

## 34059 'Sir Archibald Sinclair' to be rededicated at Sheffield Park

28th May 2024



**The Bluebell Railway is thrilled to announce the triumphant return of Bulleid *Battle of Britain* Pacific No. 34059 'Sir Archibald Sinclair' on June 15th, 2024. This special event, marking the restoration and rededication of this popular engine, is a significant milestone for The Bluebell Railway.**

Owned by The Bluebell Railway and supported by the Bluebell Railway Battle of Britain Locomotive Group, 34059 'Sir Archibald Sinclair' has undergone extensive work and restoration to return to working order. This Southern Region locomotive, named after the distinguished WWII British Air Minister, epitomizes the rich heritage and engineering excellence of the Bulleid Pacifics.

The rededication ceremony will be a highlight of the day, graced by the presence of TV presenter and historian Tim Dunn, renowned for his passion for railway history and his engaging presentations involving railway preservation. Bluebell Railway

chairman Roy Watts will lead the rededication, celebrating the locomotive's history and return to the Bluebell Railway fleet.



One of 110 of its class, designed by Oliver Bulleid, built between 1945 and 1950, 34059 (or 21C159 as the locomotive was first numbered) was built in 1947 at Brighton Works - it was subsequently rebuilt into the condition we see today at Eastleigh Works in 1960. The locomotive was named 'Sir Archibald Sinclair' - after the Secretary State For Air who served under Winston Churchill during the Battle Of Britain of 1940. The locomotive would be based at Nine Elms,

Stratford (a short spell on loan to the Eastern Region) Exmouth Junction & Salisbury before being withdrawn in 1966, having run 877,107 miles during its 19 years on the mainline.

34059 would then spend the next 13 years at Barry Scrapyard in South Wales before being purchased by The Bluebell Railway, with support from the Bluebell Railway Battle Of Britain Locomotive Group in 1979. Despite the locomotive surviving, the original tender did not. The team were responsible for building a new tender from scratch during their work returning 34059 to its former glory. In 2009, the locomotive was officially relaunched into active service on the railway after 30 years of restoration. Sadly, in 2011, after it was discovered that firebox repairs were required, 34059 was subsequently sidelined. It was discovered that a complete new firebox would need to be constructed and the the decision was made to withdraw the locomotive and an overhaul would commence as a result.

Thanks to hard work and effort throughout a period of 12 years, 34059 was tested and was returned to working order in the later part of 2023, making a surprise appearance to service on New Year's Day in 2024. Now fully repainted and lined, this locomotive is now ready to be rededicated and make a much welcomed return to active service alongside the other operational locomotives at The Bluebell Railway.