

Welcome aboard the



Racal Belle



Saloon 999503 was built at the former LMS (London, Midland & Scottish Railway) carriage works at Wolverton in 1959. It was allocated to the Manchester District Civil Engineer and based at the local Red Bank Carriages sidings.

The saloon continued in use until 1994 when a review of track maintenance procedures concluded that the traditional style of visual inspection could be replaced by automated monitoring and recording.

With rail privatisation, ownership passed to the freight operators EWS (English Welsh & Scottish Railway) and fortunately, despite little use, the vehicle was put into undercover storage at Carlisle.



Restoration

Racal Telecom sponsored restoration of the saloon in 1997 to provide a facility to view its newly installed track-side fibre transmission cables at first hand, and for corporate hospitality purposes.

The vehicle retains its original railway identification number, 999505, but to mark the restoration, the name 'Racal Belle' has been added. In harmony with 999505's history; the Severn Valley Railway restored the carriage to its traditional LMS crimson livery and associated lining, with the addition of the British Railways coaching stock heraldic crest.

Although the vehicle's running gear had remained in a satisfactory condition, because much of the interior was beyond reasonable repair the Severn Valley Railway had to source compatible furniture and period fittings from a number of similar saloons. The original steam heating has been replaced with an electric system and the kitchen has been modernised with two new boilers and a fridge.

Racal Telecom would like to thank the Severn Valley Railway's dedicated staff for their attention to detail in restoring the resplendent 'Racal Belle'.

Specification

Length - 50ft.

Width - 9ft 2in.

Weight - 51tons.

Seating - 20 dining.

Maximum operating speed - 80mph.

Braking - Vacuum.

Heating - Electric.





The Racal Belle Saloon 999503

Originally used as a safe and comfortable means for railway engineers to inspect railway track and structures, the Racal Belle now offers you a stylish and memorable way of travelling from a bygone era.

For your comfort the Racal Belle has two seating saloons, one at each end of the carriage, with large observation windows that offer an unparalleled view of the countryside and railway lines, which cannot be appreciated when travelling on everyday passenger services.

A fully functional, self-contained kitchen will also keep you refreshed whilst on the move.

Once aboard, simply sit back, relax and enjoy the unique charms of travelling aboard the 'Racal Belle'.



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