



JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

# Tenterden Terrier

**WINTER 2007**  
**Number 104**

*Editor:* Vacant

*Assistant Editor:*  
Duncan Buchanan

*Consultant:*  
Tom Burnham

*Editorial Office:*  
Tenterden Town  
Station, Tenterden,  
Kent TN30 6HE

*Email:*  
nick@kesr.org.uk

The Tenterden Terrier is published by the Kent & East Sussex Railway Company Limited three times a year on the third Saturday of March, July and November. Opinions expressed in this journal are, unless otherwise stated, those of the individual contributors and should not be taken as reflecting Company Policy or the views of the Editor

ISSN 0306-2449.

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Printed by  
Hastings Printing Company Ltd,  
St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex.

# Tenterden Terrier

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and Felicity Edwards  
(Nick Pallant)



# Editorial

## Editor Wanted

Brian Janes voluntarily resigned as Editor of the Tenterden Terrier in September and members open this issue of the house journal to find the Company Secretary standing in, albeit with the continuing and able assistance of Duncan Buchanan.

It is appropriate to first thank Brian for his work on issues Nos. 101 – 103 and in particular for his efforts to brighten-up the presentation of our magazine. We look forward to further historical articles from him.

A not very scientific survey among the workforce (chatting in mess rooms) seemed to have revealed that the changes in the journal's appearance had gone down reasonably well. It was, however, disconcerting to hear a member, speaking from the floor during the AGM on 13th October, regretting that any changes had been made at all. What is the consensus of opinion? If you have views on the matter please let either Duncan or I know. Letters should be addressed to Tenterden Town Station of course.

Also at the AGM, I made it quite clear that I was prepared to act as Editor for one issue but that I would not be able to cover the post indefinitely. Between a part time job in Carriage & Wagon, voluntary duties as

Company Secretary and commitments away from the K&ESR I am already at full stretch. We therefore need an Editor. This voluntary position has already been advertised on the Railway without result. If there is anyone out there who feels they could do the job will they please contact me as soon as possible. To balance the content of the magazine, applicants should have a good working knowledge of the present day Railway as well as of its history. Basic word processing skills and home internet access are a necessity.

This past summer has of course marked the 40th anniversary of the end of Southern steam. It is also to be remembered, with regret, that this autumn marks the 40th anniversary of the refusal of the first application for a Light Railway (Transfer) Order for the K&ESR. It is perhaps appropriate to reflect on how far we have come since those dark days and be thankful for some not very small mercies. Readers may notice a slight bias towards those pioneering times in this issue. It has nothing to do with the Acting Editor's well known historical interest in this direction. The material was already to hand when I took over!

*Nick Pallant*

# Lineside News

*Compiled by Duncan Buchanan*

## COMMERCIAL

### General Manager's Notes

Following the appointment of Tim Hockney as Project Manager (Rolvenden) we are now looking to complete the compliance issues of our planning application for the field. It now should not be too long before we see the container park ready for use and a staff car park in the field.

We have changed some of the signage at Rolvenden, with the result of the temporary event boards being at a slightly lower height, which makes them safer to change. The "Turn Left" signs for Rolvenden and Cranbrook Rd are being replaced. Thanks to John Liddell and Meg Gooch for their work on these. The new welcome board at Tenterden with info about locomotives seems to be well received. The info cards are replicated at Rolvenden.

The Tuesday Group have done some great work at Wittersham Rd but we still need a Station Agent to keep the place tidy.

We also need to put some added focus back into Northiam. There have been days on which we operate where there are no members of staff present, and the station looks a little unloved. Northiam needs an active team to ensure the station is open for business for tickets and catering on a small scale. Every team needs a leader too. Can you help?

### Catering

Following an inspection by local Environmental Health Officers, we have been awarded a 3 Star rating in the "Scores on the Doors" scheme that is now being rolled out in this area. The scheme assists customers by providing an easily visible indication of hygiene standards, compliance & confidence in management procedures that have been observed during inspections. Our rating is quite respectable, particularly as building works remained incomplete at the time of assessment & exceeds that of many other outlets within the town.

On train catering packages have sold well this year, with some very large parties accommodated. Fish & Chip Suppers have again proved popular, with all services running at capacity: a further increase in the number of scheduled trains has been made for 2008.

The combined refreshment/gift shop outlet at Bodiam Station in the former Parcels Office has proved popular with customers & staff alike.

Simplicity is the key, with hot & cold drinks, pastries, confectionary & ices offered in addition to a small range of souvenirs. These appear to meet the needs of our customers well whilst requiring minimal staffing: thanks to an excellent level of support from shop staff, the outlet turned over in excess of £5,000 in catering items alone.

Although a respectable increase in Station Refreshment Room turnover has been experienced, sadly we have failed to meet the ambitious budget so far this year. This shortfall was not helped by two poorly attended 'Thomas'™ events.

During the forthcoming winter closure, it is hoped that the buffet building works may be completed, providing a staff toilet/changing room and cleaners stores.

### Wealden Pullman

With all spaces sold for the 2007 season, it was necessary to release our 2008 schedule of services for sale in July. Demand for these services remains buoyant, as do charter enquiries.

Grateful thanks are due to those who give so freely of their time to support our profitable activities. So much is completely unseen by our customers, but is nevertheless vitally important to ensure the smooth operation of services. Much hard work ensured the successful delivery of 2 charters within one day recently, with much positive feedback received. A collection was made on one of these for the Kent Air Ambulance, raising almost £1,500 for this worthy cause.

The winter gap in services looks likely to be busy, with significant works planned for each of the Pullman vehicles. The need to replace some kitchen equipment (that is now life expired with spares unobtainable) is not far away. However we must struggle on for another season or two yet.

### Shop

The summer season has proved to be, on the whole, a satisfactory one for the shop, although it could have been better if September's Hoppers and Thomas™ events had proved as fruitful as expected. July's budget target was reached and August only just fell short despite the very unseasonable wet weather. September also saw some good takings on normal running days, but sadly Hoppers was 11% down on last year. Thomas™ saw some reasonable spend per





*Pam and Sheila Stevens on Bodiam Platform during the Hoppers event. (John Liddell)*

passenger totals in the shop, but the smaller visitor numbers meant that takings were 12% down on the corresponding 2006 event. The second Sunday, usually the strongest of the four days, was in particular very disappointing.

The Bodiam shop closed up for the year at the end of September after a most successful first season when just short of £10K was earned. The positive feedback received from both staff and passengers was good to hear.

The Rother Valley Railway 4 plank coal wagon has finally arrived from Dapol and will prove a splendid addition to your 00 gauge layout. This year's Christmas cards, featuring the Pannier, are also available at £3.50 for 5 (less the appropriate discount). A new leather bookmark, featuring three of our more interesting locomotives, has proved popular and the two new acrylic fridge magnets introduced this year have flown off the shelves. The Guide Book was sold out by early September and will be revised and reprinted over the winter in time for March. 10,000 copies of the Guide were sold in only two years and the Shop Manager would like to thank all those TTI's who sold so many of them on the trains.

In a bid to cater more for our lady visitors, we introduced the poppy range of tableware from the local James Dean Pottery, which has been a good seller. Stylish tea and coffee mugs from the Robert Opie nostalgic range have also proved popular with the ladies, whilst for the men, B.R. and S.R. mugs have been equally successful. For the children, the Thomas™ range of products remain steady sellers, but the big hitters have been hi-speed and wild west locos and VW Beetles and rescue helicopters! The success of the western locos (which were wrongly sent by the supplier but fortunately kept) and the failure of Underground Ernie, which seemed to be a sure-fire winner, shows that you can never take anything in retailing for granted!

We've been fortunate to welcome three new volunteers this year to our happy band of shop staff: Kathryn Clegg, John Weakley and Dr Paul Wright.

### Operating

Our Inspectors have once again been very busy over the summer months with several staff gaining promotion. Congratulations are due to John Ascher who has passed out as a Fireman, 21 year old Henry Mowforth, son of drivers' Heidi Mowforth and Mick Blackburn, has now passed his Driver's exam to join them on the drivers roster. Also recently passed are three of our very own "railway children" 18 year old Matthew Hyner, 17 year old Dan Dickson and 16 year old James Darling who have all qualified as Firemen. It is extremely heartening that 40 years after the end of steam on the Southern, there are still keen and enthusiastic youngsters who are drawn to the fascination of steam locomotives. This summer we have passed out four footplate staff who are all under the age of 22, three of whom are 18 or under. It is important that we continue to encourage and develop the younger generation to ensure steam survives on the K&ESR for many more years to come.

By the time you have read this two more footplate promotions should have occurred with James Veitch being promoted to the grade of Steam Driver and the last of the latest batch of railway children, Christopher Stuchbury to the grade of Fireman

In addition to the activity of promoting footplate staff, Don Albury has recently qualified as a Guard and Richard Smith and Chris Dawson have both qualified as Wittersham Road Signalmen. Andrew Stokes and Maurice Hooker have passed out as Crossing Keepers.

Well done to all the staff who have recently passed out. Every one of them has spent a considerable time learning the theory and the practice relating to their posts and can now be considered as competent and skilful members of the Operating Department team, we wish them all a long and successful career. Could you be next for promotion?

Although operating the railway and assessing staff has been the highest priority, work has also progressed with risk assessments for loco work and with revision of rules exams and procedures. We have also found time to get our hands dirty with water column repairs and maintenance work. Tenterden water column has received a new arm to replace the old life expired one. Whilst replacing the arm an anti vacuum valve has been fitted to cut down the amount of water wasted when the bag is taken out of the

locomotive's tank. The arm was lifted into place using the Hiab on TREATS TRAMM. Thanks to Jamie Douglas for his welding skills and Matt Green, Ben Prior and Mike Grimwood who also assisted.

General improvements and maintenance at Rolvenden, has also taken place including the delights of oil interceptor and sump pit emptying and cleaning. Always a favourite job if you fancy getting up to your eyeballs in foul muck!

Your chance to pull the levers, the new Signalmen's training course will start on 5th January 2008. If you would like to train as a Signaller, please contact Peter Parascandolo (Assistant Signalling Inspector) on 020 8777 3101 (email: p.parascandolo@ntlworld.com) as soon as possible.

The course consists of twelve lectures spread over nine months and a number of practical turns in the signalbox. New trainees are usually allocated to Tenterden Town or Wittersham Road initially. Other boxes can be learned later after experience has been gained in the first box. Lectures are given on Saturday or Sunday mornings in the meeting room at Tenterden and last about three to four hours., followed on some days by guided tours of each of the four signal box areas.

No previous operating experience is required. We are an Equal Opportunities department, and ladies are welcome.

### Hoppers Weekend

The seventh annual "Hoppers Weekend" at Bodiam on 8th and 9th September. Once again the weather was good. In fact there had been so little rain that clouds of dust were put up when the Morris dancers did "their thing" in the yard.

Again we must thank all those (too numerous to name individually) who worked so hard on the preparation of the event starting from the previous Tuesday; on the weekend itself and on the following two days of clearing up and putting things away.

All the catering, including the bar, tea tent and barbeque was organised by the railway's catering department, and bearing in mind two Pullman dining trains also called at Bodiam during the weekend this required quite a feat of personnel management. The amount of equipment moved from Tenterden is also prodigious; everything from freezers, cold display cases, fryers, mobile hand basins and disposables – and of course food.

After last year's experiences, extra draught beer was laid on (which sold out) and this year there was a run on brandy. Needless to say, all the

catering outlets enjoyed good takings.

The attractions were much as usual but there were more of them. As before, there was Bruce Law's hopping memorabilia, Barry Saunders' penny-in-the-slot machines, two Morris dancing groups and the four piece "Hopping Mad" group on Saturday night.

On the transport front, there were tractors, several classic cars, the Austen Lorry loaded with hop pockets, the Model T Ford pickup from which were sold apples, plums and nuts, and four nicely turned out Morris Minor vans representing the baking, plumbing, Pullman supply and Royal Mail trades. On the Saturday, Dennis Hoad again brought his third scale Foden Steam engine and Southern Region 'mechanical horse'. On Sunday these were replaced by Mick Blackburn's scale road-tractor engine.

Newly laid eggs donated by a local farmer were sold by Geoff Goodsell in aid of the Chernobyl Charity childrens fund. Fresh supplies had to be rushed in twice over the two days but unfortunately the hens couldn't keep up and were exhausted by Sunday lunchtime.

The hopping video had to be moved from the marquee to the station waiting room as the soundtrack couldn't be heard above the music and singing around the camp fire.

Several ex-hoppers said how much they had enjoyed meeting old colleagues, some after many years. Those visitors unfamiliar with hopping life were interested to learn how life was lived in the hop gardens, from sleeping, washing, laundry and cooking – and the daily rituals of picking hops.

Once again Nadine, an ex-hopper who now lives in France came over especially to join the party with the added intention of spending a night sleeping in the hopper's hut. One night became three – and she was reluctant to go back home!

Thanks once again to all those who took part especially to the increasing number of staff who 'dressed the part'.

Next year is the 50th anniversary since the last hoppers' trains run by British Railways (as it then was) from Robertsbridge to Bodiam. "Hoppers Friends" trains were run on 14th and 21st September 1958 hauled by class 03 No 11223 then newly introduced to the line. There seems to be the germ of an idea for next year?

### Bodiam

Work on repainting the station building was interrupted by preparations for the Hopping event but now attention is again on completing the work. The new door has been fitted on the yard-side of the goods office and this has been



painted along with some minor redecoration inside.

The cutting of the station's extensive areas of grass and the trimming of the hedges takes up much of the maintenance team's time. The grass seed applied to the filled areas on the picnic site did eventually germinate and the ground is now more level and greener. The ditches dug along the southern boundary seem to be working as intended and the ground is now firmer after heavy rain.

There was drama at Bodiam in the summer when an elderly gentleman collapsed. He was resuscitated by Harry Hickmott, assisted by Peter Kinyvn and the Rye & Battle Observer photographer attended on 18th October to take their picture for an item in the newspaper.

We now look forward to our annual Christmas Dinner at the White Dog, Ewhurst Green on Wednesday 5th December – best wishes for next year!

### Museum

Visitor numbers to the end of September are down on the same period last year, but due to the price increase for admissions this year, income is about £400 up. There is no doubt that the charge does deter some visitors.

The mechanism for the moving head on the Colonel Stephens model was returned to the manufacturer and we are awaiting to hear what the problem might be. Hopefully, he will be working next year.

Additions to the collection since the last report, in the Spring "Tenterden Terrier" No 102 include:-

- North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway share certificate issued to Rev. George Corser of Ludlow in 1873.
- Part of a Rother Valley poster board dating from 1903 from Robertsbridge Station.
- Pair of pre-paid parcels stamps issued at Rolvenden in 1935 for a parcel to Blenheim & Woodstock, GWR.
- Small section of rail from the Ashover Light Railway.
- Brass 7mm scale model of an "Austerity" class locomotive.
- Documents relating to the early years of the K&ESR.
- Two pocket timetables from the Ashover Light Railway dated 1925.
- Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway handbill dated 1914 for combined motor bus and rail trips between Oswestry and Llanymynech.

- K&ESR poster advising the withdrawal of passenger services dated January 1954.
- Two East Kent Railway small timetable posters for 1917 and 1918.
- Shropshire & Montgomeryshire handbill dated 1928 printed at Rolvenden printing office.

If anyone would like to join the Museum attendants roster next year, please contact John Miller on 01580-765350.

### Pannier Appeal Report

The Appeal for funds for the purchase of Pannier Tank Engine No.1638 commenced twelve months ago and is now reaching its conclusion. The amount raised is still to be finalised but it will certainly exceed £30,000. This is of course well short of the original target of £160,000, which (with hindsight), was always unrealistic. Nevertheless a significant contribution has been made towards the purchase of the engine, which is the first locomotive to be wholly owned by the Railway in the preserved era. A key lesson for future appeals must be the setting of achievable targets!

At the time of writing, the breakdown of the funds raised is:

Donations	£22,006
Anticipated Gift Aid Recovery	£ 4,088
Draw Ticket Sales	<u>£ 4,573</u>
	<u>£30,667</u>

A summary of the principal contributions to the amount raised may be of interest. Individual donations included five of £1,000 or over, two of £780 and twenty of £200 to £250. Donations in memory of Stephen Parascandolo exceeded £3,500. A donation of £700 was received on behalf of the original Northiam Group of volunteers from sales and donations taken at Northiam since 1990. Molly the bus and her crew raised just over £125 from shuttle bus customers at Bodiam over the Hoppers' Weekend. The amount recoverable through Gift Aid is also of particular significance. Most draw ticket sales came from tickets issued with the Summer edition of the 'Terrier', with around 420 readers purchasing 2,100 £1 tickets. Draw ticket sales on the Wealden Pullman produced a further £1,590. Other sales came from the efforts of a small number of volunteers assisting with sales on and away from the Railway.

The Kent and East Sussex Railway is most grateful to all members and other supporters who contributed to and assisted with this appeal.

## Steam Locomotives

**No 3 'Bodiam' (32670)** performed very well during the summer running for a full washout cycle (25 steaming days) with hardly any trouble at all.

**No 8 'Knowle' (32678):** One of the new boiler tubes leaked as the hydraulic pressure built up. This had to be removed and sent away to a professional laboratory for testing. The result was that the tube leaked due to a significant defect in the weld (the tubes are formed at the foundry by rolling strip steel into tubes then forging the heated strip ends to make a tube). A decision now has to be taken in conjunction with our boiler inspector as to whether or not all the tubes are to be withdrawn.

**No 11 'P Class':** In service and performing well.

**No 12 'Marcia':**



*Marcia*

**No 14 'Charwelton':** With the loco now in the shed, the Interfleet graduates who attended for their K&ESR working week in September applied the boiler lagging and cladding. It is starting to look like a loco again as the primer is applied.

**No 19 'Norwegian' (376):** Fitting of the new stays continues. Two sides of the smokebox are tack welded in position, and the pistons and valves are in the process of being withdrawn to carry out an examination of their condition. The loco wheels are now re-tyred and return to the K&ESR is imminent. The next task will be the refurbishment of the driving axleboxes which will go out to contract in 2008.

**No 21 'Wainwright' (DS238):** In store pending overhaul.

**No 22 'Maunsell' (65):** This loco is now in the final stages of fitting out. It has been removed from the shed and is now outside in the yard. The new butterfly firedoors (sourced over 10

months from China!) are being fitted.

**No 23 'Holman F Stephens':** Presently stopped for boiler washout.

**No 24 'Rolvenden':** Has run the mainstay of services in 2007 and performed faultlessly, despite creaking at the seams a bit!

**No 25 'Northiam':** Back in service after washout and running very well.

**No 26 Sellingle J94 (68078):** Work has recently concentrated on completing the repairs to the loose right hand side eccentric. A new key has been manufactured and the final result is very satisfactory. All wheels have been cleaned down, inspected and ultrasonically tested. We are now in a position to send them away for re-profiling. All 6 main springs are being refurbished by a subcontractor. Some remedial work is being carried out on the cab roof and the saddle tank.

Our next major task is the axle boxes. A work schedule is being drawn up for this complex task.

Any offers of help or financial assistance will, as usual, be warmly welcomed.

**No 30 GWR Pannier (1638):** The Pannier has been back on the K&ESR on return from the contractors some weeks now. The hold up in returning to service has been due to the need to carry out the annual boiler exam. The first part of this (the intensive visual exam) took place on 17th October. Two potentially broken stays were identified on the boiler back head. Luckily, access to these is quite easy, so the old ones are already out and new ones on order.

## Diesel Locomotives

**No. 20 (GWR Railcar):** The first of the two engine radiators has been re-assembled with a successful pressure test to ensure no leaks are apparent. The cast iron top and bottom tanks of the second radiator were in very poor condition. On dismantling, holes and flange damage due to age were discovered and they have now been extensively refurbished to correct this corrosion. Re-assembly and pressure testing will follow soon.

Due to unfortunate delays to the completion of the birch coach restoration, the planned entry of the railcar into the carriage shed has now been put back to Easter 2008. Once inside, the railcar will remain until the restoration is complete as a combined railcar team and carriage & wagon project. Therefore speeding up the final restoration and ending a





*Baldwin 4-6-0T, seen by members during a September visit to the Froissy & Dampier Railway, this type was used by Colonel Stephens on his narrow gauge railways (John Liddell)*



rather long project duration of some 20 years.

**No 40 'Ford' (BTH):** Stopped for an "A" exam (routine inspection) which is delayed pending resource.

**No 41 (Ruston):** In service

**No 44 'Dover Castle' (Class 08):** As part of the major overhaul, the engine was lifted out using the 36 ton steam crane. A lot of other engine associated hardware has been removed giving access for the completion of engine compartment steam cleaning.

**No 46 (Class 03 – D2023):** In service and a

credit to TREATS overhaul standards.

**Class 33 'Ashford' (33074):** In service

**Class 108 DMMU:** In service. To date the DMMU has been very reliable. Unfortunately one engine has failed in service and diagnosis indicates that the cylinder head must be replaced on that engine.

**TRAMM:** In service

**Tamping Machine:** In service with a proportional tamping depth control facility installed.

**Class 25 D7594 BR Sulzer Class2:** As part of the K&ESR diesel policy for two class 5 diesel locomotives, TREATS are the new owners of the Class 25. The locomotive, to date, has been clad with a new tarpaulin and money allocated. Restoration will proceed as access to space and facilities, (not forgetting the English weather) permit. Initially, while remaining on the railway, one cab will be removed and restored under cover away from the locomotive

### **Cranes**

**No 133 (10T Taylor-Hubbard):** Passed annual boiler inspection on 17th October and awaiting a steam test on 6th November.

**No 145 (10T Grafton):** In store

**No 151 (36T brakedown):** In service.

## ROLLING STOCK

### Mark 1's

K&ESR No. 68 (TSO No. E4355, ex Avon Valley Railway) which had served as the Bodiam static buffet for some years, was brought up to Tenterden during the summer. It is intended to return this coach to traffic, thus allowing us some additional flexibility in the Mark 1 fleet when 'down time' is required for maintenance and overhauls. No. 68 has, however, the most severe corrosion problems of any Mark 1 which we have yet tackled. The experience gained working on Nos. 63 and 64 has nonetheless proved most valuable and nothing found to date is beyond the capabilities of the department in general and C&W Shed Supervisor Alan Brice in particular. A supply of 'z' frames, 'top hat' sections and sheet steel has been obtained not to mention a large quantity of welding rods. It is intended to tackle the 'Robertsbridge' end of the coach in 2007 and, once the winter maintenance season is out the way, the 'Headcorn' end in 2008. The interior will also need an extensive refit which should see this more than useful addition to the running fleet fit for many more years service. At present it is planned to complete the coach as S4355 in Southern Region green.

Wheel flats having been reported on K&ESR No. 64 (TSO No. 3753) corrective action was

taken by replacing the entire bogie at one end. This was made all the easier as a suitable replacement was sitting under No. 68, the coach described above. We shall shortly be sending several wheelsets in need of turning to our usual contractor.

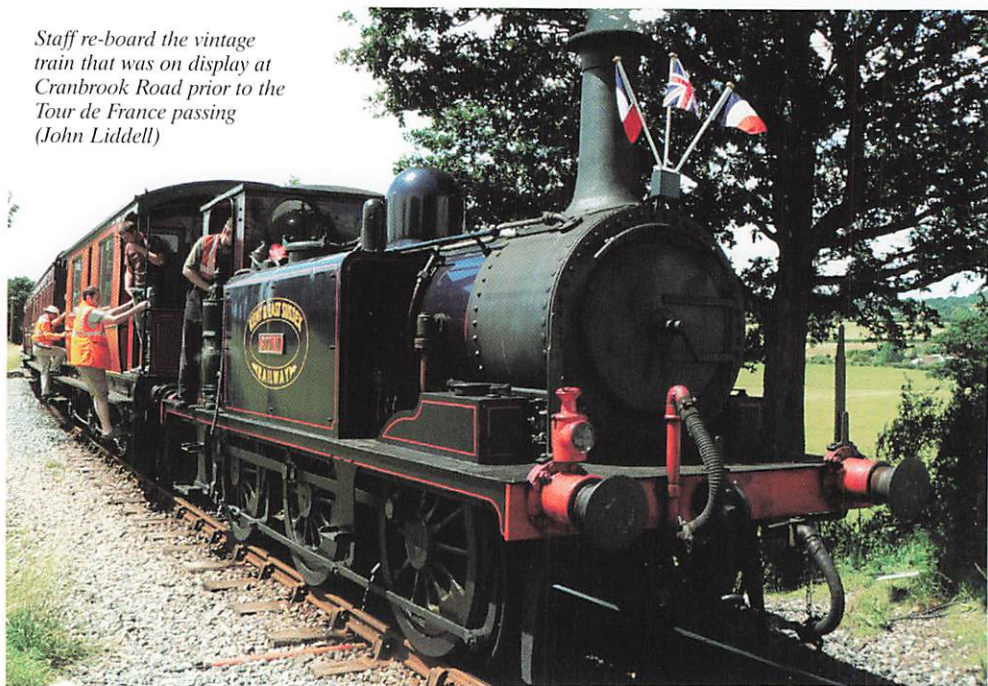
### Vintage Coaches.

The Birdcage (SE&CR No. 1106, K&ESR No. 61) continues to make good progress.

Refurbishment of the doors is well advanced, most doors having been rehung at the time of writing with door locks and exterior mouldings being refitted. The guards brake end bogie is back in position and the brake gear has been reassembled. Interior varnishing has commenced and the handsome brass compartment heater controls installed. The moquette for the interior has been ordered and it is planned to re-canvas the roof and paint the vehicle before the end of the year. The Birdcage will be finished on this occasion in BR carmine red in accordance with the requirements of a photographic group who generously donated the cost of the paint.

London Chatham & Dover Railway three compartment brake (SE&CR No. 3062, K&ESR No. 98) is progressing steadily. Work is in hand to

*Staff re-board the vintage train that was on display at Cranbrook Road prior to the Tour de France passing (John Liddell)*





rebuild the doors (which fortunately are of a distinctly different design to those from the Birdcage!) Ron Nuttman and Colin Shenton have continued to make progress on the overhaul of the underframe intended for this coach.

In the previous issue of this journal we reported that the brake rigging of **SE&CR Family Saloon No. 177 (K&ESR No. 84)** had received some replacement items. Herein lies the danger of anticipating what is going to happen before the Terrier is published. It in fact happened after the magazine was distributed! We can, however, quite definitely report (and repeat) that the Family Saloon was only out of service for a short period whilst the new parts were installed.

As expected, **SE&CR No. 2947 (K&ESR No. 88)** re-entered traffic in time for the last few weeks of the main season, its sparkling condition seeming to make it an instant hit with the visiting public.

#### Wagons

**Shell Tank Wagon K&ESR No. 118** has now been repainted in its traditional silver livery and,

complete with appropriate logos, now looks very smart indeed. Although No. 118 has been returned to Bodiam where it will remain on display, the wagon was through piped whilst at C&W and will now be available for use on demonstration freight trains.

**Brake Van K&ESR No. 104 (L&NWR No.135945)** which has languished on various sidings for many years was, like No. 68, recently retrieved from Bodiam for assessment and the start of restoration. Initial work to dismantle time expired bodywork components was undertaken during one week of September by Interfleet's graduate trainees. This group of future rail industry leaders were at the K&ESR for their annual exposure to how-it-used-to-be-done

#### People

Dave Sinclair has been away from C&W during recent weeks following a hip replacement operation. We understand he has been progressing satisfactorily and wish him all the best for a rapid recovery.

## WAY AND WORKS

#### S&T

At the end of June a new pole was erected behind the coal pile at Rolvenden yard. This pole is longer than our usual ones in order to get the clearance over the A28. We had the use of the coaling bucket to assist us and many thanks here to the friendly and skilful driver! To get access to the site, metal stillages, springs etc had to be moved. In mid July we changed over the cable to the new pole. Many thanks to André Freeman for his assistance in this task.

This winter will see further pole replacements at Rother Bridge and near Northiam.

At the end of September another length of covered galvanized wire was run out from Tenterden home signal to the other side of Cranbrook Road to complete the renewals on this section.

#### Tuesday Group Report

The painting of Wittersham Road crossing gates has now been completed and new warning lights fitted. New signs advertising K&ESR have been put up by both Rolvenden and Cranbrook Road level crossings.

In mid June we used the

DMMU as transport for the day and carried out trackside clearance between Northiam and Wittersham Road stations where it had become very overgrown. The General Manager helped and became an Honorary Member of the Tuesday Group for the day.

Work is on-going to repair and repaint seats at Northiam and Wittersham Road stations. The toilet door locks at Northiam have been difficult to open at times and these have been replaced.

We have now started on the major task of

*Martin MacFarlan's Leyland Titan bus waits at Bodiam crossing during the Hoppers' Weekend (John Liddell)*



*During the 1940's event; Police pay attention to 'commercial' activities at Bodiam (John Liddell)*



repairing and repainting the outside of Wittersham Road signal box. This is a big undertaking on a one day a week basis. However, things are progressing well.

We welcome Doug Ramsden who has for some years been a Signaller on the Railway and Matthew Burrows from the Shaw Trust to the Tuesday Group's happy Guild of DIY experts and tea and coffee makers and drinkers.

### **Gardening Group Report**

Following the expansion of the Gardening Group from one to three with the arrival of Paul and Brenda Tanton Brown, I am sure many of you will have seen the great strides made at Northiam Station. Paul and Brenda have decided to make Northiam their designated station. Paul is a professional "mechanical" gardener and is very kindly using his own equipment to get the grass and hedging under control while Brenda "attacks" the flowerbeds and pots. Next spring and summer will show the results of their efforts.

At Tenterden the flowerbeds are gradually coming under control and by Spring the new garden by the signal box should start to mature. Some winter planting of the flower boxes around the station is taking place in readiness for the Santa Specials.

With the proposed demolition of the raised beds in front of the Tenterden buffet planned for the near future, work is in progress to move the plants and pebbles to other areas of the station. A few more pots will be planted up which can be moved around the station.

At Wittersham Road the planters on the platform seem to be surviving the rabbits and it is proposed to fill these with more plants in the spring. During the next month an effort will be made to clear the garden areas of weeds. This year the bank has been kept under reasonable control by a couple of cuts by Paul and members of the Tuesday Group.

The little garden at Rolvenden will be visited shortly in order to tidy it up and to add some additional compost to improve the state of the soil. The little garden seems to struggle on with obvious attention from someone who kindly keeps an eye on the weeds when I am unable to get there. Also planned for the future is an overhaul of the tubs on the platform which used to be so well looked after by Gar and Tony Pearson.

During the period under review I have received help from Phil Wood and also members of the Tuesday Group which is much appreciated as it enables me to gain some sort of order to the gardens around the Railway. Thank you everyone.



## GROUPS & ASSOCIATES

### Ashford Area Group

We continue to enjoy enthusiastic support for our indoor meetings. Recent topics have included such diverse subjects as our intrepid Programme Manager's extreme altitude trek in Nepal and the sight and sounds of a pickup goods shunting at a sleepy Sussex country station! The latter filmed on a beautiful 4mm scale layout. Our Members' Slide and Digital evening was filled with the results of their visits to railways at home and abroad, it also included some "mystery" historical slides brought along on the night. Keep it up!

Increasingly our presenters choose to use digital presentation as this enables them to produce a very professional result and enhancement of otherwise less than perfect pictures and film to a standard never seen before. For this we are indebted to Andy Wood for the loan and operation of the equipment. If you are looking for a deserving home for that slightly dated laptop or digital projector please bear us in mind.

The highlight of our outdoor visits has to be that to Le P'tit train de la Haute Somme for their September steam event. Seventy-four of us were

whisked there in our "adopted" luxury coach. Early arrival saw some of us having to resist their impromptu invitation to share a banquet in the engine shed. This gave adequate time to study the outside working exhibits which included vintage cars, a miniature railway and works trains operating in the extensive yard. A hint of what was to come was given by the array of engines in steam awaiting their crews to return from lunch.

Ample time was available to study the collection of 60cm gauge locomotives and wagons in the cavernous museum, each with a multilingual learning board. Many of the exhibits were of military origin, a sombre reminder of the origin of the line as part of the supply line to the Somme in WW1.

A band struck up announcing the commencement of services. These consisted of frequent passenger trains interspersed with two freight trains, one double headed, these shuttled between the various passing places. The line follows a canal, passing through colourful trees before climbing through a long tunnel. On emerging a road is crossed before coming to the first reversal of a zig-zag which climbs the side of



*Wagon 118, newly outshopped as Shell/BP oil tanker in Bodiam Sidings in place of the Avon coach (John Liddell)*



the river gorge. At the top the line hangs on to the edge before a sharp right turn to cross the road to a passing place. The vintage cars, their occupants in period dress, drove up and down the towpath and road adding to the atmosphere. Engine run round gave time to fill one's lungs with fresh air before descending to THAT tunnel. More than enough action for even the most hardened line-sider. An excellent souvenir DVD of the day by Andy Main is available for £5 which will contribute to our funds. Buy at a meeting or contact Ted Micklam (below).

A raffle on the trouble free return trip raised £134 for The Terrier Trust. Thanks are due to Keith Mapley for his seamless organisation of such a memorable day.

You do not have to be an Ashford resident to join us at our indoor open meetings. These continue, commencing at 7.30pm, at the Railway Club, Beaver Road, Ashford TN23 7RR, on the following Wednesdays in 2007:-

21st November – “Boat Trains & Channel Packets, 1840 – 1990” slides & talk by Bob Ratcliffe

19th December – “BR & European Railway Miscellany” illustrated by Geoff Dunster.

We then continue into 2008 with the following expert speakers:-

16th January -Alan Crotty makes a long awaited return visit.

20th February - “Our own” Doug Barrow

19th March - Michael Bunn – What does he not know about French Railways?

See you there? Ted Micklam 01233-503999

### CFBS News – Philip Pacey

Following a bright start to the season, the CFBS experienced changeable weather from May onwards; passenger figures through the summer were no more than stable, but September was reported to have been the most successful September ever. Whether this was enough to maintain the CFBS's record of increasing passenger figures year on year remain to be seen. The 'Train de Fin de Saison' on 4th November was a last opportunity to cross the old swing bridge at St Valery before its replacement in the next phase of rebuilding the canal lock.

My annual visit as a volunteer to the CFBS this year took place between the 3rd and 9th July – a week of mostly fine weather, but with some cold winds; the trains I observed were by no means full. My visit began eventfully. Having made an unofficial and somewhat unlikely connection at Frethun, I arrived at Noyelles in good time to



*The Peleton cross Cranbrook Road during the Tour de France (Paul Kitney)*



catch the 6.00 departure to St Valery after calling at Pippa Darbyshire's welcoming café/gallery and admiring the CFBS's ticket office and exhibition hall in the old station building. 6 o'clock came and went with no sign of the trains. Finally, the two trains appeared, one hauled by a diesel. It turned out that the Buffaud had suffered a breakdown; an occurrence which was to happen again later in the week. I was greeted by Cecile and an unfamiliar but friendly fireman who I assumed - wrongly - to be French. At this stage our conversation did not get beyond 'Bonjour, ça va?' which we both accomplished without giving anything away.

On arriving at the depot I examined the whiteboard to see which volunteers were on site or visiting during my stay, and with whom I could expect to be sharing sleeping accommodation. Near the bottom of a long list of volunteers my eye was caught by the words 'Trois anglais' (not including me - I was listed separately). I guessed that they would turn out to be members from the K&ESR, and I was right - Chris Garman, whom I had met at Noyelles, Pete Hubbard, and John Ascher. They were in lodgings in town; for the first couple of nights I had the original 'dortoir' to myself, but for a mouse in the roof; the new 'dortoir' ('filles'), not required by Cecile, was occupied by a young lad, Antoine, later joined by another student, Germain. It is good to see that the CFBS is able to attract young volunteers.

The 'trois anglais' had come to acquire footplate experience; while it appeared that a good time was had by all, Chris was unlucky in that on Thursday (5th July) he was firing on the Buffaud with Cecile when it broke down a second time, on the morning train not far beyond St Valery Canal (the whole drama could be seen from the depot). While Cecile and Chris brought the loco limping home, Nicolas Morel used one of the diesels to draw the train back, nearly to the depot, until he could run around it and take it on its way. The Corpet was quickly steamed to take the place of the Buffaud on the afternoon trains and to haul the evening dining train, the passengers of which were treated to a glorious sunset. Following repair, the Buffaud was steamed again on Friday; in the afternoon it ran solo to Noyelles, some minutes behind the scheduled passenger train which it hauled back to St Valery with the Corpet bringing up the rear.

While the 'trois Anglais' were having fun on the footplate, I was content to be given the task of rubbing down and repainting a historic wagon, to all appearances a standard example of its type

(and I'm told the oldest on the railway) but in fact one which my friend, the late Guy Lenné, adapted for living in.

The highlight of my stay was - once again - the Fête de la Gare de Cayeux, on Sunday 8th July, when I was - once again - designated to help with the draisine, and - once again - patronised the café at Cayeux which only opens on this day every year! During a spell of changeable weather we were blessed with bright sunshine through the morning and later in the afternoon, after a bank of cloud had passed over. With normal services also operating, there were three locos in steam on this Sunday, with the Cail providing the Le Crotoy service and the Buffaud operating between St Valery and Noyelles. Early on this same day, the little Corpet, which had been waiting on a low loader, was taken to Abbeville, to be displayed at the inauguration of 'La Gare Multimodale', returning in the evening sunlight.

What was new? *The booking office and gallery at Noyelles*, which had been opened on 23rd June. A substantial *concrete coaling stage* behind the depot, taking some of the pain out of coaling up. A *vegetable garden* at the depot, the work of Jean Pierre, an active CFBS member who lives in one of the houses beside the approach to the depot. Three *ex-BOB vehicles* in use, in their smart new green and cream livery; another was in the paint shop, with three or four others waiting their turn. Sadly, one of these vehicles, B237, was subsequently a victim of graffiti.

In the weeks following my visit all of the regular locos, steam and diesel, have been in service, enabling the workshop team to strip down the ex-Reseau Breton 4-6-0T. In mid-August the CFBS received a 'bourreuse' (ballast tamper) from the CF de la Provence; I understand that it is to be repaired at St Valery, after which it will no doubt be put through its paces on CFBS track before being returned to Nice.

In September the CFBS was used for shooting several scenes of a film, 'Ce Cochon de Morin', a Maupassant story, for France 2. Some CFBS employees featured as extras. In October a documentary series on the history of fashion, 'Histoire de Look', was broadcast; filming of episode 4, covering the year 1885, had taken place on the CFBS in autumn, 2006

Finally, if like me you have been expecting there to be a Fête de la Vapeur *next* April, I'm afraid you will have to contain your excitement - these events are now held every *three* years and the next one is scheduled for 2009.

# Company Secretary's Notes

## 2007 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting for 2007 was held at Tenterden Town Hall on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October. Although not the sort of occasion that historians may fall over themselves to write about in decades to come, this AGM nonetheless seemed rather less routine than those of recent years. An attendance of around 80 was slightly up although there was a more than corresponding decrease in proxy (postal) votes, the latter possibly having been connected with the Royal Mail strike.

We started off, almost uniquely, with an amendment to last years minutes - matter raised by former director Graham Bridge - before the Annual Report of the Directors and the Audited Accounts for 2006 were considered. These were duly adopted, albeit after a technical question had been raised which had to be answered by Mark Smith of our Auditors, Messrs. Day Smith & Hunter. That firm was also reappointed for a further 12 months.

Norman Brice then proceeded to his annual 'State of the Railway' address before we came to the other votes to be taken. Various questions were asked about the special resolution to change the renewal date for membership subscriptions from 1<sup>st</sup> January to a system of 'rolling' renewals throughout the year before a drafting error was spotted. After some rapid consultation it was decided to withdraw the resolution. It will be revisited next year. Results of the Board election were as follows:

	For	Against	Abstentions
Dick Beckett	237	7	11
Brian Janes	215	29	11
Ian Legg	231	14	10
Stuart Phillips	231	13	11

There were also presentations from Derek Dunlavey, Safety Director, and Graham Baldwin, General Manager on commercial matters. The meeting finished rather later than we have become accustomed to as the Open



*Hopping memorabilia on display at Bodiam (Phil Wood)*





*Harry Hickmott proudly displays his General Managers award (John Liddell)*

Forum produced a reasonable crop of questions. Notable among these were two for which written notice has been given. The first, from Pam and Sheila Stevens (former joint membership secretaries) led to exchanges on the separate, but allied issues of membership categories, annual subscriptions and the size of the membership. Much of this is, of course, being reviewed by the Stuart Philips led committee who no doubt took good note of what was said. The second was from Robin Dyce asking for clarification about the proposals to

improve facilities at Tenterden Town. The meeting was assured that an architects plan produced for the Company was only a starting point for discussions, particularly with Ashford Council planners. Consultation within K&ESR would be via departmental managers.

Finally, and for a further year, apologies to those present for the absence of a PA system. Once again it was not our fault and I shall be taking up a member's offer of the loan of his amplifying equipment!

## Farewell to a Friend

Joan Greenhow, a stalwart with her husband Brian, of the Museum Attendants roster regrettably passed away in October after a long illness.

There was a very well attended service in Dartford at which the Railway was represented. We shall miss her cheerful presence.

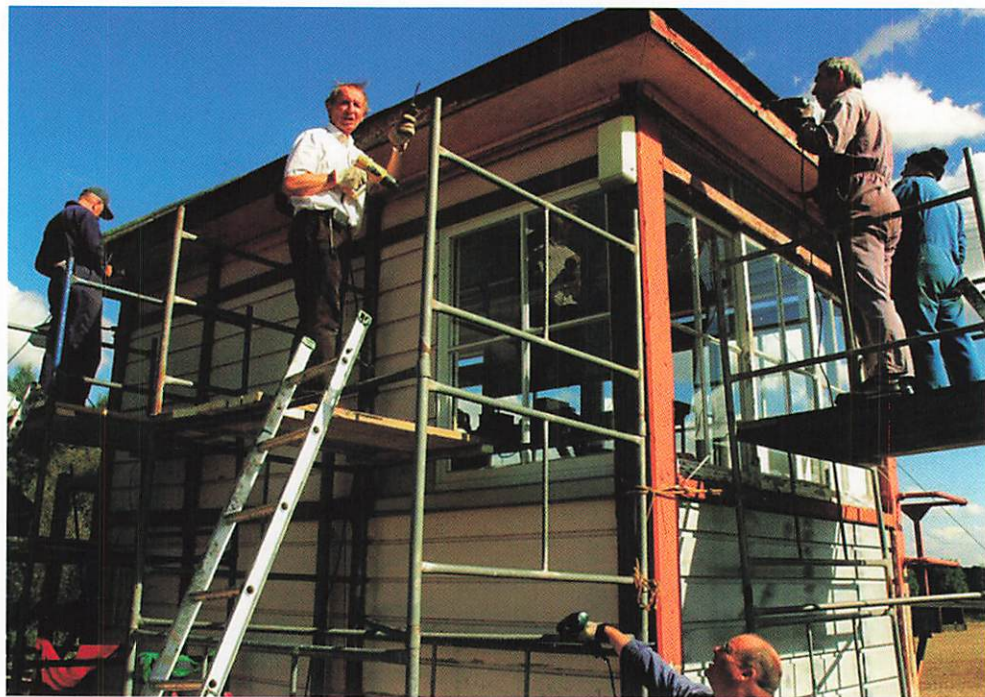
Brian is already back in harness and we look forward to his continuing volunteering in the Museum and other areas. (BMJ)





*Above: More narrow gauge action on the Froissy & Dampier Railway. (John Liddell)*

*Below: The Tuesday Group painting Wittersham Road signal box. (John Rose)*

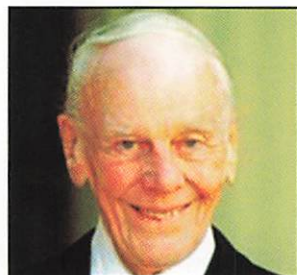




# Lord Deedes

The Railway's President, Lord William Deedes, died on 17th August 2007 at the age of 94.

Born in Kent, Bill Deedes had a distinguished career in both journalism and politics and in addition won the Military Cross in 1944. He was MP for Ashford from 1950 to 1974 and was a Cabinet Minister in the early 1960's. He was awarded a Life Peerage in 1986.



His first contact with the Railway came almost exactly 40 years ago following the refusal, in the autumn of 1967, of the first application of a Light Railway (Transfer) Order. He was asked to help in getting this decision reversed and thereafter provided assistance which was of the greatest value. He raised the matter in Parliament and during the subsequent years was an able guide through the labyrinths of government. These efforts, of course, culminated in the granting of our Light Railway (Transfer) Order in November 1973. He officiated at the formal re-opening of the K&ESR in June 1974 and visited the Railway on a number of subsequent occasions, particularly for the opening of the Bodiam extension in April 2000.

Our condolences go to his family. His place in the history of the Railway is assured.

NP

## KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB

### PRIZE WINNERS

#### May 2007

1st	Mr D K L Morgan	No. 358	£60.00
2nd	Mr D N Leach	No. 334	£40.00
3rd	Mr G P Williams	No. 458	£30.00
4th	Mrs B M King	No. 470	£25.00
5th	Mrs H A Parascandolo	No. 293	£20.00
6th	Dave Tibbatts	No. 497	£10.00

#### June 2007

1st	Mr N Brice	No. 155	£80.00
2nd	Mr D W Edwards	No. 174	£60.00
3rd	Mr A J York	No. 185	£50.00
4th	David Barrows	No. 445	£30.00
5th	Mr A J Clarke	No. 064	£20.00
6th	Mrs M Colwell	No. 447	£15.00
7th	Mrs Jean Clark	No. 348	£10.00

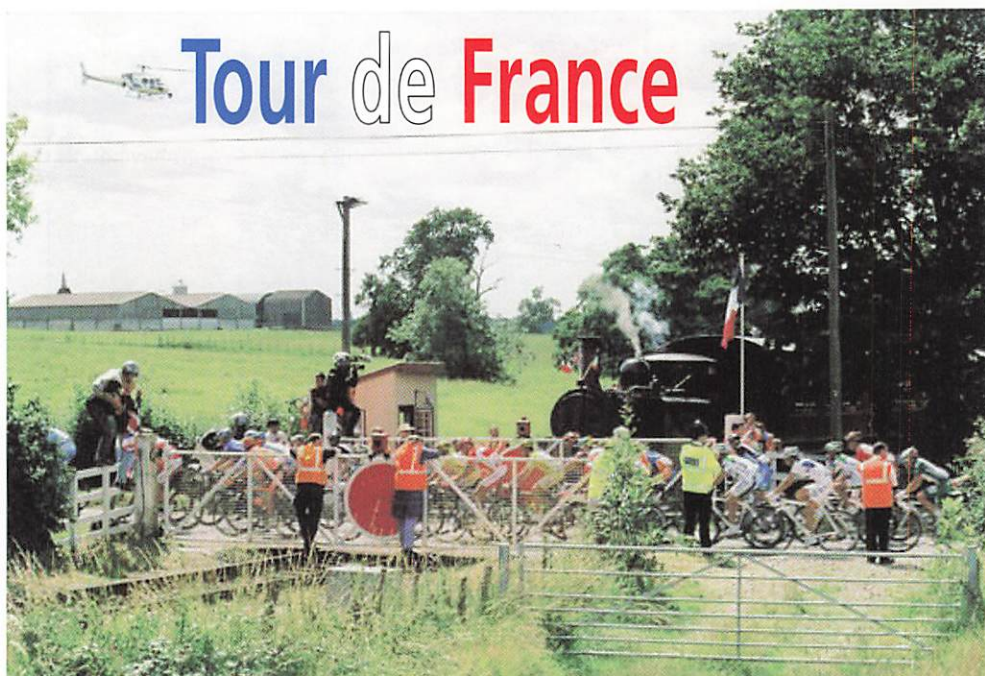
#### July 2007

1st	Richard F Smith	No. 138	£60.00
2nd	Mike Artlett	No. 289	£40.00
3rd	Mr R Bennett	No. 482	£30.00
4th	Mrs M Colwell	No. 489	£25.00
5th	Alan Dawes	No. 010	£20.00
6th	D A S Vear	No. 157	£10.00

#### August 2007

1st	Mr V Bradley	No. 068	£60.00
2nd	Bob Clifford	No. 211	£40.00
3rd	Richard F Smith	No. 138	£30.00
4th	P R Saunders	No. 121	£25.00
5th	Bob Clifford	No. 015	£20.00
6th	Peter Roberts	No. 077	£10.00

To join the 300 Club Phone Brian Heyes on 01622 744509 or Chris Garman 01424 441643 for an application form.



*The image that went around the world of the Tour de France at Tenterden (Stuart Philips)*

*Chris Wood writes about one of our most memorable days, images of which went round the world. Some booking office statistics are appended at the end of the article.*

That was the day that our railway, more used to taking families and groups down to Bodiam for a day out at the castle, suddenly found itself transformed into a mass transit organisation, carrying hundreds of passengers to and from Tenterden for the Tour de France.

A special timetable was arranged based on the assumption that most passengers would opt for the park and ride DMMU shuttle from Rolvenden, given that the race route and the A28 through Tenterden was closed to all traffic from 9am.

So an intensive DMMU shuttle service was arranged, the first one leaving Tenterden for Rolvenden at 9:10am and returning at 9:27. At the same time the vintage train left Rolvenden for Northiam to pick up any passengers who may have decided to park and ride from there (it came back packed solid!). The 'A' set consisting of just four coaches left Tenterden at 10:30am for Bodiam to pick up any park and ride

passengers there, but given that they would have had to pay to park at the castle (except National Trust members) and walk to the station, it was assumed most would opt to travel from Northiam.

However when the train arrived at Bodiam some 60 people were waiting to board it. An even bigger crowd was at Northiam on the return, and more tried to cram on at Rolvenden. So when it arrived at Tenterden, horrified station staff saw it was bursting at the seams with passengers standing everywhere right through the train – this despite another DMMU shuttle to Rolvenden and one through to Northiam. The 'A' set with only four coaches on, which includes Petros, the buffet car and the Maunsell. NBO has an effective seating capacity of only about 180 and has shown itself to be inadequate on all but the most routine of days. So to use it unstrengthened for the race day was perhaps not the best choice.

Unfortunately to get trains where we needed them to be, before the cavalcade and race came through, there was no time to add the vital fifth coach and the 'A' set departed



again at 12:25pm to Bodiam having arrived at about 12:15pm. As it was the Police then threw a spanner in the works by insisting that we cancel a DMMU shuttle run, to allow the pre-race caravan to come through uninterrupted – which left quite a few passengers stranded at Rolvenden.

The afternoon timetable was arranged on the assumption that once the race had gone through most people would stay in the town to sample all the entertainments.

Unfortunately the great British public decided that once they had seen the race they wanted to go home, so instead of drifting back down Station Road in manageable lumps to catch the trains provided, they all came down in one very big lump – everyone who had spent the morning coming up from Bodiam, Northiam and Rolvenden, arrived on the platform around 2:30pm, expecting instant transportation back to where they came from. So it was obvious we had a major problem, since the scheduled trains would simply not cope with the huge crowd. The existing timetable was effectively torn up and the DMMU and the vintage did as many Rolvenden shuttles as could be fitted in. One DMMU shuttle to Rolvenden was extended to Northiam, the 3:30pm 'A' set having left to Bodiam bursting at the seams with passengers standing throughout. The 17:15 DMMU shuttle to Northiam was replaced by the 'A' set on its return to Tenterden and hauled by the Class 14 diesel and then extended to Bodiam, returning to Tenterden around 7.00pm. For those volunteers who booked on at 7:30am, or even earlier, a very long day. The final timetabled DMMU shuttle to Rolvenden left at 6:15pm and even at that late hour carried around 20 passengers.

What was most striking about the afternoon was the way everyone, signalmen – who found paths for trains we didn't know existed, train crews, who worked long hours to run them, station staff, who brought order to the heaving crowds and crossing keepers who somehow coped with a seemingly endless procession of trains – everyone, not forgetting the Tenterden station buffet staff who were overwhelmed by waiting passengers demanding ice creams and cold drinks, responded magnificently to the

situation and sent everyone away feeling they had a good day out and hopefully too they will return on a 'normal' day for a ride to Bodiam.

But if only we had that fifth coach on the 'A' set what a difference it could have made.

### Tour de France Bookings

On the day we carried 887 passengers and as one might expect the day produced distinctly odd ticket issuing patterns.

Tenterden, the source of most bookings on a usual day but blockaded from 9 o'clock till past 4, surprisingly recorded a respectable 112 bookings, about the same as a very quiet midweek day. Rolvenden with its park and ride recorded 325 bookings but was piped at the post by Northiam with 334, ten times a normal day. Perhaps equally surprising Bodiam recorded 71 bookings. Clearly people were making a day of it and including a trip with us for the sheer fun of it.

In contrast to the heroic efforts of Northiam and Rolvenden booking staff, it did seem very quiet at Tenterden, and given that the town was blockaded it was surprising to see 112 bookings. Ken Dow therefore analysed the takings. Half of the sales were singles to Rolvenden because the people walked up and rode back thus making use of their car park refund and saving their tired legs. There were quite a lot of 'normal' passengers – all of whom either lived in town or came before 9.30, and some other round trips, but we even had people going to Wittersham Road single! The pattern may be of interest:

Adult rover (i.e. normal ticket to Bodiam).....	28
Bodiam single .....	2
Northiam return .....	2
Northiam single .....	3
Wittersham Road return .....	6
Wittersham Road single .....	9
Rolvenden return.....	10
Rolvenden single .....	51
Privilege.....	1

# Times Past, Times Present



*Gazelle is craned into the museum on 20th February 1997. (Nick Pallant)*

*John Miller, Hon Museum Curator, outlines how the museum has developed over the last 30 years.*

It is now 30 years since part of the museum collection first went on public display in the Town Museum at the top of Station Road. On 8th April 1977, a television personality, Donald Dougall, of the then Southern Television declared the museum open to onlookers outside of the museum.

The last room on the ground floor housed the railway display which consisted of two large free standing cabinets and wall mounted photographs of the various Stephens' railways. The cabinets held the 120 or so free passes collected by Stephens and Austen (senior) and mostly dating from just before the 'grouping' of 1923.

To be fair, there had been a previous 'museum' set up in the early 1960's by the Kent & East Sussex Railway Preservation Society when that body rented Tenterden station building for £1.00 per week from British Railways. This display was in the goods office, today part of the shop. This was before my appearance on the scene and the only surviving items from that venture, still in the collection, are a few faded tickets.

Apart from the free passes, by 1977, the collection had grown to a large number of photographs and tickets from the various Stephens' lines and about 70 other items.

On 14th May 1977, a few weeks after the Town Museum opening, the railway collection gained formal recognition when Dr John Coiley,



Keeper of the National Railway Museum, York, attended a meeting of the Association of Railway Preservation Societies in Tenterden Town Hall and afterwards toured the Town Museum with the Town Mayor, Councillor Hugh Roberts. As part of his visit Dr Coiley presented, on loan, the nameplate "Rolvenden" which is still part of the collection. Later at Tenterden Town Station he named engine No 23, "Holman F. Stephens".

Up to this point the primary sources for collected material had been firstly, W H Austen (junior) who had inherited many of the Stephens personal items from his father, secondly, from former employees or their descendants, and thirdly, material found on the railway but no longer used. Also Philip Shaw had begun watching the sale rooms and buying items with some relevance to the history of the railways.

The scope of collecting has always been the 17 railways associated with Colonel Stephens and of the personalities which have had some connection with those lines. Other items which help complete the 'set dressing' of various displays are also collected but are recorded in a different way.

A big advance was made in 1982, when, following the death of Austen (junior), Phyllis his widow, donated the roll-top desk bought by Stephens in 1900 and other items from his office. A small bay in the railway room was used to 'mock-up' a corner of Stephen's office with just the desk, chair and some pictures. Austen had left a detailed description of how the office was arranged in the 1920s and '30s which was to prove invaluable some years later. Later a quantity of interesting material was salvaged from W H Austen's garage after his death which had been earmarked for the dustman the following week!

The collection continued to grow with, it seemed, new material arriving every week. At one stage, an unfurnished cottage in the High Street was used to store the reserve collection and it was estimated that eventually only 20% of the total was on display.

By about 1993 it was decided to rent storage space on Henry Edward's trading estate. Unit 1B, now the display room of The Forge, was rented and the reserve material was moved there and the cottage vacated. Then in 1995 unit 1A became vacant and after much discussion it was agreed to convert 1A to a

museum, vacate 1B and transfer the railway display from the Town Museum.

The financial arrangements were that the Tenterden Railway Company would allocate £6,000 in both 1996 and 1997 for materials and the Museum Group of volunteers would raise a further £6,000 privately, £18,000 in all.

The usable floor area of Unit 1A is only 30' x 48' so a design had to be arrived at which gave the maximum possible display space. A team was assembled for the project; Ken Lee and John Liddell concentrating on carpentry, Allan Tebboth on painting, electricians were designed and installed by David Strivens assisted by Henry Cooper, Doug Lindsay dealt with flooring, Philip Shaw produced captions and I designed the displays and did the arrangements.

During 1995 a one hour fire protection wall was installed between Unit 1A and The Forge and an existing small sleeper platform at the rear was extended with a Dexion mezzanine floor covering half the ground floor area. Access was gained via a steel staircase. New entrance doors were created at the front with a concrete ramp for wheelchairs, and an emergency exit door was fitted at the rear. By the beginning of 1996 the building was ready for the installation of displays. Unit 1B was vacated and the reserve collection transferred to the mezzanine floor, and in December 1995 the railway room at the Town Museum was closed and the contents transferred to unit 1A.

By the end of 1996 two-thirds of the displays were completed and opened to the public on 34 days with an admission charge of 60p for adults. In October in a section still with empty floor space a buffet reception was arranged for a party from the Baie de Somme railway, with whom the Tenterden Railway Company had recently entered into a twinning agreement. Our French friends were most impressed that Tenterden could produce very drinkable wines!

The empty floor space had originally been reserved for the possible acquisition of a 1936 Bedford lorry to be finished as a replica of that bought by William Austen (senior) in that year. However in early February 1997 came a surprise request from the National Railway Museum asking if we could take delivery of Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway engine No 1 "Gazelle", "in a weeks time". I had asked the NRM a couple of years previously that if it ever became available for

loan we would be interested. Now the Museum of Army Transport at Beverly, East Yorkshire had closed suddenly following a financial crisis and "Gazelle" needed to be removed.

Permanent Way staff rallied round and laid a short section of track inside the roller shutter doors and "Gazelle" duly arrived on 20th February, probably our star exhibit.

By the end of 1997 the displays were as finished as they could be: the building had twice been struck by lightning, requiring two new alarm control panels, and the museum had received the NRM award for interpretation of its subject under the National Railways Heritage Awards, complete with a certificate and £500. All we needed now was a formal opening.

The "official opening" came on 22 May 1998, when Sir Neil Cossens, Director of the Science Museum, declared the museum open to a crowd of invited guests seated outside. Helen Ashby attended, representing the NRM and presented another nameplate on loan, this time "A.S.Harris".

Over the ten years that the present museum has been open 68,938 visitors (to the end of September) have gone through the doors which, of course, represents only a fraction of the total passengers carried on the railway. The number of attendants each season has varied between 14 and 20 and currently stands at 17. The aim is to open the museum every afternoon (12.30 to 4.30pm) between Easter and the end of October on days when the railway is operating. Since 2000 we have failed to open on four occasions due to staff sickness.

The museum does not open in the winter due to the impossibility of heating the building. However the winter months give an opportunity to work on the displays of which two to three (out of 34) are upgraded each year.

There are two parts to my job: I curate the museum and 'keep' the archives. The museum is essentially the downstairs displays with a small reserve collection upstairs. In the 'reserve' there are duplicates of material on display and other items for which there is no

space for display. The archive consists in the main of albums of photographs and tickets plus a whole mass of documents and paperwork. As each item is acquired it is entered in a file and allocated an inventory number. This is based on the current year, followed by a three digit serial number commencing 001 each year. If there are two or more parts to an object e.g. a tablet and pouch, then each part has a letter e.g. 2001/001/A. It has been policy since last year to add these numbers to the captions in displays. Each item also has an index card cross referenced with the inventory number but filed by location in the museum. Objects collected as 'set dressing' are entered on green index cards to differentiate them from the historical collection. It is estimated that there are currently about 3,500 items in the historical collection!

To celebrate ten years of opening, the museum commissioned a life size model of Colonel Stephens sitting at his desk in his office. He has sat there since April and is designed to look up at visitors as they approach the office window. There have been teething problems but he should be working well next season. The office is arranged just as it was in the 1920's (thanks to the description given by Austen) and most of the contents are original and arranged in their correct position.

As for the future, we shall continue to add to the collection by buying selectively at auction to fill obvious gaps. The Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway is one where we would like to enhance the display, possibly by the addition of original hardware. Unfortunately this rarely seems to become available. We would also like to receive on loan items with a Stephens connection, with the proviso that they would be returned to owners at any time on request.

We will continue to revamp the existing displays and some new ideas are in the making. A new attraction in the not too distant future will be the display of Colonel Stephen's and William Austen's fabulous collection of pre-grouping railway free passes. These have been off-display for the past ten years but space has been allocated and we have a plan to display them to advantage.



# Gilbert Savil Szlumper

## (1884-1969)

*Tom Burnham looks at the life and career of one of Colonel Stephens' few close friends.*

One of Colonel Stephens' favourite companions for luncheon was Gilbert Szlumper, who was Assistant General Manager of the Southern Railway from 1925.

Although Szlumper was considerably younger than Stephens, the two men had much in common: both were energetic and outspoken, both had trained in engineering and moved on to railway management, both had been involved with the Territorial Army, and both were members of the Royal Automobile Club, where they often met. Szlumper was one of the very few people on familiar terms with Colonel Stephens, addressing him as "Stevie" or "Dear old bird", while Stephens sometimes responded with the schoolboyish nickname of "Szlumps". Stephens had no connection with his family after the death of his parents, and to a certain extent Gilbert Szlumper and his wife filled that gap.

Szlumper was always a loyal Southern Railway man, but he was no doubt in a position to facilitate the Southern's support, both financial and practical, for the K&ESR and the East Kent. He must have been particularly pleased to be one of the three directors appointed by the Southern Railway to the East Kent Railway board in 1926, after the Southern made a substantial investment in that company, and he continued as an East Kent director until 1940, when the official position he took in the Ministry of Transport obliged him to resign. It is also likely that the Southern Heights Light Railway project would

not have got as far as it did without Stephens' influence with the Southern's senior officers.

Gilbert Szlumper was widely popular, and with reason. Sir John Elliot, who worked closely with him on the Southern, wrote of him in *The Times* that he inspired his colleagues "at all

times by his energy, enthusiasm and complete absence of pomposity.

Fools and knaves had no chance with him, and his gusty sense of humour was a by-word in the world of railwaymen everywhere."

The Szlumper family really warrant a study of their own, and their rags-to-riches story might have come from the pages of Samuel Smiles. Gilbert Szlumper's grandfather was a tailor, Albert Szlumper (about 1810-1882), who came to England from Poland as a young man, married a London girl, Eliza Weeks, in 1832, and raised a large family. In spite of moving around the country (London, Bristol, Milford (Pembrokeshire),

Chester, Birkenhead, Liverpool) and his periodic financial crises, no less than three of his sons qualified as civil engineers.

One of them was James Weeks Szlumper (1834-1926), who was articled to engineers in London, then moved to mid-Wales and at the age of 25 was appointed assistant to Hamilton Henry Fulton, engineer of the Manchester & Milford Railway. J.W. Szlumper was involved as engineer (and increasingly as a promoter) with many railways in Wales and elsewhere, including the Barry Railway, the Plymouth, Devonport & South Western Junction, the Vale of Rheidol and the Lynton & Barnstaple. He was engineer and at one time a director of the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway.



With his brother William and John Wolfe-Barry, he was engineer for the London & South Wales Railway, a bold attempt in 1895-96 to break the Great Western monopoly on that route. He and his eldest son, Charles David Szlumper, were engineers for the Great Northern, Piccadilly & Brompton tube railway. He divided his time between his houses in Aberystwyth and Richmond-upon-Thames, of which he was three times mayor. He was made a knight in 1894 after Queen Victoria visited the borough.

The fourth son, Alfred Weeks Szlumper (1858-1934) was articled to his brother James and assisted with railway building in Wales, where he married Frances Margaret Williams (about 1854-1943), the daughter of Captain Williams of Aberystwyth, in 1878. After working as an assistant to Francis Brady, chief engineer of the South Eastern Railway, he went to India for a while as a resident engineer on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway. On his return to England in 1883, he joined the London & South Western Railway, at first as a resident engineer on some of the widening works then in progress. He became divisional engineer of the London District in 1887, and chief engineer of the L&SWR in 1914, succeeding J.W. Jacomb-Hood who had died suddenly while riding in Devon. Described by Michael Bonavia as "bluff, chunky and competent", A.W. Szlumper's main achievement for the L&SWR was completing the rebuilding of Waterloo station. He became chief engineer of the Southern Railway at Grouping, and retired in 1927, giving him more time for his favourite pastime of golf – he was the first Captain of the Southern Railway Golfing Society when it was formed in 1926. He died in 1934, when his obituary in *The Times* praised him as "a man of quick decision and sound judgement, with a mind broadened by the habit of travel. He always had a cheery word for everyone, high or low."

Alfred and Frances Szlumper's son, Gilbert Savil Szlumper, was born at Kew on 18 April 1884 and was educated at King's College School, Wimbledon (the school moved there in 1897) and King's College, London. On 15 February 1935, when more than 500 boys from the school and a similar number of local residents inspected the new "Schools" class 4-4-0 No. 931 "Kings-Wimbledon" when it was on display at Wimbledon station, Gilbert Szlumper was there to present a working model of the

engine to the school and to remember the pleasant days he had spent there.

He was a pupil in the L&SWR engineer's department under Jacomb Hood from 1902 to 1905, where amongst other tasks he was resident engineer in charge of building the L&SWR light railway from Bentley to Bordon camp by direct labour in 1904-1905. Once qualified as AMInstCE, he became an engineering assistant, responsible for projects including the examination of cast-iron bridges all over the system and the extensive alterations at Yeovil Junction from 1906 to 1908. In 1910 he was made chief assistant to the Central District engineer, based in Southampton, and from May 1913 he was resident engineer in charge of alterations to track work and cable laying for the L&SWR suburban electrification, and for the Hampton Court flyover.

Gilbert Szlumper joined the Territorial Army in December 1908, at first as a 2nd Lieutenant in Chatham (E) Company (Electric Lights) of the Kent (Fortress) unit of the Royal Engineers. This would undoubtedly have given him an introduction to Major H.F. Stephens, as he then was. He was promoted to Lieutenant in April 1910, and in December 1910 transferred to the Hampshire (Fortress) RE, as a result of his move to Southampton.

In 1913 he married Margaret Jessie Salter (1885-1968), the daughter of James Oliver Salter, a manufacturer of tennis and polo equipment from Aldershot. They had one daughter, Cynthia Rosemary (1916-1995), who married an American, Peter Kendzior.

Szlumper moved from Civil Engineering to management in February 1914, when he was appointed as assistant to the general manager of the L&SWR, Herbert Ashcombe Walker (1868-1945) who had joined the L&SWR from the London & North Western Railway in 1912. Walker was acting chairman of the shadow Railway Executive Committee, which comprised the general managers of most of the larger companies, and planned the coordination of railway transport in the event of war. Szlumper was secretary of the Committee, and when, only a few months later, planning became reality, Gilbert Szlumper acquired a more or less full-time job for the duration of the Great War. In view of this, the Army appointed him as Railway Transport Officer on 31 July 1914, and on 1 January 1916 he was promoted from



supernumerary Lieutenant RE to Major in the Engineer & Railway Staff Corps, the rank held at the time by his father.

With the end of the war and the return of the Army from France, the Railway Executive committee was wound up, though not without a celebration dinner for the Executive's staff and friends at the Great Eastern Hotel. Colonel Stephens was there in person, replying to a toast to "His Majesty's Forces", and Gilbert Szlumper himself was presented with an illuminated address and a gramophone in an ebony case in recognition of his efforts at the REC.

After the War, Szlumper resumed his peacetime career, and in 1919 the L&SWR made him deputy docks and marine manager at Southampton. Although he does not seem to have had much connection with this side of the railway before the War, this certainly changed in 1914, as Southampton was the principal port of embarkation for the British Expeditionary Force. In 1920 he succeeded T.M. Williams when he retired as docks and marine manager through ill-health. After the grouping of the railways he acquired wider responsibilities as docks and marine manager of the Southern Railway, and it was while he was in charge that the great programme of expansion of Southampton Docks started.

In 1925 he returned to Waterloo as Assistant General Manager, moving to a large Georgian house at Surbiton. He handled the job with "energy, combined with affability and good humour to all except those he generally described as 'bloody fools'" (according to Sir John Elliot), and it caused no great surprise in railway circles when he succeeded Sir Herbert Walker as General Manager of the Southern on Walker's retirement in 1937. John Elliot (1898-1988), who had joined the Southern in 1925 to handle its public relations, became Assistant General Manager, and Eustace Missenden (1886-1973), who had started his railway career as a station lad on the South Eastern at New Romney, became traffic manager. With his background as an engineer rather than an operator, Szlumper relied more heavily on Missenden in this area than Walker had on Missenden's predecessor, Edwin Cox.

Szlumper no doubt expected to be General Manager of the Southern Railway until he retired, completing the electrification programme which Walker had started, but the approach of the Second World War brought a

sudden change. The War Office asked the Southern to release Szlumper to be director-general of transportation and movements for a limited period. Southampton was once again to be the main port of embarkation for the British Expeditionary Force, and no one knew it and its railway connections like Szlumper. The board of directors agreed, deciding to make Missenden acting general manager while Szlumper was away. Unfortunately, they had consulted neither Szlumper nor Missenden before agreeing to the War Office's request, and Missenden now declared that he would only accept a substantive appointment as General Manager, and if that was not on offer, he would retire. At that critical time, the Southern could not afford to lose their chief operating expert, and accepted Missenden's demand, while Gilbert Szlumper went off to the War Office with the rank of Major-General. In July 1940 he moved to the Ministry of Transport for a year, where he was Railway Control Officer, the link between the Minister and the Railway Executive Committee. It would then have been possible for him to return to the Southern Railway, but the directors decided against another reorganisation and asked him to resign on generous terms. Loyalty was one of Szlumper's chief characteristics and he agreed to their request, although he was deeply hurt.

One can only speculate on how Szlumper might have managed the Southern's affairs differently from 1939 to 1949. Compared with Missenden, he was a professional engineer and had greater strategic vision and a more self-confident personality. He might have attempted to restart the electrification programme soon after the War and would perhaps have guided rolling stock development under O.V.S. Bulleid with a firmer hand than Missenden seems to have applied. However, he might well have found the political manoeuvres surrounding Nationalisation unappealing.

As it was, Szlumper spent most of the rest of the War at the Ministry of Supply, until he had a row with the Minister, Hugh Dalton, and resigned. Dalton was certainly no fool, but clearly managed to infuriate the habitually good-natured Szlumper. Following this, he visited South Africa from November 1944 to April 1945 to advise on railway reorganisation there. After the War he retired to a flat in Chelsea, and died on 19 July 1969.

# 2007 AGM SPEECH

*The Chairman's 'State of the Railway'  
address to the AGM on 13th October 2007*

We are meeting today to receive a report on financial trading to 31 December 2006 - a period which started 22 months ago and ended ten months ago. Despite the best efforts of our Accountant, John Cobb, and auditors Day Smith & Hunter, the complexities of a company with a turnover of £1.5 million mean such delays are inevitable.

For the Kent & East Sussex Railway, 2006 was a good year - not an outstanding year, but a good one. Any outcome which allows a contribution of £50,000 to our reserves for bond repayment, contributes a modest surplus and allows us to invest and continue to improve our infrastructure and customer offering must be considered "good".

However, as we have just approved the 2006 Accounts, I will not dwell further on the detailed figures. I would rather concentrate on the successes we have had in the 12 months since we last met at an Annual General Meeting. For we have had some noteworthy and record-breaking successes. Graham will be detailing more in due course but I want to highlight a few.

First of all, we have purchased our very first steam engine - the Pannier. This attractive and powerful engine is vital to the delivery of our core steam services and we simply could not have lost it. I would like to record my gratitude to David Stratton for allowing us first offer and for the exemplary way the negotiations were conducted. This purchase - essential though it was - was not made without some financial strain. But the fact that we were able to spend £200,000 is a sign of the very marked improvement in the company's financial position over recent years. My thanks also to the generous donors who have contributed some £25,000 to the Pannier Appeal. And my message to everybody is that more is still needed.

The other major financial event has been the successful redemption of the Northiam Bonds. The extension to Northiam in 1990 was financed by, amongst other sources, the sale of bearer bonds which raised £175,000 and which fell due for payment on 2 January 2007. Sadly, the extension to Northiam did not improve the railway's finances as hoped and it is only in very recent times that we have been trading profitably enough to generate sufficient surpluses to create a reserve fund for those bonds and the Bodiam bonds. We could not

know of course how many of the bonds would be reclaimed so, in accordance with prudent accounting principles, we planned to have a fund large enough to cover the full amount. As it transpired, only £57,000 of the bonds were redeemed. Equally importantly, the full £175,000 of debt can be removed from our balance sheet at the end of then current year, making it look much more attractive. This is important for any potential financial restructuring for major capital investments, of which I shall speak a little later.

The other major success I want to touch on was our outstanding performance during the visit of the Tour de France to Tenterden. Thanks to the very considerable contributions by staff and volunteers, we had amazing publicity on UK, European and even world television - messages of appreciation from Australia no less - which benefited not only our railway but also the broader community in which we work and in which so many of us live. We carried almost 900 passengers that day, 10% of all visitors to Tenterden, and for the first time in our preservation history we operated a public transport service rather than a tourist attraction. Most impressive was the way all the staff responded so quickly and positively to the changing circumstances in the afternoon. Never before have we had to close the booking office doors to keep out the crush of eager travellers.

Despite those successes, I must sound my traditional cautionary note. Trading in 2007 has not been easy, the June Thomas<sup>TM</sup> in particular fell short of targets. We have suffered a small drop in visitor numbers so that at the end of September, K&ESR sales were about £90,000 behind budget. Some relief came from increased CSRE sales and Gift Aid for last year, 2006, but we must nevertheless proceed cautiously. Even though the shortfall is a relatively small percentage against a total income of around £1.5 million, the high level of fixed and unavoidable expenditure means that income and spending are very finely balanced.

One topic which is always controversial is that of membership fees. I have to say that even at Board, there is no single clear-cut view of what we want from our members. Volunteers apart, there is a constant tension between maximising numbers and maximising revenue. Is the principal purpose of having a membership to generate the maximum income to support our activities; or is a large absolute number of members our objective, both for reasons of prestige and as a base from which volunteers might be grown? Either way - and we would genuinely welcome members' views - we have decided to increase the standard annual membership to £23 per annum, whilst leaving volunteers' rates unchanged. This year's decision is an interim one. As I announced last year, the Board is reviewing the whole question of



membership: benefits, fees; and categories. Not all of these decisions are entirely within our own control as we must stay within the benefits' rules of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs to continue to benefit from Gift Aid. A report will be made next year, together with any changes to the Memorandum and Articles of Association which may be necessary. Just to clarify, membership rates and benefits are within the authority of the Board but changes to categories (individual, family, junior etc) must be approved by members at General Meeting, just as we did a few minutes ago.

I now want to talk a little about governance. Your Board is elected by you, the members, to take decisions on your behalf. Unlike a plc, we are absolutely democratic on the basis of one member, one vote rather than voting powers being proportional to wealth. A little later this afternoon you will have the opportunity of voting for, or against, candidates who offer themselves for your approval.

Not all your Board's decisions will be popular. Often decisions have to be taken on incomplete information but where a delay would be damaging. And sometimes we base our decisions on information which cannot be disclosed publicly as the mere publication would be disadvantageous or even bring about the end we are trying to avoid. Contrary to popular belief, we do not gather together and think "what can we decide to irritate the maximum number of members; or how can we waste money the most quickly and pointlessly". If we stand firm on a decision, we are called stubborn; if we change our minds, we are weak and give in to pressure.

The duties of a Trustee, under Charity law, are to protect the good name and financial standing of the Kent & East Sussex Railway and we are personally liable financially if we do not act according to those tenets. And I repeat my message of so many AGMs – if you wish to influence policy, then offer yourself for election. This year, I am reassured in part by no less than three new names who have volunteered for these often difficult and thankless duties. But we still have no competition; there are four candidates for four vacancies.

The subject of governance brings me inevitably to the issue of trust. We have a hobby and a passion which involves significant potential risk: we have elderly pressure vessels full of hot and dangerous live steam – 150 pound at temperatures I cannot imagine; a single-line railway with the potential for calamitous collisions; bridges over rivers; masses of people on narrow platforms. Derek's risk assessment runs to several pages. Of course there are rules, regulations, procedures and inspections to guard against potential risk becoming actual disaster. I personally do not

know one end of a boiler or brake cylinder from the other; the electronic relays in signalling token machines to me are magic black arts. But if something should go wrong, it is me personally who has to stand before the Judge or, heaven forbid, the Coroner. I therefore place my trust in each and every one of you to do your job properly. Equally, you trust your Board to manage the company's finances so that we can continue to have a railway on which to indulge our passion. I feel that we have largely honoured that trust. In 2000 we were virtually bankrupt – it was a miracle that the banks did not call in a Receiver. Since then we have made a profit every single year and repaid more than one million pounds of debt, whilst still investing in our assets and infrastructure. I would invite members to reflect on that overall performance when judging individual controversial decisions.

Finally a word about the future. As I mentioned earlier, our balance sheet is much improved by the repayment of debt including creditors, banks and now the Northiam bonds. But we still owe some £850,000 in bank loans and Bodiam bonds. The continuing need to set aside at least £50,000 a year to meet those bond redemptions in June 2013 limits free funds. One sobering thought: the redemption date for the Bodiam bonds is nearer in time than the opening of Bodiam station.

We are considering two major investment projects: enhanced engineering facilities at Rolvenden; and the redevelopment of Tenterden station site. Both require amounts of money beyond our ability to generate organically. Rolvenden's engineering activities are crucial to running the service but at the same time they do not generate direct increases in income from which to repay any new borrowings, though there is the potential for Heritage Lottery grant funding, Olympics permitting; whereas investment in catering and shop space at Tenterden will generate new income from which to service additional debt but is not eligible for grant support. Nevertheless, both projects would need extra cash as well as notional contributions. This is why the improvement in our balance sheet is so important.

A Rolvenden Development Committee is integrating the demands of the various users at Rolvenden - not just the Engineering Department - and will then move on to produce costings for discussion with donors and lenders, as well as with the local authority planning officers. 2008 will be a year of planning and preparation but also, I fear, one where the economic climate will require us to watch our spending.

However, even the ability to talk about new investment reinforces our improved financial and managerial competence, for which everybody in this room and elsewhere have given so much to ensure our future.

# Company Secretary's NOTES

The following notes are a summary of the Board meetings in July, July and September. (There was, as usual, no meeting in August due to Railway operating and holiday commitments).

- Derek Dunlavy (Safety Director) asked the GM to supply him with copies of incident reports to enable corrective actions to result from recommendations.
- The Operating Manager had suggested that the Safety Director review any future reports following incidents. Authority was given to modify the relevant procedures.
- Derek Dunlavy also presented the Asbestos Plan. He also reported that the signal boxes, station buildings and the 'Palace' overnight mess accommodation at Rolvenden had been inspected for asbestos. The Plan was a management document and would therefore not be distributed on the same basis as Company Instructions and Policy Documents.
- The RAIB report following a derailment on the Mid Hants Railway the RAIB had instructed the Mid Hants to install track circuits on two sets of points. Trustees were reminded that track circuits had been debated by the Board, sometimes critically, in past years and described as over complicated. The K&ESR examples were now substantially complete and a Corrective Action had been issued instructing that the necessary work be completed.
- The Company Secretary reported that Rother District Council had granted full planning permission, including a requirement for landscaping (trees and hedges) and car parking spaces for the proposed use of the engineering works premises at Bodiam as a community hall. The views and objections of the Company and others appeared to have been ignored.

- Ashford Council had received a planning application in respect of Mercers' garage site adjacent to Tenterden Town Station. The Company subsequently wrote expressing its concerns including vehicular access, traffic conditions in Station Road, car parking, springs on the site and drawing attention to the Railway's existing activities in close proximity to the proposed residential units. It was reported in September that the Council required a soil contamination survey before the matter proceeded further. The Company would be notified when the application was to be considered by Committee.
- Consequent to the Mercers proposal, it was decided to safeguard the development of the Railway's Tenterden site (i.e improved facilities) by submitting a planning application immediately. The GM was asked to arrange this. The Board noted that a modest out of budget expenditure would be necessary. (Please also see report on the AGM).
- The GM reported that Morghews Park Estate wished to improve the access to Harvester crossing (accommodation crossing between Rolvenden and the crayfish beds). There was a need to improve the sight lines and Morghews proposed to meet the Railway's expenses. It was agreed to the increased use of the crossing subject to safety improvements. It would be the Railway's responsibility to provide the authorised crossing user with safety instructions the user's responsibility for their implementation.
- The GM informed the Board that, despite numerous representations to Rother District and other authorities, there was however nothing that could be done about the appearance of the scaffolding site adjoining Northiam Station.
- A Hire Agreement for Stratrail Ltd's Class 14 locomotive No. 14029 was approved.
- The Finance Committee had considered the proposed change of membership subscriptions renewal date from 1st January to a 'rolling' system (e.g. join in April, renew in April). The Committee now recommended implementing the proposed change. Everyone would now get 12 months membership and there would not be varying periods in the first year for those joining. The cost benefits of the



proposal were discussed it being concluded that the costs were marginal and that there were commercial benefits. The bulk of renewals would initially continue to fall in January. A consequent Special Resolution, to be put before the 2007 Annual General Meeting, was subsequently agreed by the Board (See report on AGM).

- During the period covered, the Company's cash balance continued to recover from the purchase of the Pannier Tank and the Northiam Bond repayments although obviously at a continuing lower level than in 2006. Unlike the position some years ago, there was a precise knowledge of what the Company owed. The GM added that the budget model was for nil cash at this stage but we were £98,000 ahead thanks to advance bookings
- John Cobb (Accountant) was pleased to report that he had negotiated a substantial saving with a heritage railway experienced broker. The choice of insurer should be reviewed regularly. The insurance value of rolling stock was also to be updated.
- John Cobb further reported that redemption of Northiam Bonds amounted to approximately £53,175 at 30th May 2007 and that £19,485 had been received for the Pannier fund inclusive of Gift Aid.
- The accounts for 1st January – 30th June 2007 showed profits to be behind budget. The shortfall in Thomas™ income and the absence of Gift Aid income were the cause.
- Ian Legg queried the increase in credit card charges. JGC replied that these were due to the continuing growth in the use of this method of payment by the public and on-line booking. This was, however, a cost effective system in terms of security.
- Total debt at 30th June stood at £653,682. Since then £110,000 had been written off in unclaimed Northiam Bonds. NRB commented that debt was now one third of the figure owed at the time he became Chairman.
- The Finance Committee were to meet in July/August to consider Future Planning in the light of the Northiam Bond redemption and the shortfall on Thomas™ income. The Chairman added that the Committee would look at the future of the business and any capital expenditure it was proposed to make.

- £18,400 InterReg income had been received.
- The draft accounts for 2006 together with the Trustees report were distributed ahead of the July Board meeting. As no comments had been received Philip Shaw proposed, and Carol Mitchell seconded, that the 2006 accounts be presented to the 2007 Annual General Meeting. This was agreed unanimously.
- The Finance Committee recommended that £20,000 out of budget expenditure be spent on Rolvenden car park. The recovery in Gift Aid would facilitate this. Ian Legg asked about the need to build reserves against exigencies (such as the Severn Valley Railway's problems). It was pointed out that given an infrastructure disaster of that nature, £20,000 would make little difference. Existing planning permissions had to be completed before further schemes (such as Tenterden Town improvements) were addressed. The Board agreed the recommended additional expenditure.
- Derek Dunlavy asked if the practice of putting aside £50,000 pa for the redemption of Bodiam Bonds was to be reviewed (i.e increased). The Chairman replied that this was still under consideration.
- Resolution of the Gift Aid audit was complete. A repayment of £860 had been made to HM Revenue & Customs in respect of administrative errors as continuing to contest this would have cost much more. The Company had nonetheless won on points of principle which enabled the various back claims to be made. Gift Aid recently claimed in respect of 2006 had been accrued back to to that year.
- The GM reported that the Railway had had a good May, the Evacuation Week/1940's Weekend and Colonel Stephens weekend had all been most successful. The shop, Catering and RXD's were all up against budget. However, Thomas™ bookings were not as strong as had been hoped for. The Tour de France day had, however, been highly successful. 887 passengers had been carried in very full trains. The loss of the Pullman service for the day had been more than covered.

There had been excellent TV coverage and other publicity. The Chairman commended everyone who had taken part in operating the Railway on the day and the Board passed a vote of thanks to the staff. The Town Mayor, Cllr. John Weller, had written to thank the Railway for its contribution to the day

- June had been poorer than expected. The weather was thought to have been a contributory factor. The Railway's Thomas™ event had been less successful than either the Bluebell's or the Spa Valley's. The GM was of the opinion that Thomas™ theme parks would take custom away from Day out with Thomas™ events at heritage railways. The Family History day had been very poor and would be the last one.
- The results for July were 3 per cent up on the same month in 2006. August had, contrary to conventional wisdom, produced more passengers on sunny days than rainy or dull ones. Some other attractions in the South East, such as gardens, had had a very poor month and the Railway's figures had been relatively good.
- Advance bookings for the remainder of the year amounted to £94,000 and Fish & Chip DMMU's were fully booked. The on-line shop had taken £220,000 since it commenced operation.
- The Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance (Vaqa) inspector had found the Railway to be more definitely a visitor attraction and better presented than in previous years with dramatically improved catering.
- The matter of paying volunteers expenses for travelling to the Railway was revisited following the submission of a detailed scheme by R. Potter, guard. Briefly, this involved making such payments as an incentive to cover hard to fill duties and posts. This was not the same proposal which the Board had previously discussed. After a full discussion the matter was put to the vote but the Board was unable to approve Mr. Potter's proposals.
- Following an incident on the Mid Hants Railway, the GM confirmed that all staff on the K&ESR who work with children had been CRB checked.
- A committee (including non-Trustee members) under the chairmanship of

Stuart Philips were continuing the review of membership categories. There were inconsistencies and vague areas in both the membership categories and membership fees were known to be a contentious area. The Committee would report to the Board in due course and it was intended any consequent changes to the Articles of Association would be put before the 2008 AGM.

- It was agreed to increase annual membership to £23.00, Seniors to £13.00 pa and Life membership to £400 with effect from 1st January 2008. All other categories, including the Volunteer would remain unchanged..
- Ashford Council had now abandoned their latest proposals for the Tenterden and St. Michaels Parking Review following widespread opposition but were to revisit the matter in July. The Council Leader had apparently accepted the need for additional off-street car parking.
- The Pannier Tank had been delivered back to Wittersham Road. The Engineering Manager had said that the remaining tasks were unlikely to be completed in Time for the September Thomas™ event. Bill Morgan asked what the contractual (timescale) conditions had been and whether they had been met. Derek Dunlavy replied that there was a shortage of suitable contractors and that time-scales are not customarily discussed.
- The GM reported that a meeting with TREATS on 20th June 2007 had been useful and positive. Discussions had included restoration prospects for the Class 25.
- The 2008 Timetable & Calendar was presented. The GM explained that there was little change from 2007 although new events included Ivor the Engine and South Eastern (i.e. SE&CR) Sundays.
- Ian Legg said that no Business Risk Assessment seem to have been carried out. NRB replied that this was done in 2001 and agreed that the exercise should be repeated.
- A reference to the 'Managing Director' in the Grievance Procedure was amended to read. 'General Manager'.



# Letters to the Editor

Sir - For various reasons I have only just managed to read the Spring 'Terrier', and I hope it is not too late to reply to Peter Hopgood's letter, which brought back many memories of the early preservation days at Rolvenden.

The elderly gentleman whom he met on his visit in 1967 would have been Charlie Kentsley, who lived with his wife Elsie in the bungalow named 'The Haven' at Rolvenden. Charlie came to the Railway in the very early days offering to act as unpaid caretaker and site supervisor with a view to becoming a member of the footplate staff when the Railway re-opened. He had previously worked on the Bluebell Railway and was a skilled mechanic and model engineer with a keen interest in the K.& E. S. R.

The Railway obtained planning permission for the erection of the bungalow, which was a second hand sectional bungalow. This was erected at Rolvenden (on Railway land) at Charlie's expense, and became a remarkably comfortable residence at which a whole generation of Preservation Society members and visitors enjoyed unrivalled hospitality.

Dozens of members joined the Society after making first contact with the Railway through Charlie and Elsie in the days when it was an all volunteer organisation and there was no-one else on site during the week. There was always a teapot on the stove, and Charlie's lifelong experience as a railwayman was invaluable in those early days.

I well remember the epic journey made by Sentinel geared locomotive 'Gervase' to rescue 'Marcia' when she broke down between Rolvenden and Wittersham Road on her first trial run. Due to numerous problems the return to Tenterden took place long after dark, and 'Gervase' ran out of steam just short of Cranbrook Road crossing leading to all available personnel having to push to keep the train moving at a bare 2mph. I remember looking up into the Sentinel cab and seeing Charlie crouched over the water gauge trying to spot the

water level by the light of a flare lamp. His craggy features resembled a latter day Mr. Punch in the flickering half light of the oil lamp, but we got home safely after a run in which both coal and water ran out and recourse was had to cutting up a telegraph pole.

It is a cause for great regret that delays in re-opening the line meant that Charlie never did become a member of the permanent staff, but he was a delightful character, and as Peter Hopgood found on his visit, was a first class ambassador for the Railway in the early days.

*Bulawayo, Zimbabwe*

*Robin Doust*

Sir - As the person who drew the editor's attention to Chris Woods's retirement as a guard may I express my strong dissent from the accompanying comment in *Lineside News* in the Summer Tenterden Terrier that the policy of compulsory retirement of some operating staff at 75 is 'silly'? It is a Board policy with which I and others are in entire agreement.

*Willesborough, Kent*

*Graham Williams  
Guard's Inspector*

Sir - I look forward with great anticipation to the forthcoming return to service of the SE&CR Birdcage coach, presently being restored in the Carriage Shed. One of my earliest railway memories is of travelling in what was most likely one of these vehicles on a London to Hastings day trip excursion some time in the early 1950's.

A clear memory remains of the compartment door and the droplight's leather strap. I found the latter totally fascinating as such things were not to be found on the Maunsell era 6 PUL electric units with which I was much more familiar. Alas I have no memory of whatever motive power sped us on our day to the seaside, Robertsbridge station or even of a certain line that curved away!

*Ferring, West Sussex*

*Nicholas Cannon*

# Book Reviews

*An Illustrated History of the Festiniog Railway.*  
Peter Johnson. OPC.160pp. Price £19.99. ISBN  
978 0 86093 603 9

The Festiniog Railway is not only one of the iconic pioneers of the Heritage railways movement it is also the historic centre of all narrow gauge and 'light railways' not only in Great Britain but also the world. Built by local craftsmen as a horse tramway, with Irish capital, in 1831 to transport the incomparable roofing slate of Blaenau Ffestiniog to the Sea at the new seaport of Portmadoc it led a quietly useful life until its pioneer engineer James Spooner and his ambitious and showman son Charles Spooner decided to use steam engines on its incredibly narrow gauge of 1'11½". Success lead over the next ten years to a succession of innovative articulated engines (the Fairlie's) and rolling stock that convinced a world wide audience of the possibilities of more economical transport if gauge and, more particularly, construction costs were minimised. The light railway concept was born in these years.

One of the catalysts of the revival of the, by then, moribund railway in the 1940s and 50s was the histories of the railway written by J I C Boyd and few have wished to challenge his supremacy. However historical research is never static and Peter Johnson has now had the courage to tackle Boyd head on. The author has, almost uniquely, been able to draw on copies of the Company minutes (the originals are inaccessible to most scholars whilst being catalogued by their now custodians, Gwyneth Archives) and this invaluable material is the backbone of the work.

The result is an excellent, competitively priced, and comprehensive business history of the company with a good but not overwhelming level of illustrations and maps. Whilst perhaps lacking the great storytelling sweep of Boyd and giving only outlines of the pioneering rolling stock, Peter Johnson has put the railway squarely in its business context, outlining the railways rise and decline in relationship to its

customers and rivals in a straightforward and readable way.

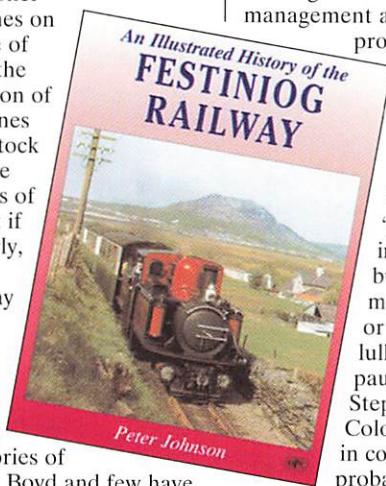
By the early 1920s the railway was in almost terminal decline following intense railway competition after the mid 1880s and the decline of the slate export, and indeed home, trade leading up to and during WW1. In 1923 Colonel Stephens became the railway's engineer only to resign 15 months later as a new broom MD moved in. However within weeks the traffic decline became worse due to road competition and it became evident that not only was the FR an unsound business but that economic involvement with the Welsh Highland project had been unwise. The world then turned about and Stephens was appointed Chairman, Managing Director and Engineer! He was extremely active and although he found dealing with local management and staff difficult he nevertheless probably saved the railway from closure in the 1920s.

As is traditional in Festiniog circles the author is a little ungenerous of Stephens' contribution, which is only briefly covered, and he says 'Stephens showed a close interest in the FR's day-to-day running but the minutes suggest that he made little impact at board level or on strategy'. Perhaps he was lulled into this thinking by the paucity of full board minutes that Stephens often engendered. The Colonel made policy in his head not in committees, which he hated, probably finding them unproductive. And it is a fact (not recorded in this

history) that Stephens, against his normal instincts, took the strategic decision to negotiate a joint takeover of the railway by the GWR and LMS in 1930 only to have an agreement effectively vetoed by the local authorities who would have had to provide guarantees. In any event he provided the Festiniog with the necessary, and long absent, firm management required for survival in difficult times; for he had found weak management and a form of anarchy that defies change, let alone growth.

This book will be essential reading for all those interested in the Festiniog Railway (and its supporting society has many thousands of members). My advice is... join the rush.

BMJ





*Sussex Engineman, The Hubert Hobden Memoirs. Volume One: 1913 - 1935. Edited by Anthony P. Vent. Buggeskelly Books. 102 pages including maps and photographs (some colour). £9.95. No ISBN number.*

This book is an example of the 'locoman's reminiscences' genre of railway publishing also to be found in the Oakwood Press list and periodicals such as 'Back Track' and, in common with some of these, the text is a 'director's cut' by a railway-knowledgeable wordsmith. Much that can be said in a review is already to be found in the Editor's note at the beginning. Fortunately I did not read this until after the book itself but, finding myself in agreement with Mr. Vent, make no apology for expanding here on his comments.

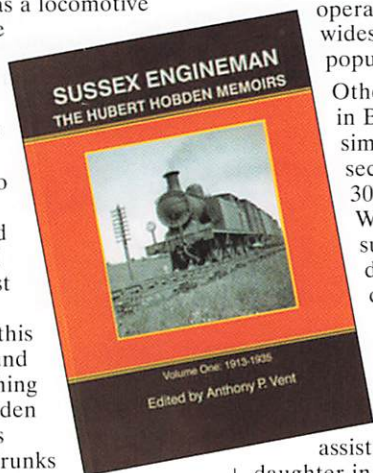
Bert Hobden (1896 - 1978) joined the London Brighton & South Coast as a locomotive cleaner right at end of the 'Golden Age' of railways and served through to 1961. This volume covers his rise through the ranks to driver and experiences up to the electrification to Hastings via Eastbourne. This was a period of rapid change and Hobden's full career encompassed a vast span of social history. Therein lies the value of this book. The early years sound at times more like something from Nelson's Navy, Hobden pulling no punches in this description of the yobs, drunks and the indiscipline that he had the misfortune to encounter. One already knew that life could be very hard for just about everyone below professional and senior management level, but this unforced narrative is an impressive first hand account of what it was really like. Equally, don't read this book if you are looking for a sentimental account of the Brighton 'mystique' as handed down by its upper middle class admirers. That famous company is here, but seen from the refreshingly jarring perspective of social realism. One amazing revelation describes the almost complete non-observance of the Rule Book requirement to carry out a brake test on a train after coupling up and connecting the hoses!

Once Bert Hobden becomes a driver (at a fairly young age) the eight hour day arrives and the 1920's start to roar things begin to

sound more familiar to a member of the post World War Two generation if still hard going by the standards of the decades since Suez. Railway operating practices are those both remembered from the end of the steam era and still to be found on the K&ESR. 'Foreign' engines arrive from the SE&CR fitted with that strange device the vacuum brake rather than the Brighton's Westinghouse system; Hobden and his colleagues take out mortgages and worry about redundancy. One is also reminded that modernisation and the decline of pride in steam locos, which those of us of a certain age remember so well, occurred on the Central Section of the Southern a generation before it happened elsewhere. Also included is the best account I have ever come across of the LB&SCR (later the SR standard) push-pull system and its operation. Surprising, considering the widespread use of this system and its popularity with enthusiasts.

Other than an extract which appeared in Back Track during 2002 (as did a similar excerpt from the forthcoming second volume) it has taken nearly 30 years for this book to appear. Why? Perhaps there has been a surfeit of this kind of material during that period. One might cynically suggest however that as it neither described somewhere north of the Trent, nor was full of Black Fives and over rated L&NWR locos, that it was not sufficiently right-on. Mr. Vent's assistance to Hubert Hobden's

daughter in getting this work into print is therefore admirable, even if the publishers have only produced a limited edition of only 500 copies. *Sussex Engineman* may perhaps be of a limited regional appeal, but covering as it does the locomotive sheds at both Eastbourne and St. Leonards as well as the LB&SCR network in East Sussex, there is plenty of local interest for K&ESR members as well as to our colleagues at the Bluebell and the Spa Valley. The price is reasonable by the current inflated standards. The only minor gripe I have is that the caption beneath a BR era photo of our own P Class locomotive claims that it was owned by Bowaters before entering preservation whereas the industrial owner was, of course, Hodson's Mill. All in all, a fairly short but invigorating read. I look forward to volume two.





*Sentinel vertical boilered 4 wheel shunter at Isfield, in pseudo-LNER livery (John Lovegrove)*

# Sentinel Locomotive Trials on the S&MR

*Colonel Stephens experimentation with internal combustion railcars and small locomotives on the Rye & Camber and the Welsh Highland /Festiniog combine are well known. Less well known are the trials of the advanced steam 'Sentinel' locomotives on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire, one of which still survives. Brian Janes investigates.*

Some time ago I was browsing in the February 1928 issue of Railway Magazine and found an illustration of a Sentinel locomotive on a passenger train in the Shrewsbury Abbey station of the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire. These revolutionary engines with their steam lorry based high speed power units and vertical boilers were manufactured in a works about a mile up the road at Shrewsbury but I wondered how these trials came about and what their outcome was. Were they simply the Sentinel Company trying things out with the Colonels consent or were they a serious attempt to modernise Stephens' railways? After all, the Derwent Valley Light Railway had bought one in 1925

with such success that the LNER noticed and was investing in what turned out to be a substantial fleet.

Further research in the Colonel Stephens Society magazine 'The Colonel' revealed some reminiscences by Bill Willans, son of the originator of the Sentinel railway locomotive and Managing Director of the Shrewsbury works, who served an apprenticeship at the S&MR's Kinnerley Workshop. It was largely due to the trial that he came to work on the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway. He had no idea how his father got in touch with Colonel Stephens: The family were living near Chester at the time and one day it was announced that a loco was being tested on the S&MR and that his father had found a house in that district. He accompanied his father to Kinnerley and met W.H. Austen who was very enthusiastic about the Sentinels. The test on that day was from Kinnerley to Shrewsbury and back, but being a comparatively light locomotive she failed to hold the un-braked goods train on the steep descent to Abbey



station; there was a ' sudden exodus of various extraneous personnel from the footplate to apply wagon brakes to avert disaster'

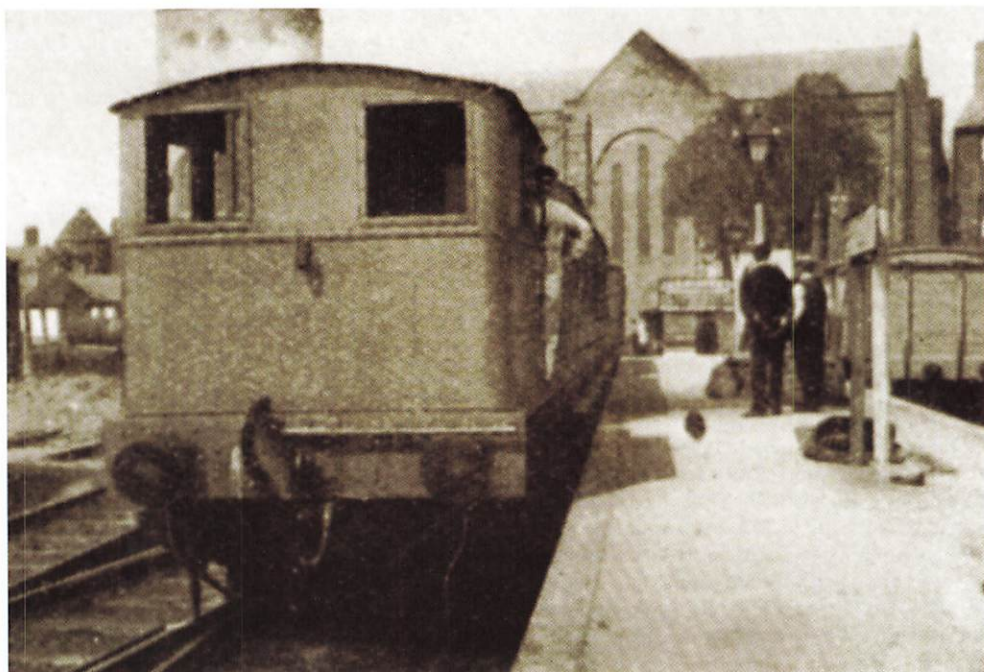
A later extended trial was subsequently arranged and it was these that resulted in the Railway Magazine photos. Willans noted that it occurred during 1927 and involved two locos .One, a single engined locomotive, was re-gearred and fitted with a vacuum brake ejector for use on passenger trains. The other had 'two engines and two boilers' and was suitable for goods service.

Further research with John Hutchings of the Sentinel Society has identified the passenger Sentinel as works number 6515. Originally ordered by the Sentinel Company for stock and then supplied to the GWR in 1926 for passenger train work, it was fitted with vacuum brake and steam heating. The boiler was the same size as that fitted to the other GWR Sentinel, works number 6514, but it was of insufficient size to support the steam supply needed for the vacuum ejector. It was returned to Sentinel by January 1927 and fitted with a larger boiler of 25% greater capacity. Further trials were conducted on the GWR, but it was still considered underpowered, returned to Sentinel and

turned up on the S&MR.

The other Sentinel trialled was works number 6776 which was larger, and one of a number of experimental types being tried out by the company. It was fitted with two engines and what Sentinel called their "Twin" boiler. This was actually two vertical boilers mounted side-by-side at the front of the loco and connected by two large pipes, one at the bottom and one at the top. The steam and water space was thus combined, but two separate grates needed feeding. This idea was not a success and Sentinel reverted to a large side-fired boiler first used in 1925. Reportedly a photograph exists of a Sentinel of this type shunting some wagons at Kinnerley but the author has been unable, as yet, to trace this.

When first delivered at Moele Brace Junction, Willans recalled that the smaller engine raised steam and was driven by Billy Turner, a Sentinel driver together with the necessary S&MR pilot etc. This left for Kinnerley at the head of a train of Granomac (the Criggon Quarry roadstone trade name) empties and the larger, "dead" Sentinel. The load was heavy for the smaller, high-gearred locomotive and often necessitated the engine working very slowly in late cut-off.



*Sentinel Loco at Shrewsbury Abbey Station.*

Willans reported that the single engine did particularly well on passenger trains, and made an excellent job of running the railcar service, keeping time and inconveniencing some passengers who had assumed that the train would be late. It could also tow a wagon or two on these turns as the S&MR wanted to run mixed trains. Even at that time the freight traffic on the Kinnerley to Llanymynech section was so light that the Sentinel could have managed virtually all of it even with its more limited haulage abilities at speed. The use of such a loco in place of the Railmotors could have eliminated an extra steam goods turn and this was viewed by the crews with some dismay. This turn was paid as overtime, a near essential on the poor wages paid to the staff. Furthermore the Sentinel only required a one man crew and also reduced preparation and steam raising time, again shortening earning opportunities. Consequently the engines were not particularly popular with the staff (both the LNER and LMS experienced this problem).

Less is known about the ability of the double loco to cope with the heavy Criggon stone trains. The driver of this engine was a member of the Sentinel sales team; a man called Roberts who was an ex-Royal Flying Corps pilot. Willans records that on the one occasion he travelled, the locomotive struggled on the available poor quality coal to which Sentinels, with their small grate area, were very sensitive.

The official outcome of the trials so far as the SMR is concerned is not known. One suspects that Stephens must have been attracted by potential running cost economies of 50% and relative cheap first cost. It has often been said that the Sentinel railcar would have been ideal for his lines and we know of Stephens' interest in the economies of geared railcars from his early trials with the K&ESR's Pickering Railcar. A locomotive such as that trialled might have been a better bet for the mixed trains that were the norm on many of his railways. However the shortage of capital rather than unsatisfactory performance probably put a stop to any purchase. Willans certainly reported that Stephens remarked that Austen kept asking him for new engines but he said 'repair what you have got'; not surprising with the limited finances available. A shame for, according to the LNER,

Sentinels repaid their capital cost in two years. Perhaps for heavy haul something more was needed and when the quarry at Criggon got a big order for stone in 1930, the S&MR acquired three old LNWR coal engines. These all cost less than £400 each, compared with a 1927 list price of about £1,500 for the smaller Sentinel and £2,500 for the larger but their running costs must have been high.

Whether the use of a Sentinel on passenger services would have delayed the loss of traffic experienced by the SMR in the 1930s is probably doubtful, so the Colonel was probably correct in his decision. The outcome for Sentinels was not entirely negative, however, as they sold a loco to the quarry company at Criggon for shunting. This engine was not however of type's that were trialled but a slow speed industrial type styled by the Sentinel Company the Balanced engine, or BE type.. Nevertheless it ended up working all the rail traffic from the quarry to the S&MR interchange at Kinnerley for long periods after 1946, because of weak bridges, and lasted until 1962.

Once they had finished their trials the engines reverted to works' use. The larger engine was not a success, despite further trials on the LNER (and exhibited at Scarborough) and at the Dunlop Rubber Co. at Birmingham. Later rebuilt with a single engine and one boiler it was sold to Taylor Brothers at Sandiacre from whence it was scrapped.

The smaller locomotive No 6515 however lead a charmed life. It was next reported loaned to the LMS in April 1929 for trials at the Shropshire Union Goods Yard in Shrewsbury, which resulted in subsequent sales. It then remained a works shunter at Sentinels until sold into industrial service in October 1934 going to T. E. Grey at Burton Latimer where it was named 'Isebrook'. It survived to be preserved at the Buckingham Railway Centre (Quainton Road) acquiring in the process the power unit from the Sentinel railcar power unit 'Dom' that passed to them from the K&ESR. The locomotive is now in working order on the Lavender Line at Isfield.

#### *Sources*

*John Hutchings of the Sentinel Society*

*The Colonel -Journal of the Colonel Stephens Society- Numbers 16 and 57.*



# Jeremiah MacVeagh MP

*Tom Burnham recounts the life of Jeremiah MacVeagh, another of Colonel Stephens' friends*

As a man whose outlook on life was generally conservative and patriotic, you would not expect one of Colonel Stephens' close associates to be an Irish Catholic politician who had devoted much of his career to opposing British rule in Ireland. But Jeremiah MacVeagh (or "Jerry" as he was usually known) was involved with many of Stephens' railways during the 1920s.

Jeremiah MacVeagh was born in Belfast in 1870 to a well-known Nationalist family, the son of Thomas MacVeagh, a shipowner, and Jane Hughes. He was educated at St Malachy's College, an old-established Catholic school in Belfast, and then matriculated at the Royal University of Ireland in Dublin. He took up journalism in Belfast and wrote for the *Morning News*, and was also a special correspondent for the (London) *Daily News*, a Liberal paper. After the failure of the 1886 Home Rule Bill, the Irish Nationalists put into effect their so-called Plan of Campaign, a series of rent strikes and boycotts aimed at the larger landowners. This was countered with evictions and in some cases considerable hardship for the tenants, all reported in detail by MacVeagh in a series of articles in the *Daily News*. The articles were reprinted and circulated in England, where they aroused considerable sympathy for the Irish cause. MacVeagh also involved himself more directly in the Irish Home Rule movement, becoming a founder member and the first secretary of the Belfast Young Ireland Society in 1887.

He came to London in about 1894 as private secretary to Sir James Whitehead (1834-1917), who had been Lord Mayor of London in 1888-89 and Liberal MP for Leicester 1892-94. Besides innumerable other forms of public service, Whitehead was the founder and president of the Mansion House Association on Railway Rates. This was a pressure group representing traders in demanding better service and lower rates from the railway and canal companies. It is

still active today as the Freight Transport Association. MacVeagh was very likely involved in research and organisation for the Association in connection with the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1894, gaining a useful insight into the economics of railways.

In London, MacVeagh continued his journalism and political activities, becoming "pamphleteer-in-chief" to the Nationalist cause. In order to make a living, he also became an advertising agent, eventually in partnership with Hugh Markham and Henry Smith, under the titles of the Kingsway Publicity Service and the Aldwych Bill Posting Company.

In 1902 there was a bye-election in the County Down South constituency following the death of Michael McCartan. MacVeagh was elected unopposed as Irish Nationalist MP for the seat and found that in the House of Commons as elsewhere his wit and genial personality gained him friends from all parties. He represented South Down until 1922 as "one of the last of the Old Guard of the Nationalist Party". He acted as a general organiser and go-between for the party, and in his later years in Parliament acquired a reputation as somewhat of a humorist. He is credited with the classic Irishism "Since the Government has let the cat out of the bag, there is nothing to do but take the bull by the horns."

During the debates on the Home Rule Bill of 1912, he travelled up and down the country speaking for the cause, and also wrote a pocket guide to the issues which was much reprinted and had a preface by no less a person than Winston Churchill (then a Liberal of course). He discovered that a Mr Simon Rosenbaum had been commissioned by the Opposition to open an office in Victoria Street to provide Unionist members with facts and figures, or indeed with ready-made speeches, every night until 10.30 pm during the Committee stage of the Bill. MacVeagh made great play with Mr Rosenbaum's name and declared that "if any honourable member found that the speech supplied to him was used by a

previous speaker, he had only got to telephone to Victoria 4592 and he would be supplied with a new speech red hot”.

The Irish nationalist movement was not only political but also cultural, and MacVeagh made a contribution towards encouraging traditional Gaelic sports in 1913 by presenting a silver cup (which is still awarded) for the County Down Senior Hurling Championship.

After the failure of the Home Rule Bill in 1912, and particularly after the declaration of war in 1914 put a stop to movement towards constitutional change, leadership of the movement for Irish self-government passed from Jerry MacVeagh’s clubbable nationalists to the hard men of Sinn Féin and the IRA. During the Great War MacVeagh played an active part in raising the Tyneside Irish Brigade for the British Army, and he also became a barrister, being called to the English Bar in 1918.

After the War, he was re-elected for South Down in the general election of 1918 with a convincing majority over the Unionist candidate. Elsewhere in Ireland, Sinn Féin were accused of intimidating voters and election officials, but MacVeagh benefited from a partial electoral pact between the two Home Rule parties, as Sinn Féin supporters were instructed to vote for him. In the new Parliament he made a half-hearted attempt to reprise his pre-war role of licensed jester, but achieved only a rather acerbic comment from *Punch* that he seemed not to be aware that the centre of Irish politics was no longer Westminster but Dublin. Although he rarely spoke in the House other than on Irish questions, he did play a part in the debates on the 1921 Railways Bill, expressing a conviction that the measure would not do much either for the railways or for the traders. On the other hand, he offered his thanks to Sir Eric Geddes, the Minister of Transport, on behalf of the legal profession.

It was a cause of great grief to MacVeagh that the settlement in Ireland involved Partition. County Down became part of Northern Ireland, but he did not become involved in the Unionist-dominated politics of the province. He also kept well clear of the intrigues and civil war that surrounded the establishment of the Irish Free State.

On 30 July 1920, Frank Brooke, the 69-year-old chairman of the Dublin & South Eastern Railway was shot in his office at Westland Row station, Dublin, by an IRA assassination squad. Although MacVeagh had been appointed a director of the company in 1919, he and his fellow directors failed to attend Brooke’s funeral, a lapse criticised by *The Times*. Instead he stayed in London, where he was the junior barrister for the defence of the two IRA men convicted of the murder of Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson (Unionist MP for the neighbouring seat of Down North) outside his house in London in 1922.

MacVeagh made an attempt to return to British politics when he stood as the single Labour Party candidate for the two-member constituency of Sunderland in the 1924 general election, in which the opposition made much use of Red scares and the (forged) Zinoviev telegram. The constituency had a large Irish electorate, and although he was not elected, he polled nearly 22,000 votes.

Deciding to make use of his talents and his wide range of acquaintance on both sides of the Irish Sea, he became managing director of the Register Publishing Company of Kingsway, London. MacVeagh was also appointed as a director of various Irish companies, including the Dublin & South Eastern Railway (from 1919 until it was absorbed by the Great Southern in 1925), the Alliance & Dublin Consumers’ Gas Co. Ltd. and the Irish BP Company. He was on the board of Vickers (Ireland), which took over the business of the Dublin Dockyard Co. in 1923. Another, more controversial, directorship was of the Wolfhill Colliery Co. Wolfhill Colliery (near Athy) was one of a handful of small coal mines in Ireland and had been worked since the early nineteenth century. However, by 1914, coal imported from Britain still accounted for well over half of Ireland’s energy requirement, with most of the rest coming from peat and only an insignificant fraction from Irish-mined coal. No doubt with a view to lessening the risk of ships being attacked by German submarines in the Irish Sea, the British government sought to increase local coal production and amongst other measures built a branch railway from Athy to Wolfhill Colliery in



1917, apparently using materials from the Carlow branch of the Great Southern & Western Railway. It is not clear whether these activities had the desired effect, but by 1918 the New Irish Mining Co. Ltd. was employing 60 men below ground and 33 above at the Wolfhill and Gracefield mines.

Irish independence brought arguments about the ownership of these assets and liability for paying compensation for the land compulsorily acquired to build the railway. The Athy and Wolfhill Colliery Railway became part of the Great Southern Railway in 1925, while the Wolfhill Colliery Co. Ltd. was floated in 1921 with a capital of £160,000 to acquire and modernise the mines. Having achieved political independence, there was a popular feeling in Ireland for economic independence from Britain, and home-produced coal was a potent symbol of this. There was indeed a general feeling that the British had deliberately failed to exploit Ireland's coal resources in order to benefit British coalowners. Under these circumstances, many applied for shares in the new company, some of them apparently as nominees of the Sinn Féin organization.

Some new equipment was delivered and more men were taken on (much to the benefit of the depressed agricultural area around the colliery), but production of saleable anthracite never rose to more than eight to ten thousand tons annually. By 1923 the Irish government had to guarantee a £50,000 loan, and in 1925 the company went into liquidation, amid lurid accusations of incompetent management, graft and misappropriation of funds, which were aired in detail in the *Dail Eireann*. Most of the directors suddenly became highly elusive, and rumours circulated of a shadowy organisation with British money behind it, which was about to step in and snap up the assets at bargain prices.

The Irish Government agreed to pay for pumping to continue, while the miners worked the pit as a cooperative, increasing output and rectifying some of the previous management's mistakes. The colliery eventually came into state ownership, and worked until the 1950s.

There seems to have been no suggestion at the time that MacVeagh had been

personally involved in anything improper, but it does appear that he had been willing to lend his name to the project and collect his director's fees without taking much trouble to investigate what was actually happening at Wolfhill.

It is not clear how Jerry McVeagh got to know Colonel Stephens – perhaps through his recruiting activities in the Great War – but after the war he was involved with several of the Colonel's railways. He was eventually a director of the East Kent (from 16 August 1923 until 18 August 1926, when he resigned following an agreement with the Southern Railway to invest in the railway and take three seats on the Board), North Devon & Cornwall Junction, Shropshire & Montgomeryshire and Kent & East Sussex Light Railways (he was appointed to the board of the K&ESR in January 1929 to replace Montague Bates who had recently died), as well as being one of the promoters of the Southern Heights Light Railway (Light Railway Order granted in 1928). He represented the promoters at the public enquiry into the Newport & Four Ashes Light Railway in 1923.

Little is known about MacVeagh's private life. He never married, his immediate relatives being his sisters, Sarah, Jennie, Kitty and Mary, who lived in London. However, he had a wide circle of friends, including many prominent in public life in Britain and Ireland. When he took the chair at a St Patrick's Day banquet at the Hotel Cecil in London in 1926, the chief guest was Stanley Baldwin, then prime minister, and the other guests included Philip Snowden (the first Labour chancellor of the exchequer), Winston Churchill and the Earl of Birkenhead.

MacVeagh suffered a heart attack in Dublin, where he had gone to attend directors' meetings. He was taken to the nursing home attached to the Mater Misericordiae Hospital and was visited by Cardinal Joseph MacRory (1861-1945), then Archbishop of Armagh and a personal friend, before he died on 17 April 1932 at the age of 62. He was given an impressive funeral in the Pro-Cathedral in Dublin, attended by President de Valera and the Lord Mayor of Dublin, amongst many others, and was buried in Glasnevin Cemetery in that city.



*Marcia at Rolvenden in the early 1970's (Raymond Lowe)*

# EARLY DAYS

*Vice president Robin Doust (who was Secretary of the original Kent & East Sussex Railway Preservation Society) reminisces about the pioneering days in the 1960's.*

Although I have lived in Zimbabwe for the past 32 years I have kept in close touch with the Railway. I always make a point of visiting the Line on my annual visits to the U.K. and I retain many happy memories of the early days of the old Preservation Society dating back to the inaugural meeting held at the Rother Valley Hotel at Northiam in 1961.

One enduring memory dates back to around August 1962 when I visited the Line with

Tony Hocking on a scorching hot summer day. We discovered an abandoned pump trolley in the long grass at Rolvenden and decided to make a quick exploratory trip down the line towards Wittersham Road. We made good time on the outward journey, with a stop for an inspection of the old 1029 bridge (now known as Newmill Bridge), but the return trip was a major ordeal with the long grass dragging at the wheels and only two of us to man the crank handle. We arrived back at Rolvenden totally exhausted with barely enough strength to drag the trolley back to its former home in the grass. It was on this occasion that I lifted the receiver on the old



wood cased telephone attached to the telegraph pole beside the water tank and was totally shocked to hear an angry voice at the other end demanding to know who was meddling with the telephone. I hastily replaced the handset without replying, and often wonder whether that was the last time the through link to Robertsbridge was ever used, as metal thieves soon afterwards stole the copper overhead wires, and the instrument was dead by the time of my next visit to Rolvenden.

A few years later I was closely involved in the purchase of Pullmans "Barbara" and "Theodora". These had been spotted in a siding on the L.S.W.R main line by member Alan Dixon, marked with the condemned catspaw, and enquiries revealed that both cars had already been sold to a Welsh scrap merchant. The late Leonard Heath Humphrys contacted the purchaser, who was quite willing to sell the coaches to us for the princely sum of £265 each as they have wooden bodies and were of little value as scrap. We therefore struck a deal, and asked B.R. to arrange delivery to Robertsbridge – only to be told that because the original sale was to a Welsh company, they had to go to Wales first and we would have to pay to have them brought all the way back again! Later still we received an angry letter from the B.R. sales department stating that the Pullmans had been sold for scrap and it was not allowed for them to be resold. That letter went unanswered and was, fortunately, not followed up, but indicates the kind of obstructive treatment some sections of B.R. handed out to those of us trying to preserve a small part of the national railway heritage which was then being destroyed as quickly as possible during the Beeching era. It is, however, only fair to say that other officials with whom we dealt were very helpful and went out of their way to assist.

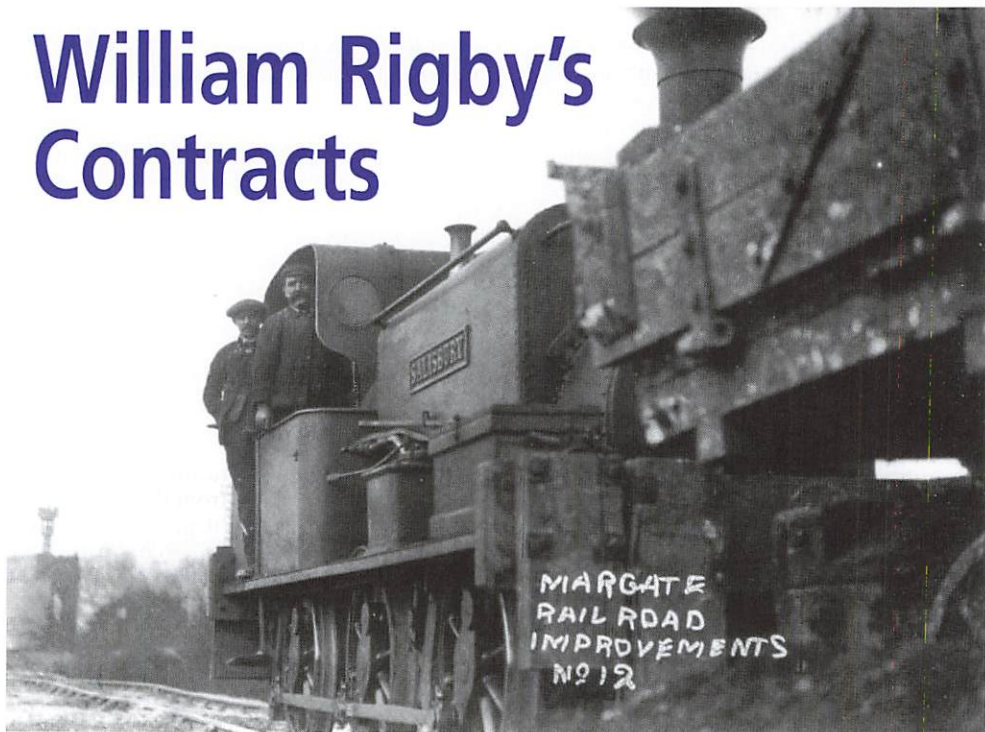
In due course the two Pullmans arrived at Tonbridge West Yard, and I spotted the two distinctive roof outlines from my seat in a homeward bound train as we rounded the curve into the station. I promptly left the train and walked round to the goods sidings,

where I was able to climb into the coaches for a first inspection. It was a nostalgic moment, as I had happy memories of Pullman breakfasts (price 7/6 – 37.5 pence - and capable of being made to last the whole journey from Tunbridge Wells to Charing Cross) on these very cars in earlier years when they were still in use on the Hastings line steam services. I was, however, rudely interrupted by the sound of someone else climbing into the coaches, and being aware that I was technically a trespasser, I quickly took refuge in one of the kitchens. After a few moments I heard a strange scratching noise, and a cautious peep round the door revealed a scruffy looking shunter with a screwdriver busy prising the glass mirror panels out of the vestibule door. I promptly leapt from concealment, and demanded to know what he thought he was doing vandalising "my" coach. The poor man was dumbstruck, apologised profusely, and quickly fled. I then completed my own inspection before returning to the station to resume my interrupted journey home to Headcorn and Tenterden.

Later still, on a visit to Eastleigh to see No. 3 "Bodiam" in steam prior to purchase, we spotted another Hastings line Pullman awaiting scrapping, and with help from Dave Sinclair, who worked in the S.R. Carriage & Wagon Department, we were able to retrieve a lot of the distinctive Pullman marquetry work from this car, formerly named "Latona". Remarkably, a recent edition of "Steam Railway" reported that a door from scrapped Pullman "Latona" has recently been used to replace a door on another Pullman currently under restoration. As I had always assumed that "Latona" was broken up in the 1960's does anyone out there know how a door survived to be reused nearly fifty years later?

*It is pleasing to be able to add that Robin has renewed his acquaintance with our Pullman Cars. He travelled in Theodora during his 2006/7 visit to the UK and was able to experience the continuing tradition of superlative service which the restoration of both vehicles has made available to discerning 21st Century patrons of Pullman luxury. Ed.*

# William Rigby's Contracts



Salisbury – Manning-Wardle loco – as used at Margate by William Rigby.

*Jim Greaves adds to previously published items.*

The Tenterden Terrier of Winter 2001 and Spring 2002 (86 & 87) carried an excellent article about the contractor William Rigby by Tom Burnham. These brief notes concerning two of his contracts are to compliment that article. Hopefully they will add to our knowledge of one of the smaller but important railway contractors involved with both the SECR and Colonel Stephens' lines. Information on the Margate contract comes from local newspapers and that for the Warren from a copypress book of letters from FC Stainton.

## **Margate**

In 1912 William Rigby was awarded the contract for the improvement works to Margate West Station. Work started on 11th December 1912 and was planned in two phases.

Phase one, due for completion 1st June 1913 involved the purchase of ground to the south of the station to accommodate an

additional platform 800ft long with terminal lines either side, five carriage sidings and the expansion of the approach road to the upside with improved facilities. Phase two involved the use of the estimated 80,000 cubic yards of chalk excavated in phase one to form the embankment joining the ex-LCDR line to the east of the station with the ex-SER line at Tivoli.

Work was well advanced by March 1913 with 120 men working 7 days a week. Two locomotives, the Salisbury and the Sutton were used along with 50 tip wagons to form the 36ft high embankment. The photograph shows Salisbury engaged in this work. To complete phase one on time an extra 170 men were employed for the last week with shifts working 24hrs a day.

Although described as complete, minor works continued during the summer of 1913 and it wasn't until December that the local paper reported that the new sidings were fully commissioned, half the embankment was completed and the connection between the approach to the upside and All Saints



Road was nearly completed.

Disaster struck on 18th March 1914 when a section of concrete retaining wall between All Saints Road and the up station approach collapsed, killing 4 men. The men had been excavating behind the wall when a section around 40' long, weighing 40tons, collapsed, crushing them to death. Three men had been buried beneath the wall and a fourth, who was to die in the local cottage hospital later, was partially buried. He was described as 'suffering from shocking injuries to his lower extremities which were practically reduced to a pulp'. A BOT enquiry carried out on 15th April 1914 blamed the heavy rain that had fallen the night before for weakening the ground. No criticism of working methods was made. It was the worst accident to affect Margate since 1897, when the 9 man crew of the Margate surfboat drowned offshore almost opposite the scene of this accident.

The approach road to the upside was eventually opened on 19th December 1914.

#### **Folkestone to Dover**

A massive landslide on 19th December 1915, just beyond the Martello Tunnel, closed the Folkestone to Dover line for the duration of World War I. The SECR Board decided to reopen the line in November 1918.

On 9th January 1919 PC Tempest (Chief Engineer SECR) wrote to Sheath (SECR Secretary) stating that he had obtained an offer from the contractor W Rigby to reinstate the line at cost plus 10% profit and recommended acceptance. Rigby was given the contract by the end of the month and FC Stainton (New Works Assistant) was given the task of overseeing the work.

Arrangements for Rigby to get men and plant to the Warren, with huts for accommodation (later reduced to one at a rent of £3 month), occupied the next 2 months. Rigby received his first payment (£605) on 14th March and immediately Stainton was querying hours charged for individual labourers, a feature of his correspondence throughout the contract. Rigby required a second engine for the works and arrangements were made for 'Margaret' to travel under its own steam from Crayford to Folkestone. I am not

aware of the identity of the first engine used on site.

Improved vehicles for transporting the men from Folkestone were sought in April (they had been travelling in ballast wagons) and Stainton asked EC Cox (Superintendent of the Line) if he could spare 4 old coaches to transport c200 men. 'I am very short of ballast wagons.....great assistance to me if it were possible to release those I have set aside for the use of the men'. They got 5 old brake thirds and, with a contractors engine at both ends, dispensed with the need for a guard as well. By May about 50 men a day were coming from Dover and the unions were complaining that they had to walk. Stainton asked Cox for a train leaving Dover at 6.30am and returning at 5.30pm. The train was provided from the 7th. At the end of May the SECR provided passes for some of Rigby's men to go back to London for the Whitsun holidays.

The chalk being excavated was sent to Margate Sands to be used to complete the loop from the LCDR line to the SER. This embankment had been started by Rigby in 1913 but he obviously had insufficient materials and the War had put a stop to operations. Six wagons a day were sent from 24th June to the 24th July at which time the wagons were diverted for use in bringing shingle, for use as ballast, to the Warren.

Stainton's precise examination of Rigby's accounts continues throughout the contract. In September he enquires of Rigby as to why one of his labourers has been overpaid 4/8d. He asks for a credit in his next account. At this time Rigby is being paid around £5000 per month for the contract.

In October arrangements are made to recover Rigby's plant and materials and return it to Plumstead. Rigby received his final payment for the contract on 27th February. The total cost of the work was £27,889. Payment was made after Rigby had agreed to withdraw two invoices, totalling £6, which referred to repairs to his locomotives and to which Stainton objected.

# It was 40 years ago Today...

*Wilf Watters recalls his first visit to the line 40 years ago this month.*

The year 1967 seemed to be like any other year to me and my pals at work. Being then, and even now a keen amateur film maker, I had just realised that BR had finished running steam trains in the south and I hadn't bothered to take any film of them.

In 1964 I had through my "Vanishing Britain" period, filmed things like trolleybuses and cinemas closing down. The local steam hauled branch had provided an interesting subject before it too succumbed to "progress". My work colleague suggested that I visit the K&ESR at Robertsbridge.

So one day I was off alighting there from a DEMU train I immediately found an H tank and a little industrial loco called "King" plus a motley collection of old wagons. Looks promising, I thought, and set off down the line to the next station. Well, many miles later I had seen little green lizards sitting on the warm track bed, that smelt of flowers and tar from the sleepers but had not found much else. Finally, arriving at Rolvenden, I found Robin Doust and Alan Crotty painting the side of an old coach. We soon got talking. "Can you come down next week?" they asked. They were going to run No 3 Bodiam, then in plain green, and some coaches down to Robertsbridge, on hire to Granada TV who were filming a play-would I like to come? It didn't take much time for me to decide and I then spent the next few days scrounging some colour film, which was being tested at work to try out a new processor machine in the news department at a time when the BBC were changing over to colour.

Came the day I duly turned up. The driver, Charlie Kentsley (who lived in the old London "Pre-fab" on the site) welcomed me, as Alan Crotty the fireman prepared No 3 for departure. Off we went and it's a good job that I had brought my cine camera along as it turned out to be the last ever steam trip from Rolvenden to Robertsbridge!

I found the journey enchanting as we skimmed along the hedgerows, inched across many level-crossings, passing quaint old wood and corrugated iron station buildings. At Bodiam the loco was run around the train on the passing loop there. I asked Alan why. "So the train looks better for the TV film unit when it's at Robertsbridge". The train was propelled all the way to North Street Crossing, where Chris Lowry tried to open the gates; they were stuck and the flangeways full of debris. However with the help of Andrew Webb they dragged the gates open and No 3 carefully trundled across, pushing the two coaches ahead. Nearing the end of the branch, Alan walked ahead to unlock the points.

On the platform the film people were busy (they were all BBC folk "moonlighting" on their days off-working for Granada!). When they were all done the train gently moved on up the branch to the high brick-built water tower that has now sadly vanished, to fill up the loco. I decided then that I had done enough filming and in any case was just about out of film stock. Little did I know that 40 years later I would still be filming events on the line.

I joined the Association (as it then was) and have enjoyed actively volunteering on the line ever since. Initially most of the activity was at Rolvenden but we slept in a smelly old S&ECR coach body at Tenterden. There was a fully fitted kitchen at one end and about 10 bunks to sleep in. I would usually arrive at about midnight and the whole place would be full of snoring volunteers who had spent the evening at "The Vine". About 7 a.m. Chris Lowry would get out and go to ring the bells at St Mildred's in the High street. The rest of us would fight for space on the three ring cooker to get our breakfast done.

And so today.....the smelly coach has gone to the great scrapyards in the sky, (*actually now waiting restoration to service on a suitable chassis that we have available* -Ed). Many of the volunteers, like me, have moved down near Tenterden and still enjoy working on the railway.

N.B. The "Last steam run to Robertsbridge" can be seen on the DVD "Trains to Tenterden" available through the railway shop.



## Notes for contributors

With the coming of the electronic age our printers are set up to receive largely digital text and this is an advantage to us as it keeps the cost down. This will become increasingly important over the coming months (not years-things are moving too fast). So please try to follow the guidelines set out below.

### Content

The Tenterden Terrier will continue to major on K&ESR news, features on aspects of the current K&ESR and historical articles on Colonel Stephens' and other Light Railways, particularly those of the South East.

There is only one criterion here, and that is pre-digital. Any written or photographic contribution must be INTERESTING to the reader, not just the writer, and should only exceed 2500 words if you trust the editor to do his worst to shorten it; or put in a special plead for a two-parter.

### Text

Copy should be sent in electronic form in word-processor format (Windows is best). No need to worry about typeface or the size you use. Sending by e-mail attachment is the simplest method, but you can send by disc (although floppy discs are nearly obsolete), if carefully packed.

Typewritten copy can be scanned to extract the words for printing so can be accepted, but the Editors task will be easier if you ask a friend to turn it into digital form.

### Photos

Prints, Negatives and transparencies can always be accepted as the printers scan them (at a cost) but our recent results with transparencies have been mixed. Most can be enhanced these days but the photos need to be of particular interest or quality to justify the necessary work.

For current events photography digital is best. However a selected image for publication should be at the maximum most basic cameras can achieve. The image size is listed in the camera specification, and for a 5 mega pixel camera will be something around 2560 x 1920 pixels. This dictates the size of picture in the final print. Printers recommend a minimum of 300 pixels per inch so a full page print requires this size; a half page photo perhaps less. Please under no circumstances compress your photo for transmission, send the photo as the camera took it, changing nothing except perhaps a trim and rename.

## The Kent and East Sussex Railway Company Limited

Registered Charity 262481

*(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)*

Registered Office:

Tenterden Town Station, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 6HE

Telephone 01580-765155 Fax: 01580-765654

Email: [enquiries@kesr.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@kesr.org.uk)

Websites: Railway <http://www.kesr.org.uk>

Museum <http://www.hfstephens-museum.org.uk>

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