

Holland and northwest Germany

26th June to 30th June 2003

It was around 04:15 on the 26th when the party for the above tour came together in Worksop. I had been joined on this trip by Metal Mickey, the Exiled Brummie and Augustus Winthrop, we were heading to Leeds / Bradford Airport and our first adventure with Jet2. At that time in the morning, we expected and experienced no traffic problems, check in was painless and we even made it through security without Metal Mickey having to strip to his combinations. The small airport offered no full breakfast option and we had to make do with coffee and a sticky bun while we waited for the flight. We departed spot on time at 07:15 and a smooth 55mins flight followed. The luggage made it to the same airport, we passed through customs with no problems and Avis had us sorted out in under 20mins. Metal Mickey powered up Clara von co-pilot and we were underway.

First call of the day was to be Amsterdam Westhaven Yard, here we located four class 64XX diesel locomotives and surprisingly a single car parcels unit number 3027. Quite close is the depot at Westerpark, alas we were unable to gain entrance and had to make do with just a view which netted 5 numbers. This was followed by a one hour drive to Alkmaar where we experienced our first of many parking problems. Here is a small stabling point, which at 11:35 on a Thursday contained 15 EMU's. Moving on we made Den Helder by 13:00 and wished we had not, it was empty! We stopped for lunch and waited for EMU 8453+8421 to arrive so we did not blank. We fared better at Leeuwarden where some of the diesel units that work in the north of Holland could be found among the 14 numbers that we managed to identify. The two hour drive to Groningen seemed much longer and we arrived at just the right time for the evening rush, but just the wrong time for parking. The 45min stop here produced 28 numbers, filling in many of the empty spaces in my DMU list. The small SP here was empty when we arrived, but filled rapidly as the commuter trains arrived their closeness together would make identification much harder for anyone who arrived later.

It was now time to head for our first hotel, the Best Western on the outskirts of the city. Clara got us there with no problems at all and we were all grateful for a de-louse. Being tired we elected to eat in the hotel rather than the city. The food was excellent, we just managed the three courses before being overcome by sleep and being forced to retire to bed.

Westhaven Yard (10:10) 3027 6432/61/94/99 **Westerpark Depot (10:30)** 525 2842/64 8499 9473 **Alkmaar SP (11:35)** 517/21 802 2857/59 4058/72 8435/57/71/95/98 9412/20 9508 **Den Helder (13:00)** 8421/53 **Leeuwarden (15:00)** 3106/08/11/13/17 3208/22/23/25 3446 4018/37/62/74 **Groningen Station (17:00 – 17:45)** 3104/14/16/18 3202/03/05/07/11/12/14/15/17/19/20/24/27/28/30 3231 3447/49 4013/51 4213/34/36/50.

We started day Two with an excellent breakfast, which, in the exiled Brummie's case, contained two bacon butties smothered in tomato sauce! Underway by 07:45 the small depot at Onnen was our first call. This took ages to locate and once we were inside contained just one EMU! We were now moving into Germany, a must on all our Dutch trips, heading for the Depot at Emden. On arrival here a large German, who had a powerful smell of fish (at least I hope that's what it was) emanating from him, accosted us. Having found out we were English, by talking to us in Dutch would you believe, he asked what we were doing then proceeded to go and ask the depot foreman if it was ok if we went round. A full visit secured we headed of into the depot. Despite being small it contained 20 numbers including two of the hard to get class 291 diesels, 291039 and 291060. Augustus went walkabout and must have covered three times more ground than the rest of us, the sun came out, the fish smell got worse (so bad that one of the 291's left) and the drinks machine had no coke left!

Round at the station plinthed steam loco 04 3903 was located in the car park, shunter 362766 in the carriage sidings and 206364 (an ex class 202 diesel) in the holding sidings. The lady who owned the bar near the station got quite upset when we climbed into her garden to photo the 206, she has obviously had no previous experience of the European Branch. We moved on. Oldenburg came next, the SP by the station containing 3 class 141 electric's and 3

class 232 diesels, all of which did their utmost to stop Augustus from photographing them. Delmenhorst depot took some locating, the depot is closed, in fact the roof has caved in, and the holding sidings held just 701024 hiding among the shrubbery. Bremerhaven was a new depot for me and I always enjoy visiting new depots. Permission was granted and a slow walk round produced 19, well spaced out, numbers. Both the class 323 diesel shunters were in a shocking state but both were in the preservation area of the depot, so they may have a good future. We attracted the interest of the depot fitter who attempted to engage us in conversation, when will they learn? Maybe we need T-shirts with "Yes, I'm English" printed on them, in German of course! Next came Bremerhaven RBF, the marshalling yard. It took quite a while to locate the entrance here, someone having closed a few roads in the area without telling us. The yard contained 3 shunting locs and privately owned 182506, all of which could be easily seen from the access road. We moved onwards to the RBF at Bremen. Totally different to the RBF at Bremerhaven, Bremen is two, half roundhouses, which gave us a total of 23 locs at the time of our visit. Included in these were 5 class 335 diesels 335101/188/190/194/237 all of which appeared to be stored. Once all the photos had been taken we made our way to the main depot at Bremen, this is close to the main station and required us to dodge round an advertising board to gain entry. Once inside a full visit found 26 locs at home mainly electric but with diesels 218433 and 218901 thrown in. After booking into our hotel, the Ibis, we did the walk back to the main station. This proved to be quite busy, with freight passing regularly and plenty of loco hauled passenger trains to keep us busy. A rather large German fellow with a video camera, who once again mistook us for Germans, accosted us and attempted to engage us in meaningful conversation. The restaurant on the station was made use of for dinner, which saved us walking into the town, and proved to be quite acceptable. Once back at the hotel sleep came easily.

Onnen Depot (08:30) 8486 **Emden (09:22)** 120152 passing. **Emden Depot (09:30)** 120103 140108/123/171/214/513/627/798/853 141383 145079 291039/060 332168 360177/255/278/616 362598 363438 **Emden Station (10:05)** 141344/376 185518 206364 362766 steam loco 043903 **Oldenburg Station (11:25)** 112106/185/186 141083/333/344 232361/550/678 private owner DMU VT502/04/07/09/22/25/29 **Delmenhorst Depot (12:30)** 701024 with private owner DMU VT506/26 passing **Bremerhaven Depot (13:45)** 111138 139260 140013/117/401/489/538 141263 151021 152094/140 295079 323099/521 614077/080 634655 914027 preserved diesel V36134 **Bremerhaven RBF (14:30)** 182506 295073/083/089 **Bremen RBF (15:50)** 140036/360/653/725 151032/165 152026/077/143 225099 291041 295005/051/069/071/097 335101/188/190/194/237 364902 365435 **Bremen Depot (17:00)** 101050/119 110299/321/331/354/356/361/381/391 111081/137 120110 141211/269/319/322/385/419/422/423 146102/103 218433/901 364524 **Bremen HBF (18:50 – 20:20)** 101101/139 110331/451/500 111087/131/132/136/137/138/143/144 112118/119/128/130/154 120110 139177 140036/102/389/526/779 141081/083/116/143/169/170/193/263/344/363/385/403 182517/530 185003 218901 232678 295075 335126 401067/567 614064/079/081 708313 914030 private owner DMU VT506/22 **Bremen HBF (22:10 – 22:30)** 101096 112169 141193/319/344/397 152026 365160

Over dinner the previous night, we decided to return to Bremen RBF depot, and so, after the usual Ibis breakfast, this is where we headed off. It was obviously Clara's half day as she would not play ball and we had to revert to the old way in order to find it! Once there we gained permission for a visit, but were told we should come on Sunday as the depot would be full. Anyway 30 locs were on shed, 16 of which were "new". Heading back into Holland we called at the boarder station of Bad Bentheim. We searched the yard for a shunter, to no avail, found a small shed, that was empty and was about to leave when 140187 arrived with a freight train. As if by magic 295096 appeared from the yard to draw the train in. Baffled we headed off to Hengelo. The freight yard here contained just 6501 and the nearby depot just 357 and 1621, this was quite surprising as last time I was here there were over a dozen locos here. We made a call at Zutphen, (where the class 58 later went) this produced 10 numbers, on our way to Zwolle. Here we found 8 numbers in the yard before heading to the station. For those who don't know, the depot at Zwolle is clearly visible from the platforms and, contrary to Hengelo, I have never seen it so full! The one-hour we had allowed here was totally inadequate, 52 numbers were identified, diesel shunter 662 was continually moving stock around and passenger trains came and went rapidly around us! We dragged ourselves away, an inspired piece of navigation located 1701/04/20 1828/56 at Laystad and an even better

piece found a car parking space in Amsterdam. We spent the night in the Ibis, right on the main station (honest, we did!) which was obviously convenient for our late night visit. This netted 72 numbers and only one drunk. When hunger overtook us we headed back into the hotel and let them feed us, fried chicken livers, large steaks and strawberries with cream were the order of the day, before we retired to our rooms. Well I did, and as I was asleep before the room went dark, I cannot vouch for the others!

Bremen RBF (08:10) 140036/122/185/217/223/415 151060 152021 185081 225099 291049 295004/005/008/040/041/048/051/069/071/075/077/097 335101/188/190/194/237 364902 365435 **Bad Bentheim (10:25)** 140187 295096 425036 **Hengelo Station (11:30)** 21/4 357 1621 3432/37/42 4237/44/50 6501 **Zutphen Station (12:50)** 33 465 865 965 1736 3436/37/42 4224 9478 **Zwolle Yard (14:20)** 409 1608 3024/29 6408/57 6512 **Zwolle Depot / Station (14:40 – 15:30)** 192 427/47 662 803/22/77/82 919/32/33/53/58 1734/45/52/69/77 1854 2102/08/09 3218 3402/06/18/22/26/32/39 4029/36/67/73/77/81/87 4208/22/30 6409/25/30/39/61 6500/04/13 7717 8206 **Leystad SP (16:50)** 1701/04/20 1828/56 **Amsterdam Central Station (18:40 – 20:15)** 419/43 503/07 802/53 908/24/35 1702/08/09/17/21/24/27/39/56/64/70/75/79 1823/54 2844/62/64/68/70/73/74/79/85 4011/22/23/58/66 4071/96 7708/12/13/14/16/26/27/29/37/40 8226 8437/38/41/42/55/57/61/68/93/98 8707 9407/25/69/73 9502/08 406004 Belgium electric 1184/86 TGV 4345

Sunday morning is a good time to drive round Amsterdam. Most people we still asleep, unconscious or still on their way to bed, when we completed our breakfast and headed out to Westhaven Yard. Diesels 6467/96 were “new” here and today we managed to view EMU’s 424 and 808 in the nearby scrapyard. The road and railway run together from Amsterdam to Haarlem allowing us to spot 4 further numbers on the way. We found a parking spot away from the sex shop and had to work hard to identify all the numbers in the station. This completed we made our way to the yard at Amersfoot. There are two diesels based here for shunting, 6436 and 6482 were here today, and ACTS loco 1251 was also in the yard, these provided us with some well earned photos.

A visit to the SP at Arnhem was next on our list, it’s all open and the road is higher than the railway, this, of course, allows an excellent view. Preserved electric 1202 was located by the signalbox near the station, looking excellent in it’s original livery. Further intrepid navigation found 1603 and 6456 in the nearby goods yard, somewhere we had never been before, the latter providing me with an excellent photo. From here we moved on to Nijmegen Station, the same four “siks”, 214, 231, 314 and 327 as our last visit here were still there, once again being the subject of many photos. We were running well ahead of time now so we decided to put in an extra location, Venlo. On the way there we noticed that some work was being done on the old depot at Blerick, a re-opening perhaps? Venlo provided it’s usual gaggle of both Dutch and German locos, however the stiff ling heat and large piles of dog c**p made the walk round the yard horrendous. We retired to Eindhoven, some sort of festival made a visit to the station impossible, but a full visit was secured to the nearby depot, which produced 13 numbers, and some long awaited photos of the Eindhoven allocated “siks”. From here we drove to our hotel, the Ibis at Tilburg, it was no problem to find and proved to be excellent. It was however a far way from the station. Having deposited our luggage we headed into the town, where a circumnavigation of the works and an hour on the station produced 47 numbers. Once to hungry to continue we returned to our hotel. Being our last night we continued in the tradition of “pushing the boat out” ordering the largest meals and larges beers we could find. An excellent nights sleep followed and we were ready for our final day.

Westhaven Yard (08:10) 6467/96/99 **Westhaven Scrapyard (08:20)** 424 808 **Haarlem Weg (08:28 – 08:35)** 1607 2842/62/79 **Haarlem Works [view] (08:36)** 648 4044 **Haarlem Station (08:45)** 401 526 911/40/50 1705/07/37/39/74/81 2842 7726 **Amersfoot Station (10:10 – 10:30)** 523 1730 4023/66/90 4205/07/22/24 6436/82 ACTS 1251 **Arnhem SP (11:40)** 118 340 1854 3430/34/50/51/52 3453 4081/088 4203/14 8441 8703 9506 **Arnhem Station (12:05)** 37 407 preserved electric 1202 **Arnhem Goods Depot (12:20)** 1603 6456 **Nijmegen Station (12:50 – 13:20)** 214/31 314/27 414/46 525 835 936 3417/20 8280 8435/91/99 **Blerick (14:10)** 406 927 3440/46 6455 German diesel 232908 **Venlo (14:20)** 531 927 1609/1744 3404/10/16/29/33/40/45 6412/13/14/69/74 110159/330 140002/446/569/637/646 151004/089/093/094/104/113/116

152103 155072 **Eindhoven Depot [full visit] (16:05)** 213/17 302/44 453/60/72 689 854 934
1612 1733/73 **Tilburg Station / Works [view] (18:30 – 20:20)** 126 230/34/44/55/74 339 463
531 673 844/57 952 1308/15 1605/18/19/22/25 1736/44/55/59/65/71 1831/45/49 2855 4243
6402/33/35/44/68/75/95 6511/19 8438/53/62 9411/19 German diesel 232109/241

After an excellent breakfast, (we really must return here) we did the drive to Roosendal expecting to spend some time here observing the freight heading into and out of Belgium. We did not, however, bargain for the strike Belgium Railways had decided to have. Strukton diesel shunter 300650 put in an appearance in the yard and diesel 6443 did a spot of shunting for us, but not much else happened. We even resorted to checking out a hotel for future usage. At a loss we decided to try and visit the abandoned depot here, we had heard that the class 13 electrics were stored here and this may be our last chance to see them. After two false starts we found the depot, it began to rain so we were quite happy to be allowed a full visit. We had heard right, 12 class 13 electrics were here, 10 stored inside and 2 outside. If these are stored in reserve, they are not in good condition, I suspect they will not be around for much longer. We headed back towards Rotterdam and stopped off at Zwijndrecht Station for three and a half hours. This is the first station out of Kijfhoek yard and even today, with Belgium railways on strike, freight was passing at regular intervals. The fact that it was raining for most of our time here did not dampen our spirits, it did make taking photos hard though. Once soaked we moved on, viewed the yard at Kijfhoek then went to the depot at Feijenoord. Here we secured a full visit, the small depot contained 11 locos, which is full, believe me! With a bit of time in hand, we tried to find a large yard in Rotterdam that was shown on our map, this was a mistake for a number of reasons, it was empty when we found it, the traffic was horrendous, roadwork's blocked our path in most directions and worst of all Augustus started to tell us stories about his days "youth hostelling". We were all saved from insanity by our final call. An hour at Waal Haven Yard, 13 numbers, before it was time to head to Amsterdam Airport, deposit the car and let Jet2 do the rest, another trip over. I must say that the Jet2 operation really impressed me, both flights being on time and both planes clean, it was a pleasure.

A big thanks, as always, goes to Pete for the navigation and Warwick for the driving, we all enjoy our visits to Holland and with Jet2 now providing us with a quick and easy way of getting there, I have a feeling more trips will follow.

Roosendal Station (08:45 – 09:20) 519 803/68 933/65 1756/69 2202/09/60 2369/70/74/80
6443 8465 8658/66 Belgium electric 1181/87 Strukton diesel 300650 **Roosendal Depot [full visit] (09:40)** 1301

1304/06/07/09/10/11/12/13/14/16 plus one other class 13XX so covered in graffiti that it was unidentifiable! **Zwijndrecht Station (10:40 – 14:10)** 482 519 831/38/45 900/22/23 1603/15/19
1702/07/25/38/44/51/53/60/76 1827/29/31/34/35/42 6418/22/48/56/70/79/80/81/85/88
6505/15/20 7707/08/12/14/26/29/33/36/44 8429/52/74/93 8624/58/72 8701/07/09
9403/09/10/19/25/73 Belgium electric 1183/84/87/90 German diesel 232904/908 private
owner PB17 **Kijfhoek yard [view] (14:25)** 1142/44 1224 6476/77 private owner PB11
Feijenoord Depot [full visit] (15:05) 292/96 6404/10/17
6447/52/59/69 6503/17 **Waal Haven Yard (16:30 – 17:40)** 6421/32/38/48 6507/08/09/14
ACTS 6004 German diesel 232905 private owner PB08/11/17 **Den Haag Carrage Sidings
(18:15)** 1726