gbf (freight yard) completely failed, the new housing estate and road layout foxing Clara (and us) so we did a view of the nearby DB workshops, 16 numbers, and left town.

We called next at the privately owned Altenbeken depot, this is now the main WAB depot for the area, the only person there was somewhat reluctant to allow our visit and we settled on a compromise with him that we would not enter the depot building. This worked quite well, 14 pieces of traction were identifiable outside, with the ex DB class 142 electrics being particularly well represented. We said thanks and did the two hour drive to Hamm, finding the closed depot was relatively straightforward and we secured a visit just as easy. This produced 19 locos, even after it closed as a depot Hamm

continued to service the class 290 style heavy shunting locomotives that work the nearby yard, so it is worth calling just for these, but even we were surprised at the number of 'main line' locos here today. An hour at Hamm Hbf came next, we needed the comfort break, ADAM 8 (228721) was stabled in the station and R4C's 185533 stormed through with a freight. DB's 152155 also passed on a freight working but on the outside lines making a photo impossible, other than that the hour was fairly routine with just passenger working arriving and departing. A hour's drive found us at Vorhalle, here we secured a full visit of the yard and small depot contained within it, the walk round producing 35 locomotives, including 3 class 139 electrics and (although it did not register with him) Peter's last class 151 in the shape of 151138, still it left a good story for tomorrow!

The depot at Dortmund proved no problem, the depot foreman proved less of a problem and a full visit found 51 numbers at home. Dortmund's Köf, 323173 is still there and the recently stored class 110 electrics were all there, so was 115211 & 115383, but it was 120125 which brought the best from my camera. After this we headed into Essen, deposited our bags in the Ibis by the station, (where Augustus & I were given a choice of 1 key as the other room was on the sixth floor, overlooking the station) and saw out the last of the light on the nearby Hbf. The constant local passenger action makes this station very busy, in the main it is EMU, class 143 or class 146 electrics, any other loco is a bonus, so we enjoyed Dispolok ES64U2046 on it's passenger working and the two class 101's on long distance inter – city trains in the hour we did there. Swinging the cat in the Ibis bathroom proved impossible but somehow we squeezed in for a de – louse then headed into town. We found a steak house of the same chain we use in Bremen and our last night brought the customary 'blow out'. Large steaks all round, caramel dream puddings and many a large beer. We 'waddled' off to the Hbf for the final 30 minutes of the day, this proved to be very entertaining with 146025 on RE10137 the 19:49 Aarchen to Hamm, 101054 heading IC2318 the 17:40 Stuttgart to Hamburg Altona, 101066 on IC2307 the 18:32 Hamburg Altona to Koblenz and a very shabby 120142 on EN349 the 18:00 Frankfurt (Main) to Warszawa Wschodnia. Eventually the hotel called us for a final beer and then some well earned sleep.

Kassel Preservation Centre (08:10) 203003 (202732) 203005 (202461) 212326 Köf diesel shunter, works number Deutz 46391 **Kassel Hbf / Depot (08:30)** 363621/701 428503 612040/041/044 612505/540/541/544/550 646213 714010/014 946213/712 HGB V100-03 (202488) KNE 508103 RBK 708/10/12/16 DB **Works, Kassel [view] (08:55)** 611003/503 612002/507 614030 628229/501/683 642509/560 644020/520 648114/614 928229/501 **WAB Depot, Altenbeken (10:30)** WAB 2(311665) 16(710970) 19 21 24(228633) 54(142150) 56(142287) 60(142128) V36204 477911(142197)/914(142288) V200.1 V200.2 VEB1 EIB3 **Hamm SP (12:50)** 139522 140217/388/506/537/674 152028/061/151/159 189039 294248/731/742/744/774/780/785/893 **Hamm Hbf (13:10 – 14:00)** 101039 111114/118/120/123 143161 146007/017/027 152155 402003/018/036 425564573/581/593 708322 711110 ADAM 8 (228721) R4C 185533 **Vorhalle Depot / Yard (15:00)** 139262/264/559 140037/187/440/767/816/846 145035/078 151138/155 152011/113/159 155192/220 185002/068/235 225010 294151/378/393/395/584/604/671/732/813/847 332294 335217 363224 with 101064 passing **Dortmund Depot (16:15)** 101089/109/110 110236/245/339/359/360/389/413 111125/128 112156/162 115211/383 120125 143199/214/282 146003/019 323173 333648 363160/206/720 364511 628514/520/536/665/672/674/676 640005/009/013/026 648111/113/611/613/619 928514/520/536/665/672/674/676 **Essen Hbf (17:45 – 18:45)** 101034/075 143054/259/577/593/605/611/618/815/870 146002/008/026/028/029 402016/029 411073 420174/178/183/226/678/685/712 425022/065/519/520 Dispolok ES64U2046 **Essen Hbf (21:50 – 22:30)** 101054/066 111114 120142 143235/259/353/593/602 146001/005/025 403020 420171 Dispolok ES64U2046

Our final day began early with us at breakfast by 07:10, Augustus's alarm clock had, once again, behaved itself all night, breaking out into what can only be described as the strangled chicken squawking at its appointed time, now back in its box and packed with the rest of his things. The Sun was nicely out by the time we reached Wanne Eickel, as usual we were far too early for the depot foreman who just nodded to us over his morning caffeine intake. A steady walk round produced some interesting photos, 225802 (ex 218002) and 225811 (ex 218011) allowed themselves to be captured 'on film' and even the locos in the station yard were so well spaced out as to allow us to get all the numbers bar one (a class 151) without a visit to the platform. We had to talk Metal Mickey into a stop at the station, he wanted to get straight off to Oberhausen, he is now glad we did as the missing number, 151138, proved to be his last of the class, causing him to break out in a rendition of 'we are the champions' we would rather not here again (don't give up the day job!). In total Wanne Eickel

produced 46 numbers, a better haul than usual. We arrived at Oberhausen, still in bright sunshine, once again we were too early for the foreman as this time he would not answer the squawk box. A driver came to our rescue, having talked to us to find out what we wanted he pressed the talk button and said what translates as 'open up, this is a police raid', the door opened immediately. It was quite handy that the foreman saw the funny side and allowed us an un-escorted visit, this produced 63 further numbers including 364890 still in blue livery, 2 day out of works 232906 and 11 class 225 diesels. After saying our thanks we moved on to the nearby Sud Yard, a further 18 numbers found their way into our books and the yard is, once again, starting to collect a nest of withdrawn locos. Our final call in Oberhausen was at the West depot, you never know what you will find here and today produced 16 numbers including 189021, just sat right for photos.

It took about an hour to drive to Köln Gremberg depot, there were no Fire Engines, Police cars or Blood Transfusion service personal here today, so, once granted, our full visit was rather un-eventful. It was not as full as it could have been with just 62 numbers at home, but this did allow some better than usual photos as what was there was better spaced out. All, that is, except for blue and cream liveried 225027, once again squashed between classmates, so a decent photo of this still eludes me. We paid a quick visit to the yard at Gremberg, a further 12 numbers, before heading back into Holland for a call at Venlo. Despite our best pleading, the 'jobs worth' on the yard gate would not let us in, this did not stop us getting all the numbers in the yard, but did make photos harder to get. There is always a gaggle of locos to be had here and today was no different, 20 in the yard, 14 of which were German, 2 Belgium and 3 privately owned (not many Dutch ones then?) and a further 5 in the station, pumping up our total. Rather than get nearer to the airport Augustus talked us into visiting another of his 'freight hot spots', this time Oisterwijk station, just outside Tilburg. This proved a gem, the station has two staggered platforms and controlled signalling meaning that you can wait for the train to be signalled before deciding on the platform you need to be on, giving excellent photos. Freight passed a regular intervals along with loco hauled passenger workings (including the Arnhem fantasy loco 1833) and the Sun shone all the time we were there. A brief exploration around the station found a coffee bar and steak house, seems just the right place for a longer session.

The drive to the airport was easier than we expected, our 'on line' check in experience saved us a further 39 seconds and Jet2 had us at Leeds / Bradford before we had time to nod off. That's this years first trip over and boy are we looking forward to the next one!

Wanne Eickel SP (08:15) 140197/675/809/828/833/866 145056 151138 152034/148
185004/179/209/225 225009/101/133/802/811 232022/117/253/260/308/371/512/514/583 290054
294154/361/381/396/406/767

294789/827/888 363147/210/625/649 RAG801/05/28 with 146005 passing **Oberhausen Depot (09:15)** 139554 140440/490/712/848/850/858/865/876 145054 151002/050/065/073/096/113 155246
185239 225001/004/008/015/017/023/030/032/051/094/131
232125/156/191/238/241/298/330/359/428/509/519

232559/904/905/906 241801/802/805 290569 294156/168/207/391/782 335006/082 363128/702/823
364520/531/611/890 365838 **Oberhausen Sud Yard (10:00)** 225012/014/016/092 232203/374/700
294114/149/227/355/390/674/806/852 365158/217/732 **Oberhausen West Depot (10:35)**
140036/504/737 155131 185011/046/069 189021 232505/600 294173/200/773/791/793/848 **Köln Gremberg Depot (11:50)** 110142 139145/260 140070/102/805/821/849/854/864/874 151016/047
152093/130/139/158 155012/163/199/224/245/258/270 185051/052/156/178/183/196/260/269/272
189013/036/082/096 218137 225018/027/081/117/134/145 294165/196/408/682/720/725
296042/052/059 333096 335004/125/130/218 362390/547/942 365203 **Köln Gremberg Yard (12:30)**
140308 145027 152081/156/161 290567 294142/175/801/856 296053/060 **Venlo Station / Yard (13:55)** 823/82 3107/11 3227 6426 SNCB 7771/88 DB 111146 151091/093/112/118/119/122
155126/254 185078/106/147/237 189083 ERS 6607/08 ESRS 6614 **Oisterwijk Station (15:45 – 16:55)** 449 809/57/94 1603 1747/67/81 1833/42/52 6427/32/71/75/80 6520 8638 ERS 6607 ESRS
6617