

## **BULLEID BRAKE THIRD Semi-open S 4366 S**

Frames and bogies were constructed at Southern Railway's Lancing Carriage Works. Bodywork and fitting-out was undertaken at SR's Eastleigh Carriage Works to design diagram 2123 in Lot no. 3240. The finished carriage was 64ft 6in long and 9ft wide. Seating capacity of 48 third class passengers was divided into two compartments [total of 16 people] as well as an open saloon of four bays [32 people] with all seats covered in uncut moquette.

The underframes and bogies were of a standard design but some changes were made in the vacuum braking system. The object of reducing weight meant that the normal arrangement of two 22 ins diameter brake cylinders with brake shafts was changed. In these sets one 30 ins diameter "Prestall" brake lever cylinder, made by the Westinghouse Brake & Signal Co., was installed. It was also hoped this might reduce on-going maintenance but, after a while, most were re-fitted with two sets of brake gear with a single reservoir left intact. One toilet was fitted between the saloon and compartments. The Guard had a roof mounted periscope to see the line ahead or behind.

Although completed just before Nationalisation S 4366 entered service in February 1948 so it's 75th Birthday is early 2023. It formed part of Bournemouth Dining Set 298 [there were eleven such sets 290 - 300] from new and would have worked between London Waterloo and Bournemouth with occasional usage to Weymouth but never, it seems, on the West of England line to Exeter. The original rake for Set 298 consisted of Brake Third semi-open S 4365; Corridor Composite S 5748 with the Third class section adjacent to the Brake; Restaurant First S 7685; Kitchen Restaurant Third S 7889; Open Third S 1459 with Brake Third semi-open S 4366 on the far end.

In BR (S) Carriage Working Notices for week ending 15<sup>th</sup> September 1952 show 2 of the eleven 6 car sets being listed as 'spare until further notice' and set 298 was one of those sets.

Southern Region altered Set 298 in 1962 by replacing the Bulleid Restaurant First S 7685 with a BR MkI equivalent. The substitution of BR MkI BCK S21269, in June 1965, allowed S 4366 to run as a 'loose' vehicle but Southern Region decided soon after to abandon all fixed sets. Coach S 4366 was withdrawn from Capital Stock in May 1966.

Soon afterwards it was purchased by the MoD, along with S 4365 and S 4367, for use at a number of their bases. Around November 1967, S 4366 was renumbered "RCT 2" on moving to Long Marston. Later it received designation "ARMY 5201" and was noted in use on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1972 by members of the Industrial Railway Society on an official visit. The Luggage area had been changed by then, and the corridor connection replaced by large windows, to create an observation saloon area although the remainder of the interior was

left largely intact. Unfortunately the change to this end has weakened the structure and years of open storage has taken its toll.

At some stage, near the end of its long Army 'career', S4366 was moved to MoD Depot Kineton in Warwickshire from where it was purchased. On Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March 1985 it was purchased from the MoD and moved to Swanage on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May. After enduring further years of out door storage, its condition had deteriorated further. On Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2009 a lorry moved S 4366 to undercover safe storage off the railway, to slow down this deterioration. Here it joined LSWR Corridor Third 728 plus Maunsell-designed Brake Composite 6699 and Third Open 1323.

A fund to raise money towards its eventual refurbishment to passenger-carrying condition was opened. It had been hoped that structural restoration could start in summer 2022 although more funds needed to be raised. Once restored, it is the intention that S 4366 will again run with S 4365 which will be unique in railway preservation.

Eventually, an authentic 4 car set 298, (with the addition of Corridor Composite S 5761 and Restaurant Open Third S 1457) is intended to be formed to recreate a typical matching Bulleid carriage formation used on Bournemouth Line services after the Second World War. S 5761 is currently in passenger service. S 1457 has been sufficiently repaired to serve as the C&W Department volunteers' workshop at Corfe Castle whilst other heritage coaches have their refurbishments completed.

At the end of November 2023, coach S4366 was removed from its undercover safe storage and transported to Rampart Engineering Ltd which is based at the Barrow Hill Roundhouse Railway Centre near Chesterfield, Derbyshire. Here it underwent assessment of work needed before restoration work commenced in earnest.

Since then, work has progressed quite rapidly with the solebars and sill plates being exposed. New steel sill plates had to be manufactured and fitted throughout as the originals were badly corroded. Damaged bottom sections of some body pillars had to have new hardwood sections fitted and other timber structures similarly replaced.

The underframe has been needle gunned and painted. All four buffers were removed, cleaned, overhauled and refitted. Meanwhile, at Corfe, the Carriage team volunteers have been making new hardwood parts for the frame, to save Ramparts doing the work, and thus reducing some expenditure.

Restoration work on 4366, carried out by Ramparts, finished at the end of November. The roof was made completely watertight, steel bodyside panelling replaced, new window glass installed and the carriage fully painted externally. Just a few jobs then remained such as fitment of the gangway bellows and the steam heat pipe – the latter job requiring the body to be lifted from the bogies. Once complete the body was lowered with the brakes then needing connection and final adjustment.

Whilst awaiting the arrival of 4366 the C&W volunteers' main priority was preparing its light fittings for installation and work also continued to make new seat base supports.

Some other wooden parts for the ceiling and sides were also progressed. The gangway doors will need to be refitted as soon as possible so two doors have been worked on and will very soon be ready for painting and varnishing. A new guard's seat was made by combining parts from two chairs.

The Upholstery section was also kept busy refurbishing all the seating and replacing all the worn moquette with new material. Seat backs, seat squabs (cushions) and seat ends all had to be dealt with. In addition, all roof ventilators and internal door fittings were overhauled prior to refixing.

The coach was transported by road to Norden from where it was hauled to Corfe Castle station and shunted into the C&W siding on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025. Returning 4366 has not come cheaply with a transport bill of over £3,000. So funds need to be raised to pay the invoice when it arrives!

Initial information collated by Peter Sykes

Updated by Peter Short 16<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Subsequently updated by Peter Sykes up to 30<sup>th</sup> December 2025