



JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

# Tenterden Terrier



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**FRONT COVER**

No. 65 halted at Tenterden Home signal during the May Gala (*John Anthony*).

**BACK COVER**

Looking back. (*Tim Arnott*)

# Tenterden Terrier

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# Editorial

## Looking Back. Looking Forward

A common theme in many heritage railway magazines is the need to encourage the active participation of young people. The subject is also a frequent topic of conversation among K&ESR Volunteers for it is certainly true that the average age seems increasingly weighted towards the 'longer serving' end of the scale. There are, nevertheless, some encouraging signs around our Railway, the Rolvenden Saturday gang being one example. The relatively youthful persona of the organisers of the highly successful May 'Last Train's Gone' Gala is another. Having just passed the 50th anniversary of the date at which I remember becoming a railway enthusiast my thoughts turned to those I have to thank for encouraging me.

I think I have probably recorded both in this journal and elsewhere the K&ESR people who were influential, but before that there was the metalwork teacher who, around the beginning of the 1960's, ran my school's Friday evening railway club. His name was Bert Brock and his

message was "Give up collecting numbers and read some railway history". He was also a Volunteer on the Tallylyn Railway and did more than a little to ignite my interest in preservation. I hardly need add that his influence on me has been incalculable. During the same period not a few railway photographs were credited to 'J. Davenport'.

A few years later, when the Kent & East Sussex Railway had got well and truly into my bloodstream, the same John Davenport got me through A level English Literature and laid the foundations for much personal development. I don't doubt there were many occasions when both these gentlemen chose to exercise a little tolerance when a youthful Pallant was being irritating yet again. So, next time you find yourself in the company of one of our younger members, or indeed any new volunteer of whatever age, take the time to talk to them, find out why they want to give their time to *our* Railway and encourage their interest.

Use reason to moderate any run-away enthusiasm. Lead by example. You never know, in 50 years time someone might be looking back and remembering you with gratitude.

**Nick Pallant**



*Pioneering Days - Bodiam at Rolvenden in 1968 (Peter Chatman)*



# Lineside News

*Compiled by Duncan Buchanan*

## COMMERCIAL

### General Manager

There is a new word in the language of tourism – staycationing. Put this into Microsoft Word and it produces a red underscore, but what it is supposed to refer to is the increased number of people taking their vacation at home.

A few spells in the booking office have supported this when asking visitors from 1-2 driving hours distant if they are staying locally they say no they have driven!

By the end of May our visitor numbers were over 2500 up on last year, and slightly up on 2007, redressing the decline we suffered particularly last year. We are performing too a long way above budget, so if this is recession, bring it on!

Before we get too excited, not doing Thomas™ in June will gobble up the excess passenger numbers, so it is better to think of performance against budget in the overall scheme of things. We are now less than four years away from Bodiam Bond redemption and therefore making a cash surplus is vital. We must also invest in our infrastructure, to not only maintain but improve.

Key to our good performance was a wonderful gala, a magnificent 40s weekend, and good performance in the school holidays. A small price offer well marketed presents the railway as good value for money, and this has worked too.

Re-writing railway history is an important feature of preservation. This year's gala with the return of the 01 did exactly that.

We have had a couple of filming jobs – 'Escape To The Country' for BBC and 'My Little Soldier' for UKTV. The latter follows the exploits of a 5 year old boy left in charge of a carriage on the 1.15 from Tenterden. We can't wait to see the final show!

### Shop

In common with the rest of the railway generally, the shop has had a good start to 2009. Net income for the February Thomas was up 13 per cent on the corresponding event last year and spend per passenger rose 7 per cent. Up to the end of May, net income was above budget, assisted by bumper Gala, 1940s and Evacuation events that month. We have also been helped by

shop sales at county shows, steam fairs and other events, so thanks are due to Graham Sivyer and his team for boosting our income in that way.

The long-awaited book on the K&ESR by Brian Hart has failed yet again to appear, and doesn't look like it will for a while yet. However the limited edition (of 100 each) Alfred Day box van and Wm. Body wagon are now in stock and there is a DVD available of the very successful Gala. To freshen up stock and offer better value, we have changed our jam, chutney and bagged sweets suppliers, and introduced a number of new lines including Roy Kirkham porcelain mugs and K&ESR CD clocks, car sun shades, lanyards and tea towels.

The shop staff are a closely-knit team, so the death of Pauline Saunders hit us all hard. Pauline was a real stalwart of the shop, a regular and loyal volunteer who was much-loved by all railway staff who worked with her. Behind that occasionally firm manner beat a heart of gold, and Wednesdays will not be the same without her. We wish Mick Pierce well with his recovery from a heart bypass operation and David Ware with his battle with illness, and hope to see them back in the shop not before too long. To bolster our numbers this year, I would like to warmly thank and welcome Hazel Chaney and Valerie Lucas for joining our shop team this year.

### Catering

Whilst it is clear that we are having to work harder for the scarce 'leisure pound', our sales have so far exceeded budget by some considerable margin. The May 'Last Trains Gone' Gala certainly helped fill the coffers: almost fifty percent of the monthly budget was achieved in just three days trading! This was closely followed by a very successful 1940s event, which resulted in a new Station Refreshment Rooms turnover record. The weak pound has also resulted in a noticeable increase in the number of foreign tourists visiting and sampling our homemade meals.

Returning after a number of years absence, we are pleased to welcome a tour operator providing packages for predominantly American visitors from cruise liners berthed at the former Dover Marine Station. Demand for our pre-





*Jo Brice helping out with Theodora (Nick Pallant)*

booked catering packages has remained buoyant, with a number of sizeable parties resulting in train capacity issues. The 'Strawberry Express' weekend again proved popular, with much positive comment regarding the quality of fare offered. For 'Fathers Day' a special edition beer was commissioned from our friends at the Rother Valley Brewery, which proved popular with our customers and staff (when off duty!) alike.

At the time of writing, we are preparing for the first 'CAMRA' Real Ale festival to be held at the Tenterden Town Station, an established event that has transferred to us from another venue. All signs indicate that it will be a very busy function, although weather will undoubtedly influence our BBQ sales.

As always, there remain ample opportunities to get involved. Catering activities form the largest profitable source of income for our line and therefore play a vital part in our continued existence & development. There are duties to suit all tastes, both customer facing and 'back of house': contact André Freeman at Tenterden Town for further information or to arrange a 'taster day'.

### Wealden Pullman

Our colleagues in the C&W Dept. really pulled out all the stops to return Pullman Car 'Theodora' to traffic in time for the first services of the year. In addition to the repairs required as a result of considerable long-term water

ingress and a full repaint, all brass work was removed, cleaned, polished and lacquered where appropriate. This has made a tremendous improvement to the appearance of the vehicle and has drawn much positive comment from staff and customers alike. A deep clean of the interiors together with very thorough external cleaning has improved the appearance of the whole set tremendously – all we have to do is keep it that way!

Bookings have continued to hold up very well, with the remainder of this year's services likely to be fully booked in the very near future: the schedule of 2010 services has received Board approval and will be released for sale at that time. Although the number of services operated remains demanding, our loyal staff have risen to the challenge and are, once again, delivering a consistently superb product. This is borne out by the number of complimentary comments and letters received and the level of repeat business generated.

The Pullman Society again joined us for Dinner and Sunday Luncheon following their AGM held at the White Lion Hotel. Comments from their discerning members were expressed that the 'Wealden Pullman' heads the league table of heritage railway dining trains – a suitably fitting tribute to the hard work of our staff if one were required.

Our staff roster clerk continues to recruit staff from all possible areas. Recently, a customer who had booked a table in *Barbara* contacted us to advise that she was unable to join us that evening as her dining partner had been called in to work. After arranging the re-sale of the seats, the customer, who was therefore at a 'loose end', was persuaded to join the train and wash-up! Despite what may seem a rather unglamorous role, the bubbly atmosphere onboard resulted in further turns enlisted. If you too would like to find out more about the opportunities available, contact Meg Gooch at Tenterden Station or email [Meg@kesr.org.uk](mailto:Meg@kesr.org.uk). A warm welcome is assured!

### Steam Locomotives

**No. 3 Bodiam (No. 32670):** In service and running well. At some point soon a new chimney will be cast as the existing one is now very thin. Cracks have been repaired over the last few years but it is now uneconomic to keep doing this.

**No. 8 Knowle (No. 32678):** In service and running well. Some attention to the big ends and crossheads is needed which will be carried out during washouts or other periods of inactivity.

**P class No. 11 (No. 753):** In service and running well. As the main performer on RXDs over the last few years the lightly constructed motion has started to show signs of wear. Remedial works will commence this winter.

**No. 12 Marcia:** Bolting up and painting of the cab roof and drip rails has been completed. A new cab backsheet has been fabricated to suit the cab sides with riveted half round sections on the vertical edges. This has been installed on the locomotive and has received one coat of antirust primer.

Brass spectacle rims for the rear windows have been cast using a front rim as a pattern. These have been polished and are awaiting

installation, together with the new window glass when the new machine screws for securing the two halves of the rims become available.

The front and rear sand boxes have been installed. With the completion of the cab internal paintwork, the small bore instrument and vacuum piping in the cab has been reinstalled. The front and rear piston clearances have been measured and suitable shims made up for the connecting rod bearings to equalize these measurements.

Present work in progress consists of installation of the coupling rod bearings, completion of the whistle piping, clipping up vacuum piping in the cab and preparation to install the cab floor.

**No. 14 Charwelton:** The last few jobs before re-entering service are underway. A new, hardwood, cab floor is being installed. Following a satisfactory steam test on 22nd June, testing will commence. A visit to the C&W shed for application of the lining will follow.

**No. 19 Norwegian (NSB No. 376):** By mid summer the frames will be off the bolster wagon that has been home for the last few years and in the shed for rebuilding. Remedial works on the boiler are almost complete. The tender will also



## Pushing For Life

*When Bexhill on Sea Community Responders were looking for an imaginative way to raise funds they asked Kent & East Sussex Railway if they could use 'The Fastest Pump Trolley In The World' for a sponsored pump from Northiam to Bodiam.*

*Two teams pumped the 6 mile round trip to raise just under £1000 towards the purchase of vital monitoring equipment.*

*K&ESR's Pump Trolley was involved in the successful attempt to break the world record for the fastest pump trolley push on the BBC TV show Roy Castle's Record Breakers. The teams from Bexhill on Sea Community Responders did not reach the speeds replicated by Roy Castle's volunteers but they did have some great fun.*

*Picture shows 4 Community Responders at Northiam Signal Box under the supervision of K&ESR driver Brian Heyes.  
Pic K&ESR (Graham Baldwin)*





*'Ford' diesel at Bodiam with Vintage Train (John Liddell)*

be in the shed for refurbishment.

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

**No. 22 Maunsell (No. 65):** The modifications to the exhaust system have resulted in significant improvements to the steaming capability of the loco, and reduced the coal consumption. Presently on washout awaiting annual boiler inspection.

**No. 23 Holman F Stephens:** In service and performing well. Recently passed annual boiler inspection.

**No. 24 Rolvenden:** Following work to replace the piston heads, piston rings and slide valves the loco is now running in on Railway Experience Day turns.

**No. 25 Northiam:** Dismantling for 10 yearly overhaul is underway. The cab and tanks are due to be removed shortly. This will allow the lagging to be removed from the boiler prior to removal from the frames.

**No. 30 GWR Pannier (No. 1638):** In service and performing well.

### **Diesel Locomotives**

**No. 20 (GWR Railcar):** "Thank You" again to all who have donated and continue to donate to the GWR Railcar Appeal. The Appeal has now reached £20,300 including the benefit of Gift Aid recovery.

Steam cleaning of the entire underframe has been completed and the Railcar is now in the carriage shed at Tenterden.

The Robertsbridge end bogie has been dismantled and the main framework together with the bogie bolster was sent away for cleaning, grit blasting and an initial coat of paint. New oilers for the bogie rubbing plates have been ordered from Armstrong Oilers based at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. The existing bogie bolster coil springs are with GB Springs in Birmingham. The decision will be either some to be refurbished and some new or a complete set of new bolster springs throughout. The two wheel sets together with various brackets for dynamos and brake cylinders are being painted ready for installation on the underframe at a later date.

All four new aluminium radiator fan blades have been collected from the foundry at Northfleet. The necessary machining to achieve a perfect fit will be done later in the machine shop in the carriage shed.

The last of the floor boards have been lifted permitting replacement of any remaining old bolts with plated equivalents. At the same time rubber packing strip is being used to replace the felts situated between the floor joists and the main steel underframe. Our friends at Didcot, where W22W is now running after its engine overhaul, have strongly advised us to replace all control air pipes in light of experience of

running their Railcar. Unfortunate news, but thanks for keeping in touch and letting us have the benefit of your experience. The sourcing of a supplier and the order for some 500 ft. of pipe is underway.

Finally, it must be said that your donations are always welcome as it makes a big difference to outline planning for materials/refurbishment of components and the overall restoration plan, "Thank You".



*Bodiam Castle seen above P Class (John Liddell)*

#### Planned Sunday Working Dates

July to December 2009.

July – 12th & 26th. August – 9th & 23rd.

September – 6th & 20th.

October – 4th & 18th. November – 1st & 15th & 29th.

December – 13th & 27th.

There will also be options to work on the railcar midweek., Please contact Alan Brice the Carriage & Wagon Shed Supervisor for details of work available.

**No. 40 'Ford' (BTH):** In service.

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

**No. 44 Dover Castle (Class 08):** The major overhaul is ongoing.

**No. 46 (Class 03):** In service.

**Class 33 Ashford (No. 33052):** Presently stopped for 6 monthly exam.

**Class 108 DMMU:** In service.

The replacement of the final two engines will be undertaken soon. One is in stock and the other

is with the repairer. Once these are commissioned, all four engines will be more efficient and the diesel smoke in the exhaust will be substantially reduced.

#### Cranes

**No. 133 (10T Taylor-Hubbard):** In service.

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

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

#### Plant

**TRAMM:** In service.

**Tamper (73250):** In service. The tamper has completed a long contract at the Spa Valley Railway. A large section of their running line has been tamped from Tunbridge Wells West to a point close to Eridge which is some 4-4.5 miles.

At their recent Gala weekend of 25th – 26th April, it worked several unique firsts as the power unit for brake van specials. One was run on the Saturday from Tunbridge Wells West to Groombridge and two were run on the Sunday from Tunbridge Wells West to their High Rocks Halt. All were very full and proved extremely popular.

## ROLLING STOCK

#### Mark 1's

**BSO No. 73, SK No. 63 and CK No. 86** (the three in Southern Region Green) are all stored out of use at present but will be needed for the next Thomas™ event in September. In addition, No. 73 has had to be 'robbed' of its bogies to keep **No.75 Petros** in traffic. This vehicle regrettably suffered serious flats on all wheels as a result of the handbrake being left

on between Tenterden Town and Rolvenden. The only 'quick fix' available was a bogie swop with No. 73. This was achieved very speedily which was a credit to all involved in completing the repairs. **Petros'** wheels have now sent away for turning by our contractor at Sellindge although this will, of course, reduce the expected life span of the tyres.

**TSO No. 68 (BR No. 4355)** also known as the



'Avon Coach' has returned to the carriage shed for yet another stage in its ongoing restoration. The remaining corroded metalwork (cladding and framework) at the 'Headcorn' end has been cut away and renewal commenced. The adjacent toilet areas have also been stripped out, partly to allow access to the structure and partly because they were also in need of heavy repairs. Work continues to completely rebuild all six doors which has made a significant demand on our supply of spare door skins.

### Vintage Coaches

The 'Woolwich' Coach (K&ESR No. 67) has once again visited France in company with the P Class for the CFBS Fete de Vapeur on 25th and 26th April. We feel that this coach is a most suitable companion for the 'P' on these occasions. The 'P' is of course a veteran of World War One and the Woolwich Coach, being built from L&NWR standard components, is doubtless closely related to the ambulance train which that company provided for the Western Front.

Pullman Car Theodora (K&ESR No. 51) returned to traffic in early April. *Theodora* looks totally splendid and is playing its full part in the provision of the Railway's popular and lucrative dining service..

Work on the LC&DR 'Ashford' Brake K&ESR No. 98 has made significant progress. Whilst the Railway's 10 ton steam crane was at C&W

assisting with the *Petros* bogie swop on 21<sup>st</sup> May the opportunity was taken to place No. 98's body on its shortened PMV underframe. The body was also turned round at the same time to facilitate work on the side which had been facing the shed wall.

### Wagons

South Eastern Railway brakevan No. 102 has received repairs to its bodywork and a repaint in grey livery. The paint job was undertaken with help from James Palk and his Gala Gang who also continued with their 'wagon sprucing up' programme begun in 2008. Notable among their efforts this year was the repainting of wagon K&ESR No. 155 ('Nathaniel Pegg') to represent a Tilmanstone Colliery wagon from the East Kent Railway. This change was made with the permission of both the vehicle owner and a decedent of Nathaniel Pegg himself, coal merchant of Forest Hill, who is a member of the Company. Admirers of the 'Natt Pegg' livery will be pleased to know that a full record of the paint work has been retained against its future reapplication. James & Co. also repainted box van Nos. 128 and 138 into BR bauxite livery, appropriate to the 'Last Train's Gone' theme of this year's gala.

### People

Long serving member and volunteer Dave Sinclair has been in hospital recently for a bypass operation. We are pleased to report that we hear he is doing well. Volunteer Frank Kent has also been 'in for repairs' of other sorts with the NHS recently and we wish him well for a speedy recovery.



*Loading Dogfish  
hoppers in back siding  
at Bodiam for RVR  
extension (John  
Liddell)*

## Permanent Way News

The team refurbished all of the sleepers on Rother Bridge this spring. There was a ripple effect over the bridge as the wheel sets went over and our aim was to stop this vertical movement, and also firm up the approaches to the bridge by 'jacking and packing'. Removing the rails, which are 110lb flat bottom, seemed easy enough and when they were tipped out sideways they landed just about where we thought they would land. We put down scaffold boards on the bridge frame and then the going got a bit tougher. We had to drag each sleeper to the end of the bridge and stack it out of the way. We couldn't detach the chairs from the sleepers whilst the sleepers were still on the bridge, and the combined weight of each sleeper and two chairs was a strain for all of us. We all slept well that night!

No sooner had we removed the old ones, and then it was time to drag the new ones into position. Each new chair was fitted with a new pad and the rails were then jacked back into place. A couple of hours later and we had connected up the fishplates and we started ballasting either end of the bridge.

We have taken it upon ourselves to produce a Wickham Trolley from the rusted pieces which were 'stored' in the headshunt at Tenterden. By the time you read this, P.Way will have replaced the main frame, all metal uprights and all of the wood. We have removed the dents from the roof and refurbished and repainted all of the metal which was in a salvageable condition. The engine is an original Ford.

We look forward to seeing the Wickham running in the near future.

## Tuesday Group

We started off early on a freezing cold day way back at the beginning of February helping with lineside clearance on the section from Bodiam to New Mill Bridge.

When the weather improved we continued with the concrete base at Tenterden on the site where the new Information Kiosk will be erected. The old Kiosk has been taken apart and is, at present, on the Tenterden site but will soon be taken to Northiam where we will attempt (when time and funds permit) to reconstruct it as it has some heritage

connections, although when finished I suspect little of the original building will actually remain due to the advanced wood rot.

With the arrival of the better weather in March we returned to Rolvenden to continue with station canopy repairs. These have now been finally completed with a repaint in the Company colours of mid purple brown and cream. We were so confident of our repair techniques that we have cut down the large self seeded tree at the rear of the canopy which was holding the whole structure upright. At the same time we decided to put guttering on the rear of the canopy which had not been there originally, and may have contributed to it rotting.

The small Crossing Keepers Hut/Booking Office on the platform is now receiving some TLC and a repaint.

We are now concentrating on Tenterden Station site where the crossing gates have been given a repaint. The small canopy over the front entrance was found to have advanced rot and a full rebuild is currently underway. The fire escape steps to the offices were also completely rotten and these have now been rebuilt.

My thanks, as always, to all the Tuesday Group lads (and our tea maker) who do such a good job on all our projects.

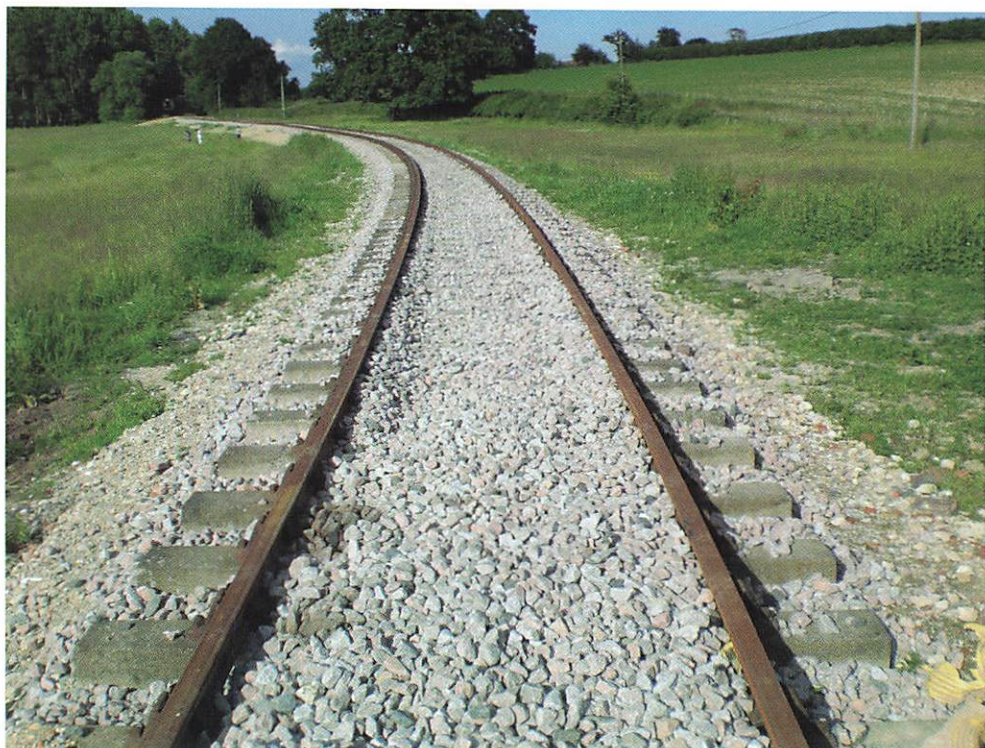
## Bodiam

In May, the station had a third attack by vandals this year. This time, three platform trollies were pushed onto the track, two of which suffered damage which will require them to be rebuilt. The wicket gate at the entrance, although easy to open, was kicked in and again, is being rebuilt. The gate at the side of the station building was also damaged but this was easily repaired. Damage to platform lights was superficial and quickly repaired but necessitated new long life(!) lamps again.

The sentry box has been resited and repaired by John Liddell following previous vandalism and has now been repainted by Mathew Burrows.

Redecoration of the toilets is nearing completion, much of which has been undertaken by Bill Larke. The walls above the tiling have been painted Lancaster Yellow and looks very fresh. We have continuing problems





*Newly laid and tamped RVR extension (Mark Yonge)*

with the gents urinals which flood the floor after flushing. A commercial plumber is being consulted as a solution is beyond our collective talents!

The remaining work on the station building mainly consists of replacing the timber door surrounds on the forecourt side and painting the canopy supports. These were painted with temporary white 'black out' bands for the 40s weekend but will now be painted all Copper Beech.

My appeal for bedding for the prams was answered by Mrs Felicity Edwards who has also donated a 1930s toy pram.

Enquiries to John Miller on 01580-765350.

### **Gardening**

Now the gardens are bursting with life it is a frantic time to try to keep on top of the weeds as everyone with a garden knows.

Unfortunately as I am only at the Railway one day a week it is impossible to keep on top of everything but, hopefully, as all the perennials

grow they will cover most of the weeds. The gardens have given a very good show through the Spring and as everything matures, they should look good through the summer as well.

A vegetable garden has been created in the Carriage and Wagon Yard at Tenterden. Watering is a problem and it will be interesting to see if it all survives. The same applies to the new triangle created in the car park. So far things seem to be struggling along and it is with thanks to Doug and Eve Ramsden that we have some very nice shrubs and compost for this garden.

During the Gala weekend at Tenterden a very keen lady from Amsterdam - Caroline van Dongem - volunteered to help with the gardens while her son assisted Martin in the shop. Caroline was brilliant and kindly spent nine hours working in the beds around the office building. I am most grateful for all her hard work.

The red fire buckets hanging above the rockery on the platform at Tenterden have been planted up for the summer as have the two milk churns in the same area and all the tubs





*Former alignment through Udiam Farm (Mark Yonge)*

and troughs around the Station and Pullman Dock. The hanging baskets around the station building are also in place now. Provided they are watered they should give a good show. This year for the first time three flower pouches have been planted with busy lizzies and tied to the railings outside the Buffet to lighten that area.

Also new this year are two flower fountains for the Pullman which are placed at the entrance to the carriages as part of the welcoming service to our passengers.

If any station staff find they have time to spare between trains, it will be very much appreciated if you use the watering can in the Station Master's Office to water the troughs in front of the Booking Office and the tubs, etc. The flowers add to the ambience of the station but if they all die through lack of water the impression will have an adverse effect. I know of one Station Master who already does this and I am very grateful for his assistance.

Unfortunately no new Volunteer gardeners have joined (apart from Caroline who will be back in August). Stan Kemp has been working

tirelessly with new Volunteers and although we have promises of people coming along they just never materialise. If there is anyone who would like to do an hour or two of gardening at Tenterden or Wittersham Road, please contact Veronica Hopper on 01303 862811. You will be very welcome.

### **S&T**

The wiring gang have been busy in the early spring putting up new wires to the Wittersham up treadles near Hexden Bridge. The opportunity was made to tidy up several connections at the pole opposite the Wittersham Up Home Signal and to remove a redundant wire from there to Hexden Bridge.

Following the delivery of new poles in the winter at least two of these will be used, later this year, in the vicinity of Northiam Station. Recently a new pole was erected near Cysters Crossing to pull the wires out around the curve.

All the new wires put up to the new Rolvenden Up Outer Home are now in use together with the new signal post telephone.



## GROUPS & ASSOCIATES

### Rother Valley railway

Further to the report in the last Terrier, relaying of the approximate 700m section of track west of Bodiam was completed in late March, considerably ahead of schedule. Thanks once again go to the band of volunteers who made this possible.

As can be seen from the accompanying photograph the track has been ballasted and tamped. This takes the line to a midway point in the wooded copse towards the site of Junction Road Halt. The line now looks capable of carrying trains at line speed.

The track was ballasted using the K&ESR ballast hoppers and 'Shark' brake van, in the course of which the 03 became the first locomotive to traverse the section since it was lifted some 37 years ago. The length was subsequently tamped, courtesy of Clive Lowe and his team.

A cross track drain which remained to be connected up was recently completed by

contractor Andrew Wood, and the final job of constructing the lineside fencing is awaiting the approval of the neighbouring farmer.

Attention has now turned to the next section of line from the existing railhead, past Udiam Farm, as far as the B2244, Junction Road. This has been made possible thanks to the new owner of Udiam Farm who has most graciously agreed to permit the reconstruction of the railway through his garden, on the original historic alignment. We have therefore been able to abandon the previous unwelcome plan for a deviation at this location. A planning application has been prepared and submitted and at the time of writing a decision is awaited.

Readers are advised that both the Udiam Farm Estate and the road through Quarry Farm are in private ownership and it is requested that trespass within the garden must not take place. Your co-operation is appreciated to ensure good relations with these and other landowners. The track can be clearly seen from the north side of the River Rother.



*Current end of track near Udiam Farm (Mark Yonge)*

## Museum

Visitor numbers, to the end of May, were 1467, up by about 100 over the same period last year. The May gala gave a boost to numbers as might be expected.

The additional attendants recruited last year has made rostering much easier. John Doody, one of the new recruits, managed to repaint the entrance lobby in time for opening. He and Peter Southgate cut and laid a new coir entrance mat, and Doug Lindsay has relaid the reception area with new blue carpet tiles, acquired thanks to Andre Freeman.

The Museum has been successful in a bid to the Museum Development Officer for Kent & Medway for funds towards computer equipment. Peter Southgate is now engaged on the lengthy task of transferring details of the 4000 or so items in the museum onto disc. Later, we will also be able to scan the photographic collection onto computer.

The underframe of the Bagnall built Rye and Camber Tram carriage lying outside the Museum has been partially dismantled. Brian Janes and Laurie Cooksey have been gradually needle-gunning the frame and painting it with red oxide. The springs and axle boxes have been taken off and treated. Two of the four tie rods between axles will need straightening. Once the accessible surfaces are painted, the underframe will be turned right side up to complete the work.

The other outside exhibit is at Bodiam where John Liddell has been rebuilding the Ashover Light Railway quarry tub in the workshop. This is coming on well and will be transferred to the Museum when finished.

## New acquisitions

A 7mm 'O' gauge model of the K&ESR Pickering steam railcar. It is scratch built and painted in brown and cream livery and lettered 'K&ESR No 6'. Not yet on display.

A K&ESR timetable poster for the period 23 May to 24 September 1949 (during British Railways Period).

An interesting photograph of Edge Hill in 1922 showing the Manning Wardle 0-4-0ST engine "Sankey" with Mr John Brenchley on the footplate. He was recruited from the East Kent Railway and remained at Edge Hill as ganger-in-charge.

Mrs Sue Whitehouse has given us a number of items from the estate of her late father Mr J.

Graham Vincent. These are all related to the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway:

Book of weighbridge tickets with counterfoils from 1939

Ticket No128 issued by the Stephenson Locomotive Society for their special last train on 20 March 1960.

Receipt book from Red Hill station covering years 1917 to 1921.

Pocket timetable dated 23 September 1929

Train Staff ticket for the Llanymynech to Llanblodwell section of the Potteries, Shrewsbury & North Wales Railway 1866-1880. This section was not reopened by the S&MR.

Following the recent sad demise of The Railway Club (the original railway enthusiasts club) their library has been dispersed to suitable railway charities. As a result the Museum has received as a gift a complete run of bound copies of The Railway Magazine and The Locomotive Magazine; bound copies of the Railway Observer 1949 to date; Bradshaw timetables representing winter and summer for every year from 1890 to 1931, and around 40 miscellaneous books and booklets on Light Railways. These have been added to the Museums reference library and, as always, are available to researchers by appointment.

## Ashford Area Group

Once again the collection of waste paper in the special skip behind 'Soweto' has proved an invaluable resource. It enabled us to make up the shortfall in funding to send the 'P' class and Woolwich coach to the CFBS Steam Fete 2009.

The latter was attended by a party of 73 of our supporters and friends. A thoroughly enjoyable experience for all who attended.

Our indoor meetings continue to attract an enthusiastic following. After the August break we continue with:-

16th SEPTEMBER – K&ESR EXTRAVAGANZA - Norman Brice with a supporting programme of K&ESR pictures and videos.

06.50am SUNDAY 27th SEPTEMBER - FROISSY CAPPY DOMPIERRE RAILWAY - AN OUTDOOR VISIT TO THEIR STEAM GALA. Very few seats remain on going to press.

21st OCTOBER - MAINLINE SOUTHERN - Nigel Menzies



18th NOVEMBER - ROMANIAN NARROW GAUGE - Slides by Mike Jackson

16th DECEMBER - A TASTE OF SWITZERLAND - Seasonal scenes from Noel Tappenden

We meet at the former British Rail Staff Association Club off Beaver Road, Ashford TN23 7RR at 7.30pm on the third Wednesday of each month, except in August.

Suggestions for topics at our meetings and sites to visit are always welcome.

Ted Micklam 01233 503999.

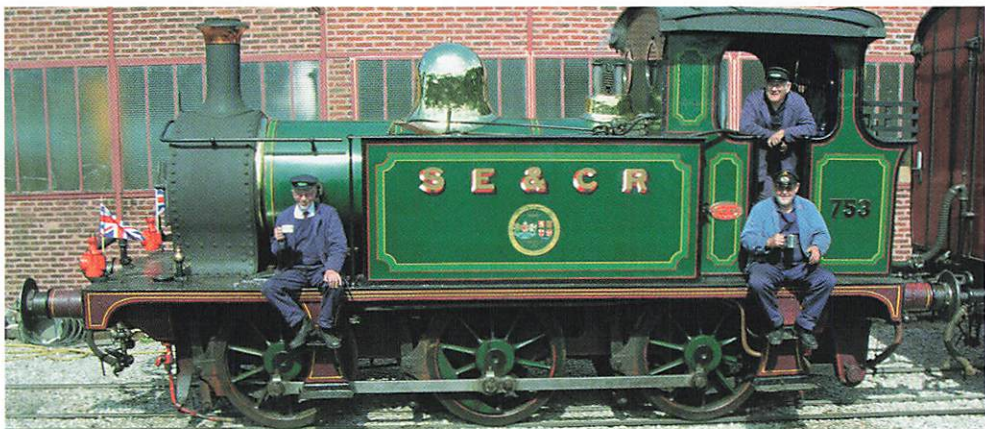
### CFBS News – Philip Pacey

The Fête de la Vapeur was a great success, blessed by good weather, as some readers will know having been there themselves or heard from K&ESR members who made the trip. I was there myself, as a volunteer, from Wednesday 22nd April. I would have made it the day before but a very late train on the West Coast Main Line caused me to miss my Eurostar connection, as a result of which I could only get as far as Calais that night! Finally arriving on the Wednesday, I was in time to witness the newly restored ex-Reseau Breton 4-6-0T E.332, built by Fives-Lille in 1909, making a trial run to Cayeux, at the head of a private train carrying CFBS members. As the pace of preparation quickened, there was a sense of mounting anticipation, boosted by the arrival of the K&ESR 'P' class loco and carriage at around midday on Thursday. I was delighted to recognise three members of the crew, and to make the acquaintance of the fourth. By Friday it really felt as if the festival had already begun. In the afternoon we were treated to the

magnificent sight of E.332 double-heading with the magnificent and immaculate locomotive visiting from Switzerland, ex-Brigue-Furka-Disentis rack and adhesion 2-6-0T SLM 2318/1913 from the Blonay-Chamby museum railway.

During the Fête itself, the weekend of the 25th and 26th, I was assigned to the CFBS's 'draisine', coupled to a visiting draisine from Le Petit Anjou. On Saturday we went initially to Noyelles, where we were forgotten and became trapped, and then at last to Le Crotoy where we were supposed to be and where we gave rides up and down in the station yard. On Sunday we did the same thing, but at Cayeux, at the end of the day following the last steam train back to St Valery. We were back at the depot in time to see the 'P' class return from Noyelles one last time before being despatched back to England. Monday was a clearing-up day. No trains were scheduled but the little Corpet 0-4-0T was steamed up for shunting and works train duties. The fine weather of the weekend finally gave way to rain in the afternoon, and walking from St Valery I came on the Corpet struggling for purchase on slippery rails.

Although I was quite happy to be at the extremities of the network rather than among the throng at Noyelles, I missed the ceremonies marking the 100th anniversary of E.332 and of the CFBS's Buffaud, and I didn't get to see the K&ESR train traversing the bay. I also missed the diesel-assisted arrivals and departures of the steam-hauled main line specials. The breakdown of these locos was the only disappointment of the weekend and could in no way be blamed on the CFBS for whom the Fête was a triumph.



(L-R) Chris Garmen, John Ascher, Peter Hubbard showing French loco crews loco tea on P4 Class (Ted Micklam)





*P and Woolwich coach at St. Valery (Philip Pacey)*



*SE&CR storm Tenterden Bank (Ted Micklam)*



# People in Profile – A. Brice

*By popular request, the return of a series that has appeared in the Terrier in years gone by. For this issue, the Editor writes about his Carriage & Wagon colleague, Shed Supervisor Alan Brice.*

Long ago, probably in the early part of 1949, I would pester my father to take me on yet another visit to a line of steamrollers in a yard not far from where we then lived in south east London. No one could possibly have imagined that over half a century later I would get to know rather a lot about two of those rollers.

One of those intriguing machines, a Wallis & Stevens of 1928, was many years later bought and restored by Alan Brice. Alan first became involved with steam at the age of eight when he began helping with the maintenance of a 1923 Ruston owned by his father, John. By amazing co-incidence that roller had also been among the line-up in that contractor's yard in Catford.

Alan certainly caught the steam bug from his father, and later became a volunteer on the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway. It was during this period that the Brice family made their initial contact with the K&ESR when the brought the Ruston to one of the early Steam & Country Fairs. Alan made his own entry into vintage steam ownership at this time with a Ruston portable engine which he displayed at a number of traction engine rallies. In preparation for his full time employment Alan completed an apprenticeship, where he learned his considerable skills as a joiner. To add more strings to his bow, he later completed an HGV Level One course and by 1996 was working as a delivery driver for Jewsons. Being fed up with this, and not least the traffic in Maidstone, he was attracted by an advert for a fitter post in Carriage & Wagon, a department whose acquaintance he had already made when the Ruston came to a Thomas™ event. Soon after he started bringing his Wallis & Stevens to special events having restored this fine two cylinder machine from a pile of parts.

Alan was promoted to Foreman in March 1998 and became Shed Supervisor in the autumn of 2004. He has been a source of continuity through the slings, arrows and good times which have characterised life in C&W, as well as the rest of the Railway, over the past 13 years. His skills extend far beyond woodworking of course, and he is an able mechanic with an inventive 'can do' approach – which is often needed and



*Alan Brice (Nick Pallant)*

much appreciated. His 'roll-on brush-off' method of coach painting was a typical innovation which is much admired as well as bringing credit to the K&ESR. Alan has had a leading role in all the major C&W projects of the past decade – *Barbara*, *Theodora*, the rebuilding of the Family Saloon underframe, the restoration of the Woolwich Coach and most recently the Birdcage project. These are just a few of the department's achievements which have benefited from his, quiet, unflappable approach. Every year he leads the Volunteers and other paid staff by example and gets stuck into the routine work and in particular the annual winter maintenance programme necessary to keep the passenger fleet in service.

Alan's non-railway interests are of course his steam vehicles and his family. The former are presently his Wallis & Stevens and half size Foden steam wagon replica, both well known to attendees at K&ESR special events. In recent years he has also restored a Marshall convertible roller, now sold, which he ran as both a roller and a tractor. His wife Jo also works for the K&ESR, in the Catering Department, and although the Brice's live in Sellindge, their children, Roberta and Oliver are at school in Tenterden. It goes without saying that both Bertie and Ollie are frequently at the Railway and there is every sign that the family's enthusiasm for all things steam will continue for another generation.

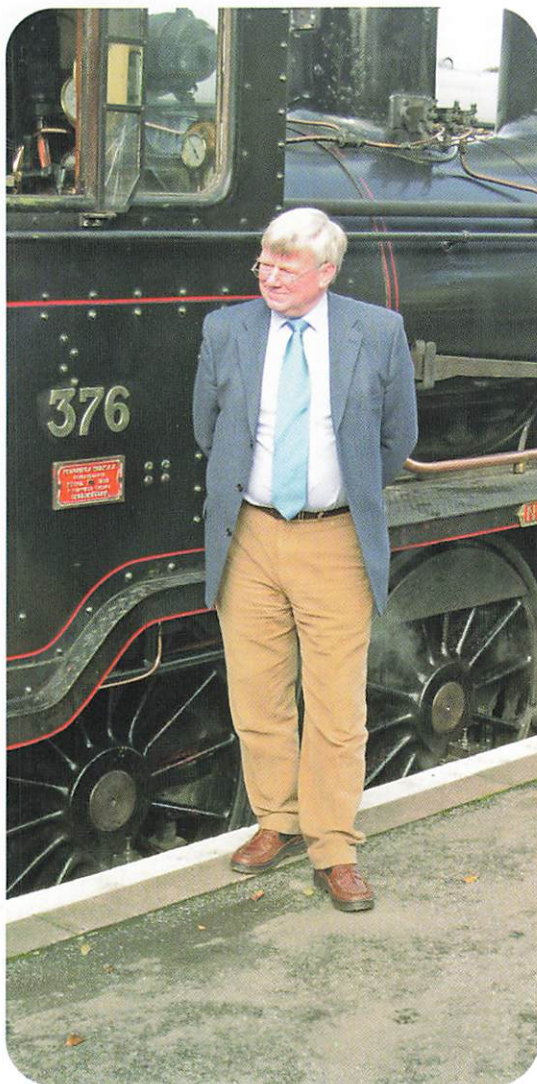
*Alan is interested in obtaining a quantity of 7 1/4 inch gauge track to develop yet another aspect of the Brice family transport interests. If you are able to assist please call him on 01580 765511 (working hours) or 01303 813394 at other times.*

ALL members who knew him will be both shocked and saddened to hear of the sudden and unexpected passing of Neil Rose, a life member since 1974 and an active volunteer right up until his death on 11th May 2009. He was 62.

Neil's contribution to the Railway over the years was very considerable. He was Company Secretary and a Director of the Tenterden Railway Company Ltd between 1977 and 1979, Assistant Editor of our house journal, the Tenterden Terrier, between 1987 and 1989, Chairman and Treasurer of the Norwegian Locomotive Trust and an active member of The Terrier Trust. He was also rostered regularly as a signalman and guard and also found time to serve as "The Fat controller" on the "Day Out With Thomas" events and as Father Christmas during the festive season.

Neil Stewart Rose was born at Sanderstead in Surrey and attended Whitgift School. On leaving school he joined the Bank of England and, in due course, became one of the managers, staying there for all of his working life until taking early retirement at the age of 55. During his working life he became a magistrate and served on the bench at both Uckfield and Lewes for a period of 25 years.

# Neil Rose



*Neil and the Norwegian (Tom White)*

Neil lived life to the full. The Railway was important to him, but his family was the most important part of Neil's busy life. He also contributed considerably to local affairs in Wadhurst, where he and his wife Alison settled and spent virtually all of their 37 years of married life.

It was symptomatic of Neil's attitude to life that, on retirement, and seeking a new challenge, he decided to train for a PSV licence and take up coach driving for a few years, doing mainly school runs, although he had no need to do so.

Everything he did was tackled both diligently and competently, combined with great charm, courtesy and a wonderful sense of humour. He was well known and respected in Wadhurst, where he was until recently, President of the Rotary Club, an active member of the Wadhurst History Society, the Wadhurst Dramatic

Club, the Wadhurst Church Fellowship and the Parochial Church Council.

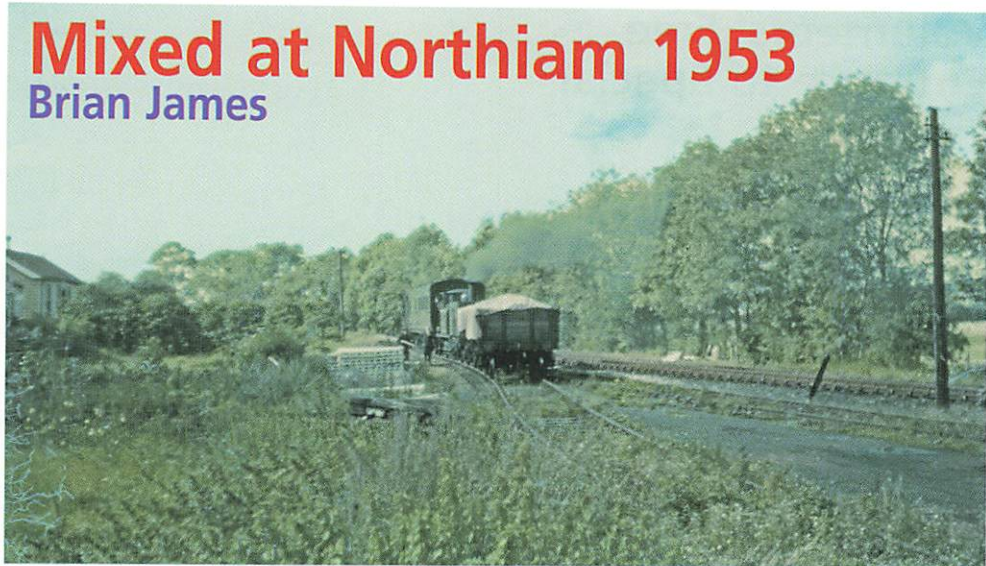
Our sympathy goes to Neil's wife Alison, and his three children, Christopher, Elizabeth and Eleanor in the sad loss. The Kent & East Sussex Railway has lost one of its most talented and valued members.

PDS



# Mixed at Northiam 1953

## Brian James

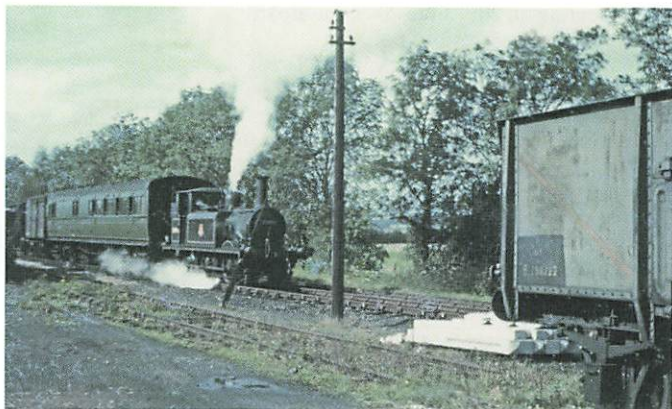


The Museum recently acquired a rare batch of colour slides taken in 1953 and 1955 on the Railway. Many are static shots but there is a nice little sequence of a mixed train dropping off wagons at Northiam.

The engine appears to be No.32655 (*Stepney*) which had already run round its train, separated out wagons for Northiam, picked up its carriage and through wagon, and was placing the Northiam wagons in the sidings before proceeding towards Tenterden. Imagine the manoeuvres inherent in this activity, especially since BR insisted on adding a goods brake van; something that would not be countenanced in independent days.

Think also of the passengers riding up and down with the engine, and the more leisurely approach to life. BR recorded that the mixed would be anything up to 70 minutes late on its journey.

*Northiam Station Yard 1953 (Col. Stephens Historical Railway Archive)*



*No. 32655 with mixed train (Col. Stephens Historical Railway Archive)*



*Entrance to Northiam Yard 1953 (Col. Stephens Historical Railway Archive)*

## Volunteers' Free Entrance to Special Events

Further to the notice regarding Members Concessions and Gala Events which appeared in the Winter 2008 issue of the *Terrier* it needs to be added that Volunteers are entitled to free entry and travel at Galas on production of a K&ESR Grade Card. These are available from Departmental Managers. Our continuing policy towards other members is to offer a discount at Galas.

## Retirement of Safety Critical Operating Staff

At its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2009, the Board agreed to vary the previous policy of compulsory retirement at age 75 for all staff (this currently only affects Volunteers) in safety critical operating roles. In future staff approaching 75 years of age will be invited to apply for review, if they so wish, with a view to them carrying on with their safety critical duties. The review will be conducted at Inspector level. If this affects you please speak to your Inspector or departmental Manager. Copies of the Policy can be obtained from the Company Secretary.



32678 crosses Hexden, May Gala (Ian Scarlett)

## LONDON TRANSPORT MUSEUM

Kent & East Sussex Railway members are able to take advantage of a 'two (people) for the price of one' offer by the London Transport Museum in Covent Garden Piazza, London, WC2E 7BB, on production of a current K&ESR membership card. Well worth visiting for its trams, 'proper' buses with half cabs and relics of the Metropolitan Railway (amongst much else) further details of what can be seen in this fascinating collection can be found on the Museum's web site at [www.ltmuseum.co.uk](http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk).





# Guarding the Guards

## *Graham Williams explains his vital role within the Operating Department*

It is now been three years since I was appointed Guards Inspector and I would like to tell you what has happened during that time. There have been only two Guard's Inspectors since the Railway reopened in 1974, the other having been Malcolm Webb from 1982 to 2005. During the first few years there was no Inspector in this work area but as the Railway grew it became necessary to have one.

There are now 54 guards, shunters and trainees on the books. In the 1980's this figure was about 30. These have been divided up into two teams. I have one team and the other team is under Assistant Guard's Inspector Kent Evenden.

In 2002 Malcolm Webb, with help of Andy Smith, brought in a new assessment procedure inherited from Connex footplate assessments and based on continuous assessment rather than rules tests. These assessments are renewed five yearly, although this period can be amended to any period set by the Railway and many of the assessments are done within four years. The first guards were assessed under this procedure during 2003. Since that date 17 new guards' and three shunters have been passed out and 45 have been assessed and had observation rides. I am indebted to Malcolm for bringing this procedure in. The assessment is mainly by observation. Questions or scenarios are used where competence cannot be established through observation.

Once a year, usually in March, I have a meeting with all the guards. This is the only time when we can get together and I use the opportunity to go through what has happened over the previous year, new guards, assessments and operating incidents for example, and also look ahead to the year to come. The Operating Manager and Roster Clerks also give reports. Then it's on to any other business which is where I can get a lot of useful feedback.

I would like to mention Colin Avey who stood down as Roster Clerk on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2008, and I thank him for all his work over the last six years. He took over after the sudden death of Laurie Gurr in March 2002. Peter Spratling and Jim Williams have taken on this role and I wish them well.



*Guards Inspector Graham Williams (via Graham Williams)*

Most days when trains are running two or three guards are required for the service. At the weekends this goes up to three to four each day. On the Monday of the May gala there were eight! Guards start the day about one hour before the first departure and during this time they prepare the train for service. Now that the platform road derailer at Tenterden is in use, booking on can be later. Most guards, however, book on in good time because we have now got back the job of tanking-up the coaches. (Filling the toilet tanks from a hose; a lengthy and at times cold and wet job. Ed.)

I like all my guards to be competent in all aspects of their role; shunting, out of course working, emergencies and so on.. You can become a guard from the age of 18 but may start training before that. The post is safety critical so you must be fit and healthy and pass a medical. I have guards from 18 to 74 at the moment and a good spread in between.



One area I am not so happy about is the training of guards. Most of the training is 'on the job' with a qualified guard, but I also like to have one-to-ones where I can see how the trainees are getting on. This gives the opportunity to look at yard layouts, local instructions, signals and ground frames around the railway and to see what they know.

As an inspector I can not be a trainer as well and I feel this is one area we could do better. One area I am happy with is assessments. (Yes, I know I'm on about assessments again!) Nevertheless it is very important that you have the paper work in place in this day and age. With HM Railway Inspectorate and the RAIB out there I need this to be up to date.

When I took over in November 2005 I found out that over half my guards were over due an assessment. But with the help of Kent this is now down to zero. For this, in 2007, I was given the General Manager's Award and am very proud to have been recognised in this way. As Kent and I both work full time for South Eastern it can make it hard to fit everyone in. At the end of the year I give a report to my manager, Pete Salmon, on how things are going.

I joined the K&ESR in 1968 - that is now over

forty years ago. In those days I was looking at being a fireman. I did a few stationary steam turns on Manning Wardle *Arthur* (Renamed *Matthew Murray* in 2001 at The Middleton Railway).

This was the period when BR would not allow us to move anything but on Sundays we would have one loco in steam to show a presence. It was Derek Dunlavy who, in the early seventy's, asked me if I would like to be a shunter (passed out 1972) and as a guard (in 1973). I was 19 years old.

A lot of guards have dual roles as signalmen, drivers, firemen, TTI or Station Masters. It is a very responsible job, you meet the travelling public and get to see the entire railway - it's not just waving a flag and blowing a whistle. I would like to thank Operating Assistants Howard Wallace-Sims and Matt Green for their help over the years, and drivers who have helped me with shunting.

I would also like to express my thanks for the cooperation of other departments, especially Alan Brice from Carriage and Wagon. The Guard's Inspectors is one of the jobs that is behind the scenes and I hope I have shed some light on this area of the Operating Department.



*Charles Lucas attaches tail lamp (Graham Williams)*





Pat Denvir sees his train out of Tenterden Town (Graham Williams)

## KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

### January 2009

1st D G W Taylor	No.354	£60.00
2nd Ray Crampin	No.423	£40.00
3rd Clive Norman	No. 390	£30.00
4th Norman Brice	No. 223	£25.00
5th Bob Clifford	No. 016	£20.00
6th Meg Gooch	No. 493	£10.00

### March 2009

1st Mrs M L Bates	No. 328	£80.00
2nd L A Scott	No. 166	£60.00
3rd Mrs Denise Riley	No. 126	£50.00
4th C D Ware	No. 173	£30.00
5th Lancelet G Tyler	No. 367	£20.00
6th Maggie Remnant	No. 249	£15.00
7th Chris Maple	No. 216	£10.00

### February 2009

1st Brian Heyes	No. 151	£60.00
2nd Mrs P Coombs	No. 220	£40.00
3rd Adrian Clark-Monks	No. 270	£30.00
4th Kent P Evenden	No. 494	£25.00
5th P R H Alexander	No. 430	£20.00
6th G F Tollerfield	No. 297	£10.00

### April 2009

1st P Bradford	No. 483	£60.00
2nd Roger Price	No. 546	£40.00
3rd Brian Heyes	No. 152	£30.00
4th Mark Justice	No. 352	£25.00
5th John Cobb	No. 382	£20.00
6th Tom Webb	No. 411	£10.00

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





*Above: No. 32678 at Tenterden Town (David Ware)*

*Below: USA Class No. 65 waits in Rolvenden Loop with the Breakdown Train (Paul Sayce)*

# MAY GALA







*Above: No.3, Knowle and the P Class at Bodiam (Paul Sayce)*

*Below: The visiting O1 Class at Rolvenden with the Vintage Train (Paul Sayce)*







*Above: Brighton meets Ashford at Rolvenden (Paul Sayce)*

*Below: And the last train's gone... (Paul Sayce)*





# Railway preservation in Tasmania and Britain

by Peter Southgate



*Locomotive M5 heads a steam excursion from Hobart in Feb 2004*

Returning to Tenterden after four years in Tasmania one reflects on the differences in the railway preservation scene here and 'down under'. Australia has some good things to offer, but I think Britain definitely comes out on top. We went there with an open mind as to how long we'd stay but in the end the attractions of England won the day. One turning point was in July 2007 when we sat down on a chilly winter day – yes, they are in Tasmania – to watch the TV coverage of the Tour de France cycle race passing through the Weald of Kent. Once the camera helicopter circled Sissinghurst Castle we knew that Tenterden would soon appear, then all of a sudden there was a shrill sound and we were back at Cranbrook Road with the Victorian train, a Terrier at its head whistling its heart out, welcoming the cyclists to Tenterden. There was not a dry eye in our house that day, and the video of this section of the race was carefully preserved for display to Australian visitors, to show them just how beautiful, green and well-kept our part of England actually is. A gentle reminder that not all Poms went to Oz to escape the squalor of back-to-back industrial slums, which is the stereotype that Australians prefer to believe.

As we know from school geography, Australia

has had a mixture of railway gauges, which led to the tedious and time-consuming transhipment of goods and passengers at many places. But Tasmania's island status helped avoid this. It started out with a broad gauge, but then changed to three feet six, which gave flexibility in rugged terrain but allowed largish locos and rolling stock and faster running on the more open sections of line.

The Tasmanian Government Railways (TGR) grew from the mid-1800s onwards, and then cut back progressively in the mid-20th century as road transport made its mark, with passenger services ending completely in 1978. Until that time the main station in Hobart saw numerous passenger trains, including the elegant 'Tasman Limited' luxury trains which travelled the length of the island in both directions each day. Their articulated saloon carriages featured air suspended reclining leather seats, tray tables, state of the art lighting and heating, and an at-seat buffet service from smiling hostesses – according to the publicity films. Unfortunately the publicity was not enough; road transport was improving and the 'Tasman Limited' simply couldn't compete. For much of the route it had to navigate horseshoe bends and steep gradients to gain very little distance, and it never could



be a fast journey, so passenger trains were lost to the state. The TGR has been described by some (Tasmanians) as the best run railway in Australia. It certainly provided an extensive service through its main lines and branches, and nowadays still carries freight on the main routes. The ability to carry 20 and 40 foot containers has probably kept it going as long as it has.

Colonel Stephens would have had a field day in Tasmania, for there was no shortage of quaint and down-at-heel lines serving the largely rural island which he could have knocked into shape. The island's railways are, technically, 'narrow gauge' which gives them a bit more of a branch line/ light railway character, even on the main line, and this narrow gauge would doubtless have pleased the Colonel on grounds of economy. In days past the island also boasted a network of branch lines, reaching into corners so remote that in some places there was no road access to the outside world, and until quite recently cars were carried in on railway wagons.

He would have found these branches pretty cheap to run, with their ramshackle diesel and petrol rail buses carrying the tiny numbers of passengers, most of whom were so grateful to escape from the bush for a day that they would not have complained about the noise or discomfort of the transport on offer! The very basic and functional buildings on the railways would also have appealed to HFS.

Architectural design was not a big concern for the local builders, who were content to work with wood, concrete and corrugated iron. In fact the standard Colonel Stephens station would have fitted perfectly in Tasmania.

One feature of Tasmania makes a very direct link with the Kent and East Sussex. For just as the K&ESR ran through hop fields, so too does the Derwent Valley line in the south of the state. There is no train service at all there at the moment, but there were regular passenger excursion trains until recently, and in 2004 I travelled on one of the last of these. As we ascended the valley, with numerous crossings of rail, road and river, suddenly the hills opened out and there below us was the familiar sight of hop fields! I'd heard of their existence, but it was still a strange experience to see them; a sense of déjà vu so far away from home. I wondered whether there used to be special trains to bring hop-pickers to work the fields. But how did they come to be there in the first place?

In the early 19th century when the Colonial government was trying to diversify Van Diemen's Land (as Tasmania was first called) from its primary role as a penal colony it offered generous grants of land and convict labour to 'free-settlers' willing to emigrate from England. William Shoobridge a hop-grower from Tenterden went out at this time, arriving in Hobart Town in 1822, and was given land on which he built a house and named it Kent Cottage. At first he ran a sawmill then, in 1825, he began hop farming using sets brought from Kent. The local climate proved conducive and the industry prospered. Shoobridge died in 1836 but his descendants continued hop farming up in the Derwent Valley and are still leading Tasmanian growers.

The line past these hop fields was opened in 1886 by the TGR, branching off the main north-south line and running at first 18kms to New Norfolk then further up the valley by stages until 1936. In 1940 the opening of a paper mill lower down the valley increased traffic enormously, but after the war things were cut back, first the more remote logging branches, then eventually in 1995 floods closed most of the line. But all was not lost for the DVR Preservation Society was set up and by 1999 was re-establishing passenger running.

At New Norfolk the preservationists now work to restore and maintain the line's four steam locos, seven diesels, nine carriages and a dozen or more wagons, many of which are in a pretty bad state. The hefty-looking tender locos came from Vulcan and other British manufacturers and the freight wagons offer a wonderful mixture of British and American styles, with four wheel and bogie stock. The passenger carriages are quite luxurious for a narrow gauge heritage line, being the leftovers from the passenger trains I mentioned earlier.

Preservationists in Tasmania have a tough time. Until 2005 the Derwent Valley Railway, along with the Tasmanian Transport Museum in Hobart, ran regular excursion trains over the main island system and along the DVR itself. There were short runs up the valley at weekends and occasional longer trips from Hobart right through to Mount Field National Park. From there walkers could venture into the bush and the less hardy into the gift shop and café, then back onto the train. Another very popular excursion trip involved sailing up the river from Hobart to New Norfolk on the 1912 MV Cartela, Australia's oldest passenger vessel in continuous service, then returning

down to Hobart by train at the end of the day.

Suddenly this all became a memory and bushes now grow between the rails, a sad contrast to the thriving preservation scene over here. The explanation is that in recent years until 2005 the Tasmanian railway system was run by the Pacific National company, which had no interest in the line above the paper mill and failed to maintain the track. It was eventually declared unsafe and summarily closed down; no more excursion trains! After some lobbying the state government made a grant of \$60,000 to the DVR in 2006, and an agreement was reached that the government would take over the island's rail infrastructure – the assumption being that it would then maintain it.

Despite this the future of excursion trains and heritage railways remains in doubt, for there is nothing like the same level of interest or passenger demand as there is in Britain. The market will always be limited by the small local population and the relative inaccessibility of Tasmania. Some tourist lines have gone out of business altogether while others close then re-open, like the two foot gauge Ida Bay Railway. This 'bush tramway' is in the middle of nowhere two hours drive from Hobart down dirt roads.

It once carried limestone and timber, but now has no steam engines and not much else to see. On a pleasant summer day we were the only passengers; imagine that on almost any British narrow gauge line. Other two foot gauge lines which do run steam are the Redwater Creek at Sheffield in northern Tasmania and the Wee Georgie Wood at Tullah in the west. Neither has more than one engine and a mile of track and they run only once a month. It's all very low key compared to what we're used to here.

Preserved railway lines in Australia rarely seem to be named after the places they once served, but have names like 'The Valley Rattler', 'Wee Georgie Wood' or 'Puffing Billy'. Maybe they don't take them as seriously as we do? There are some good museums and tourist lines, but they are often far-flung and lack the style and visual appeal that form such a central part of the preservation scene here. Rural station architecture, for example, is no better than much of the rest of Australian architecture, with its concrete walls, tin roofs and general tattiness.

Tasmania's best publicised line is the West Coast Wilderness Railway (or 'ABT') which is a reconstruction of a three foot six line with a rack and pinion section that once served mines



*The Redwater Creek railway at Sheffield, February 2007*



and forests in the mountainous west. Older Tasmanians still remember the picnic excursion trains which ran on it in their childhood. It closed in 1963 and lay derelict until 2000 when Federal Government grants enabled its reconstruction, under the General Management of Aemonn Seddon, brought out from the Festiniog. Reopening in 2003 it is now run by the Federal Hotels chain, a commercial company. Described in the publicity as a 'world class' tourist experience it offers fares to match.

The nearest thing in Tasmania to a typical British heritage line is the Don River Railway at Devonport in the north, which offers the familiar mix of steam and diesel, static displays, workshops, gift shop, station and a train ride of a couple of miles each way along the track of a once much longer route dating back to the 1860s connecting farming communities to the coast. Closed in 1963 it reopened for tourists ten years later, with eleven steam and ten diesel locos. Unlike most British heritage lines the trains run almost every day of the year.

Still in northern Tasmania there are train and tram relics at a recently opened industrial history museum in the old works of the Tasmanian Railways at Launceston, while down in Hobart the Tasmanian Transport Museum has been open since 1983. This is a mainly static museum, open on weekend afternoons, with short railcar runs along a siding and a collection of about ten each of locos, coaches and wagons; also trams, fire engines, traction engines, a roundhouse,

passenger station and other displays.

The railways of Tasmania are permanently under threat of closure, with the prospect of hundreds more American semi-trailers clogging an inadequate road system. The government has reluctantly agreed to put money into maintenance and upgrading, but it's all a political football with so many vested interests involved. As with most things in Tasmanian politics – widely accused of corruption – nobody seems to know what will happen next, and decisions emerge without warning. The hopeful view is that Tasmania will live up to the 'clean green' image to which it aspires and make good use of its railway system, keeping significant amounts of freight on the rails and opening up a light rail commuter service into Hobart. The running of excursion trains was once a central part of the preservation scene, and with a more positive approach this might resume. On the other hand, the interests of developers and road transport may prevail, and we know what happens then.

All in all the tenuous state of both the main Tasmanian railway system and the few heritage lines in the state make me very glad to be back in Tenterden. We may have some ups and downs here, but we have so much more to enjoy.

Details of the lines mentioned and other information on Tasmanian railways can be found at: [www.railtasmania.com](http://www.railtasmania.com) This website links to the quarterly Tasmanian Rail News which covers railway developments on the island, including preservation.



*The Don River Railway, March 2001*

# From the Board Room

A selection of topics discussed in January, February, March and April 2009. Subject headings have been included to group allied topics together. More complete details can be obtained from the Company Secretary.

## Safety & Incidents

A tamping machine has struck the edge of Tenterden Town platform in November dislodging several coping stones.

Ashford Borough's Tree Preservation Officer had no objection to the removal of a split oak tree behind the information kiosk site at Tenterden. Norman Brice said he would donate replacement trees.

The risk assessment for balcony saloon No. 82 had been completed. 'Remain seated' signs would be installed and a TTI would in future travel on the vehicle.

## Legal

It was agreed to write to Rother District Council supporting their Core Strategy which safeguarded the route to Robertsbridge.

The Board had no objection in principle to a planning application for a 'Maize Maze' (i.e. a maze utilising sweet corn plants instead of privet) next to Bodiam station on the grounds this would enhance tourism in the area.

It was reported that Sustrans now had no intention of taking the Tenterden Cycleway on any route which crossed the Railway.

Ashford BC had produced yet another set of proposals for car parking in Tenterden.

The insurance inspection of the Railway in January went well. Trustees congratulated Derek Dunlavy and the management team on this result.

It was agreed to extend the Twinning Agreement with the Chemin de Fer de la Baie de Somme to include the Chemin de Fer du Cote du Nord.

Terrier No. 3 would not be making any visits away from the K&ESR until further notice. The Terrier Trustees wished to review the present arrangements.

A suggestion, from within the Rother Valley Railway, that a DMU special be run over the new Bodiam West extension had been vetoed by that company's management on the grounds that requirements of ROGS were yet to be satisfied.

## Finance

The unaudited accounts for 2008 showed a £1.5 million turnover. The loss for the year had been £42,000. The serious nature of these figures contrasted with the position in recent years. The weather had been a primary cause of a significant drop in passenger numbers. The Audit had been completed by the April meeting.

The Railway had traded well in the short post Christmas period. Thomas™ bookings were slightly ahead of the same point in 2008 and advance bookings in general were very healthy.

The 2009 budget was revised in the light of the circumstances prevailing. The objective of the revised budget was to be cash neutral.

The bank loan had been re-negotiated with a repayment period of 20 years. No more debt had been incurred but payments would be reduced as a result.

The February Thomas™ event had been both ahead of budget and the 2008 figures. The GM said that the reasons for this were uncertain. This was the first time Thomas™ numbers had gone up for two years. It had been a great start but there were 10 months to go.

In March the cash position was reported to be much better than might have been expected in view of the economic situation. The Chairman commented it was very early in the season and there was a continuing need to be prudent. This trend continued in to April. Managers' restraint in committing the Company to expenditure was noted with approval.

A revised Draft Business Plan was submitted by Ian Legg this being followed in March by a further version of the Plan. Trustees said that there was a need to identify key targets and then determine if they were achievable within resources. They also asked for a shorter version concentrating on decisions the Board needed to take. This was presented in April.

A revised InterReg III application was to be submitted for consideration by the relevant authorities in June 2009.

## Marketing, Sales & Product

Pullman and RXD bookings were very good. Overall, the position was difficult to reconcile with the general economic situation and it was therefore difficult to make forecasts for 2009. Advanced bookings were at £162,000 (about the same level as 2008). The local tourist industry



showed signs of an increase in 2009. The weekend previous to the March meeting had been the best start of season in the three years. As with finance, these trends continued into April.

Working members were concerned about the late availability of the 2009 timetable leaflet. The GM explained that in 2009 the Vintage set would form the first train of the day which had led to design difficulties. The Chairman instructed that the 2010 timetable should be available for the 2009 Santa Specials.

### **Human Resources**

Geoff Crouch had received 420 replies to his Volunteering Survey. 52 per cent of respondents said that they did not know who the Board members were. Geoff urged everyone to go and talk to departments they were not normally involved with. Geoff was to publish both his reports on Volunteering by making them available in mess rooms. He wished to edit out nothing.

The Memorial Sub-Committee recommended that the scattering of ashes be confined to non-safety critical areas at Northiam and Bodiam, that there should be no further indiscriminate placing of memorial plaques. A Memorial Book should be established and kept on public display in the Museum. Full details of the scheme would be announced in due course.

Carol Mitchell suggested that the Board should apologise for the problems that had arisen during the introduction of the Blackbaud ticketing system. Although these were not entirely of the Company's making, it was clear that they had created very negative feelings, which it would take time to change. The GM said that although he was responsible for organising the training only Blackbaud could deliver it. Regrettably, that training was inadequate because of shortcomings in their preparation and computer programming.

In March there was a discussion about the pressures on Pullman staff (many of whom are Volunteers) and the need to maintain high standards following the recent increase in fares for this prestige service.

Ruth Gower of Catering Department had been elected unopposed as Volunteer representative on the Employment Committee.

A new Vetting & Barring Scheme was to be introduced nationally to enhance protection of vulnerable people. The Employment Committee was to review the Railway's procedures accordingly.

Following concerns raised at the Volunteers & Staff meeting about the age limit for operating

grade volunteers, the Chairman put on record that the Board had taken note of this matter. As a consequence the Policy was to be reviewed.

### **Infrastructure**

The GM said plans were in hand for the Carriage & Wagon Shed extension. Brian Janes reiterated his view that this project and other capital infrastructure works should be controlled by a Board Sub-Committee. Carol Mitchell formally proposed and Derek Dunlavy seconded the establishment of such a Committee. This was agreed.

An initial plan for the Carriage Shed Extension had been prepared but needed revision. The matter was carried forward.

### **Policy Compliance**

Brian Janes said that the Heritage Policy should be complied with in respect of trackside signs and new types of sign discussed with the archivist. He was concerned about Managers acting unilaterally. Derek Dunlavy replied that the K&ESR needed to comply as much as possible with recognised national signs but that he noted the Heritage Policy.

Paul Wilson, Engineering Manager (who attended the meeting) had produced a paper on Locomotive Strategy. To deliver the number of locomotives envisaged in the strategy required resource, this had not been met and the number of available locos would decline. The K&ESR was, nonetheless, ahead of other Railways in recognising this problem. The Chairman said that the Railway could not afford more staff. Paul Wilson continued that eventually we would be unable to run as many trains. It was possible to run smaller trains as had been proven during Easter. In the past the 'A' set has been run because the Railway had plenty of class 5 locos; but things were changing. A draft revised Locomotive Policy was to be prepared to take account not only of locomotive availability but also the commercial impact. There was also a discussion on diesels. Paul Wilson emphasised that diesels were needed for emergency use rather than service trains.

Carriage Policy was also discussed. The GM thought that what was needed was a Rolling Stock Policy covering traction and carriages. Norman Brice suggested that anything (including locomotives) which cannot be restored in 10 years should be moved elsewhere.

A request had been received to reinstate the Heritage Policy exemption which had previously permitted Rolvenden signal box to be painted SR green and cream. Brian Janes was to review this.



# Closure

*At the conclusion of Brian Janes' article 'Nationalisation-The End of Independence' (see Tenterden Terrier 106) it could be seen that efforts to improve and integrate the K&ESR into the national system had come to an end and the writing was on the wall for the closure of the K&ESR.*

Branch-line operations, taken in isolation, had been continuing loss makers from the beginning of railways, but had been largely tolerated by the private companies for their contributory income to the whole system. However action on them and in particular closure was an easy way for management to show that they were active in pursuit of 'efficiency' rather than taking the harder low profile improvement of the efficiency of day-to-day running practices. Sir Cyril Hurcomb, a long time transport civil servant and Chairman of the British Transport Commission (BTC), pressed the subordinate Railway Executive (RE) on several occasions to take up the matter of closures with more urgency. The RE in March 1949 agreed to establish an ad hoc committee of chief officers (known with characteristic bureaucratic ambiguity as the Branch Lines Committee) to investigate all branch lines whose earning capacity was in question. The committee adopted an essentially conservative stance, and this was made clear in its terms of reference. Branch-line policy, it declared, "should not be approached solely from the negative point of view of reducing expenditure. The main object was to increase or maintain net revenue, and this could not be considered without regard to the wider aspects now opened up by transport integration." A praiseworthy approach in many ways particularly as, unlike later reviews, it paid considerable attention to the possibilities of transport with buses and lorries (then a BTC responsibility), although it never seems to have considered efficiency improvements on the Branch lines. However, not an approach that would endear it to senior officers and politicians, who simply wanted to demonstrate action, and the Committee finally lost its way with the coming of the Conservative government in 1953 when it became clear that transport integration was a dead issue. It faded from the scheme and branch line matters lay festering for several

years before spiralling losses forced the issue in the late fifties and Beeching finally came along to wield the axe on a vaster scale.

The practical result of this initial work on the network was nationally minimal. Of course, public enthusiasm for its railway, however unprofitable, was then an important factor to be considered, particularly since consumers were supported by an extensive appeal machinery - the Central Transport Consultative Committee and the area Transport User Consultative Committees; the Minister of Transport did not, at least in theory, have a role. So between July 1949 and June 1953 the committee dealt with about 200 cases, recommending the complete closure of over 500 route-miles and the withdrawal of a further 88 passenger services. 253 miles were closed to passenger and freight traffic, 1,167 miles to passenger traffic only and 359 miles to freight traffic only; the total savings were put at £1,159,000 (£23-24m in 2007 values) per annum. The savings from these closures were little more than a drop in the ocean, for the mileage of track open for traffic was reduced by a mere 1 per cent. But individual cases of course mattered; and one of these was the Kent & East Sussex.

It was not, however, a forgone conclusion that the K&ESR was for the chop, even though it had not made a penny since at least 1932, for other lines had not made a penny since they were built and lost far more. Even as late as September 1950 Eustace Missenden, the Chairman of the RE and former Southern Railway General Manager, told Hurcomb that it would be difficult on political grounds to find further lines to close on the Southern and Western regions. The Branch Lines Committee was, perhaps consequently, a little slow in getting into gear, and the Southern did not get round to proposing the K&ESR till quite late in the process. It is an interesting speculation that had the case been presented a few months later closure might have come later than it did.

However the figures presented to the Committee were the sort of figures that, to the eternal damnation of his name, Dr Beeching was to accept on a broader basis 10 years later. Taken at face value they were pretty damning.

In summary, the K&ESR was taking £269 per day of which only £33 came from the Headcorn extension. Even this if later figure discounted the operational oddity, that, after BR took over, it was customary for Tenterden Town wagons to

	Local Journeys		Through Journeys				Total Journeys	
	No.	£	No. out	£	No. inward	£	No.	£
<b>Passengers</b> <b>Headcorn-</b> <b>Tenterden</b> <b>exclusive</b>	1499	64	577	208	382	133	1794	405
<b>Tenterden-</b> <b>Robertsbridge</b>	9495	417	6527	1998	4590	1585	21276	4000
<b>Total</b>	10994	481	7104	2206	4972	1718	23070	4405
<b>Parcels</b> <b>Headcorn-</b> <b>Tenterden</b>	26	2	2419	477	2037	349	4482	828
<b>Tenterden-</b> <b>Robertsbridge</b>	31	4	6387	1175	19974	4552	26392	5731
<b>Total</b>	57	6	8806	1652	22011	4901	30874	6559
<b>Freight</b> <b>Headcorn-</b> <b>Tenterden</b>	9	3	766	2451	2602	6211	3377	8665
<b>Tenterden-</b> <b>Robertsbridge</b>	57	30	2022	6020	28120	54216	30199	60266
<b>Total</b>	66	33	2788	8471	30722	60427	33576	60266
			wagons		wagons		wagons	
<b>L/Stock</b> <b>Headcorn-</b> <b>Tenterden</b>			31	255			31	255
<b>Tenterden-</b> <b>Robertsbridge</b>			8	75	20	252	28	357
<b>Miscellaneous</b> <b>Receipts</b>		125						125
<b>Total All</b> <b>Receipts</b>		645		12659		67298		80602

*£1 in 1951 = £22.63 in 2007 using the retail price index; or £66.54 using average earnings*

arrive via Robertsbridge and depart via Headcorn. The Headcorn extension was, as it had been from day one, a dead loss. It was taking some six passengers a day; 15 parcels and 11 tons of goods (perhaps 1 ½ wagons at 1952 average loadings) and livestock traffic had virtually ceased many years before. Tenterden to Robertsbridge was much stronger but 71 passengers per day, half of which was internal journeys (including 3 seasons from Northiam to

Tenterden), was hardly healthy. Goods fared better with daily figures around 88 parcels and 100 tons (say 14 wagons).

When this was considered by the Committee, the obvious conclusion was to shut down the passenger service and retain the goods service on the old Rother Valley section only. Indeed the only discussion seems to have been how to provide a service for the three Northiam-



Tenterden season ticket holders who would not be able to get to work on time with the existing bus service. This was solved by laying on an extra morning bus under the integration system! One cannot decide whether this was a gentler more caring age or one that did not care about public finances!

So after many successful years (yes, the first 25 years of our railway were successful) and many years of struggle, the passenger railway finally came to an end on Saturday 2 January 1954. And the result of all this dry economic and bureaucratic decision making was to bring a way of life to an end for many.

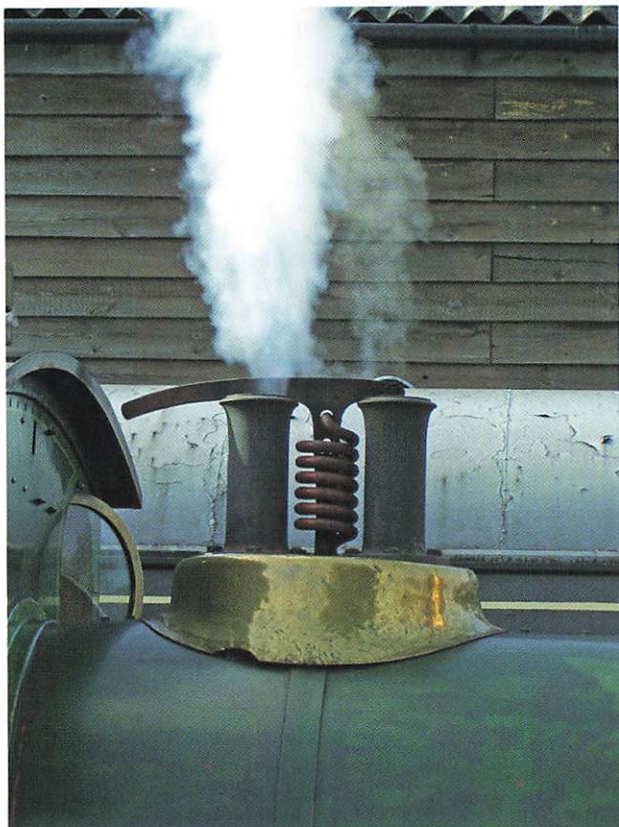
George Fraser, who had pursued a varied railway footplate career from Haymarket Edinburgh to the mainline at Ashford and the K&ESR in its dying BR days, well reflected this when writing to the Tenterden Terrier in 1996:

"Since nationalisation, Rolvenden had become a sub shed of Ashford, so when required Ashford men were sent to fill duties there. This again was a good duty for me; it entailed catching the bus from Bethersden to Ashford, walking to the loco shed to 'book on', walking back to the bus station, and getting the bus to Rolvenden; all this before starting the real work of the day! Having crewed two return trips on the K&ESR the aim was to get the 8.10pm bus back to Ashford (if I missed this one I had to wait 2 hours for the last one at 10.10pm). Officially there was not enough time to dispose of the loco in time to catch the 8.10pm so in any event I was paid until the 'official' booking off time at Ashford, which I think was about 11.30pm, whereas if I was lucky and got the early bus I would be home at Bethersden by 8.30pm

the Up train had in fact left and shouldn't we be on our way! The Driver and I rushed back to the train just as the Guard was about to give us the 'Right Away' and off we went, at speed, towards Tenterden. However, as we whistled for the first crossing out of Headcorn, the driver looked back to discover that we had forgotten to couple the train on. We then had to set back to the station and make amends with the Guard, passengers and station staff. Needless to say, I did miss the early bus that night!

Another very embarrassing moment for me was whilst on my very first turn on the line, I just wasn't used to having a very small fire with so little steam being required, for the one coach train. As we approached High Halden that day, I opened the fire hole door to find the fire had gone out. The driver just laughed and said I would soon get used to the line.

I do remember actually having to damp down the fire once at Biddenden. During a shunting move, between us, we managed to totally de-rail the locomotive. So I realised that it would be



I well recall this concern about catching the early evening bus for it led, on one occasion, to a near-reportable offence. It was the custom that whilst awaiting the Up connection at Headcorn for the crew to partake of refreshment in the Railway Hotel on the station approach; and on this particular evening, we were enjoying our pint when the barman reminded us that

some hours before help arrived by way of the Ashford crane and decided to douse the fire and spend the waiting time picking blackberries! There was an official enquiry into this derailment, the actual enquiry took place at Biddenden and I was called to 'give evidence' as to what happened. The chairman, after hearing what happened, actually congratulated me on my forthcoming marriage, and put the accident down to 'inclement weather'... in fact the incident occurred in the middle of a heatwave, so nobody was actually blamed!

On another occasion at Biddenden I remember a more serious accident when a member of staff was injured. We were shunting the yard and had a raft of about ten wagons with a brake van on the end, Cyril Packham, the Guard, was in the end balcony of the brake van and waved us away briskly. Being used to taking shunting orders exactly as they were signalled to us, I shouted to the driver to pull out 'briskly' as signalled, and as we did so the couplings of each wagon took up and by the time the brake van couplings 'snatched' the movement was so severe that poor old Cyril wasn't quite ready for such a sharp jolt with the result that he suffered a broken arm as he was thrown against the upright pillar of the balcony. Such were the hazards of being a Guard in those days.

I did have one or two encounters with the station staff as well. One day whilst preparing to leave Rolvenden for Robertsbridge with a Terrier, I had, as usual, 'washed-up' in the bucket which I had filled from the injector overflow down on the trackside away from the platform. As we were to run bunker-first it was customary to damp down the coal, so I threw the contents of the bucket, from track level, over the bunker, at least that is what I intended, but I misjudged the throw and the entire contents went way over the coal and landed on the station agent, I think his name was Arthur, who had just walked up to the cab on the platform side to send us on our way! As I walked round the loco to hang the bucket on the lamp iron I looked up to see Arthur, watch in one hand, tipping the water out of his waistcoat pocket with the other! He was less than pleased with me having just had an involuntary shower of dirty soapy water. I do remember that the station staff were quite smart and Arthur was no exception.

George Dobell on the other hand, who was the Station Master at Tenterden, was always immaculate, with clean white collar and pressed

uniform, and very proud of his position. We often loaded fish boxes at Robertsbridge for the fishmonger at Tenterden, and sometimes carried them on the footplate, presumably to avoid the smell in the Guards compartment in the single carriage. On this occasion, we had ascertained that there were no passengers for Rolvenden so, as was the custom, we attempted to avoid stopping there to aid our journey up the bank. Much whistling prior to Rolvenden ensured that the station agent there had the gates open for us to run through non-stop. He would stand by the gates with the single line staff for us to collect as we passed. Unfortunately, as I leant out over the fish boxes to collect the staff, I missed it, but felt that if I told the driver he would stop and our 'dash' up the bank would be foiled, so I didn't tell him until we were well on the way round Orpins Curve. The driver didn't seem too concerned as it was very unusual for anyone to check on the staff on arrival at Tenterden. However, on this occasion, as we rounded the bend at the top of the bank we saw George Dobell standing by the track with his hand up obviously expecting to collect the staff! Quick thinking lead me to think I had to find something to hand him, for going without the staff was a very serious offence, so I did no more than take the hand brush out of the soapy bucket on the footplate, and held it out, handle down as if it were the staff, and as he caught it the force of the movement of the train at the point of collection, let forth a spray of dirty soapy water from the bristles all over poor George's immaculate uniform! I don't recall whether we were taken to task for not having the staff, but I do recall George was not happy at all about the mess on his uniform.

I was often rostered with the regular KESR drivers and well remember Nelson Wood, Jimmy Webb, Jack Hoad and others who always had a tale to tell of 'the old days' on the line. It was so different to work on the main line, being on the K&ESR was like being in another world. On occasions I remember stopping the train and chasing cattle back into their fields, or as sometimes occurred, being asked by the driver to go into a field and right a sheep which had got onto its back, whilst the occasional passenger peered out of the window wondering why the train had stopped! You really felt you were part of the countryside on the line!"

#### Sources:

*National Archives (PRO), AN 97/22*  
*British Railways 1948-73 A Business History, T R Gourvish,*  
*Cambridge University Press, 1986*  
*The Tenterden Terrier No 69*



# The Case of the Suspicious Civil Servant

*Dennis Nolan's researches in the National Archives throws new light on the matter of the Flour Mill Siding at Robertsbridge.*

In matters of planning, is deception only a 21st century phenomenon? More than one modern granny annexe started life as a perfectly legitimate application to build a double garage which became 'stretched' during its construction.

Was a similar subterfuge entered into by Colonel Stephens when he applied to the Board of Trade for permission to build a siding to Robertsbridge Flour Mill?

On Thursday 5th June 1902 Colonel Stephens sat down and wrote in his almost illegible spidery hand as follows:

The Assistant Secretary,  
The Board of Trade,  
London.

Sir,

We would be pleased to receive the sanction of the Board of Trade to the use of the junction shown on enclosed plan for the purposes of siding to Robertsbridge (sic) Flour Mills.

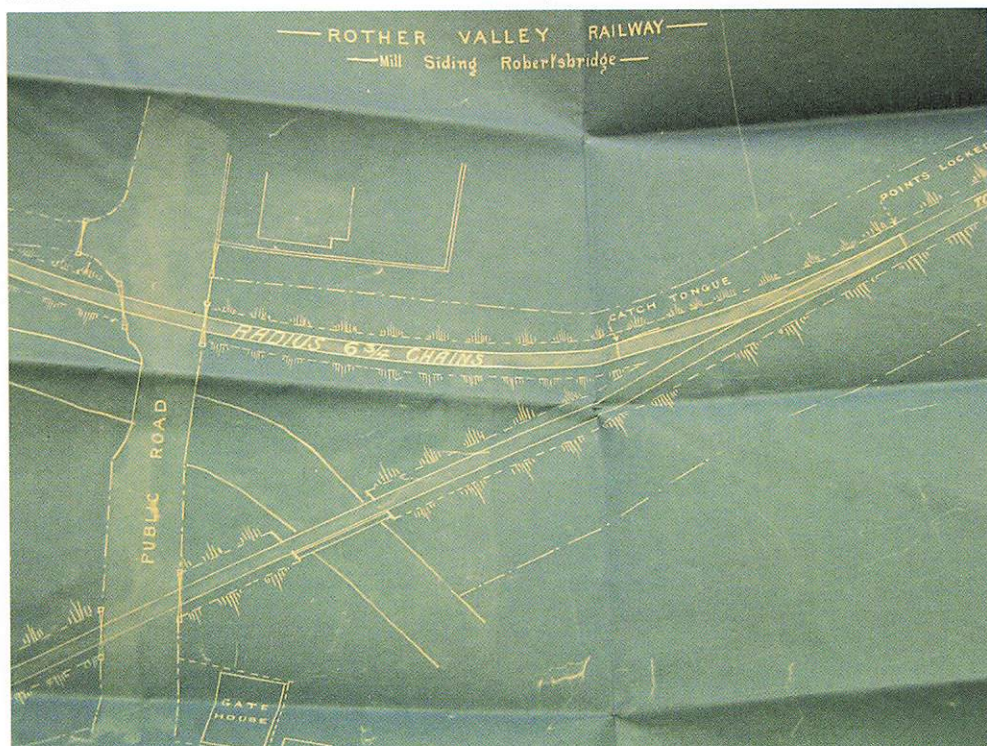
**We already have the permission** (Editor's bold) to lay in the work which is ready for use.

The junction will be for goods purposes only

Your obedient servant  
HF Stephens

Accompanying the letter was a plan on blue waxed paper showing the main line crossing the road just to the south of the river with the siding reversing back over the public road, north of the river and into the yard of the flour mill.

Upon reception of this letter on Friday June 6th it was allocated a departmental file number of 8069. Major Pringle was appointed to go and inspect the work and Stephens' letter of 5th



Layout of Flour Mill siding, before HMRI inspection



June appears to have remained unfiled until just over two weeks later.

Major Pringle travelled down to Robertsbridge on 17th June 1902, presumably with the blue plan, believing the Board had already given provisional permission for the siding he was about to inspect. The Major duly approved the work he saw, submitting his report on June 18th concluding:

“The arrangements being satisfactory I can advise the Board to confirm their provisional sanction for the new works.”

On the 21st June a lowly but alert civil servant in the Board of Trade seems to have become aware of the two separate files relating to this siding and the Major's approval, and queried “Has the company any authority to lay a siding across a public road?”. Maybe this nameless official had discovered a file<sup>3</sup> containing an earlier application and plan received on 22nd April 1901 showing a proposed Mill siding stopping well short of the public road and the mill.

In true civil service fashion the matter was referred upwards. Three further civil servants

initialled file 8069 and passed the matter on. On the 4th July is added the final cryptic comment following the ultimate referral to Colonel Yorke himself.

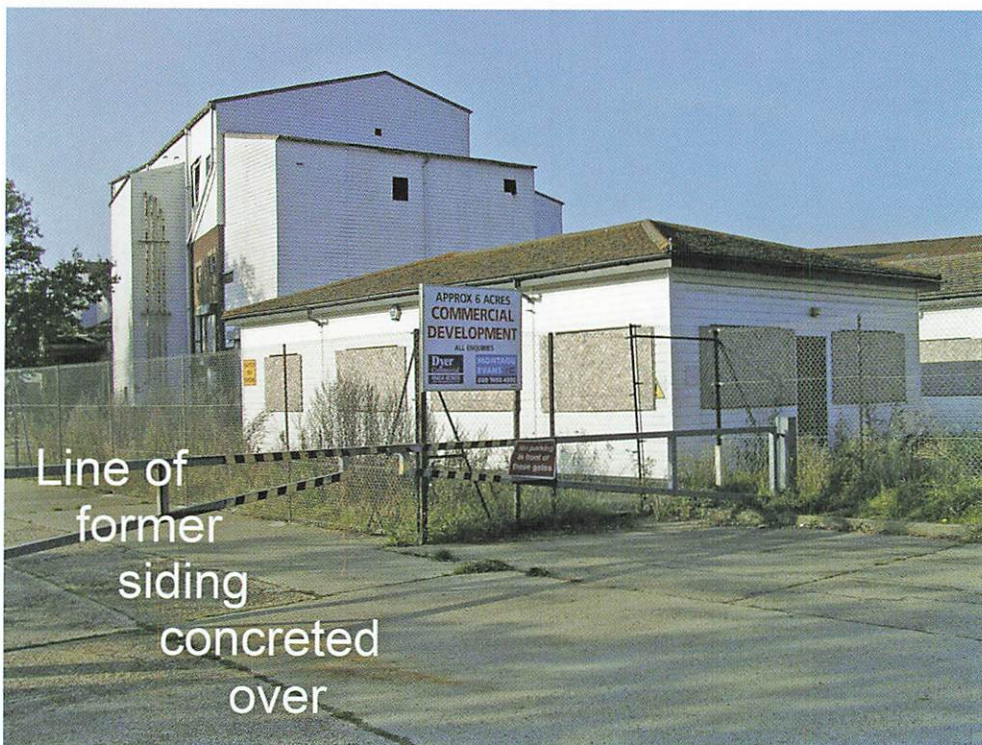
“I have shewn Colonel Yorke the (plans?) with the set of inspection papers re the opening of this line which contain correspondence shewing that the Bd of Tde explained both to the company and the Co. Council that the Bd had no authority to sanction this crossing. Nothing further required.”

Not only had the Board not sanctioned the crossing when the line was constructed, the existence of file 6094 shows that a first application for the siding and crossing dated 22nd April 1901 had been unsuccessful.

Why did Colonel Yorke appear to ‘nod through’ the 1902 application when this siding had been mooted before without success?

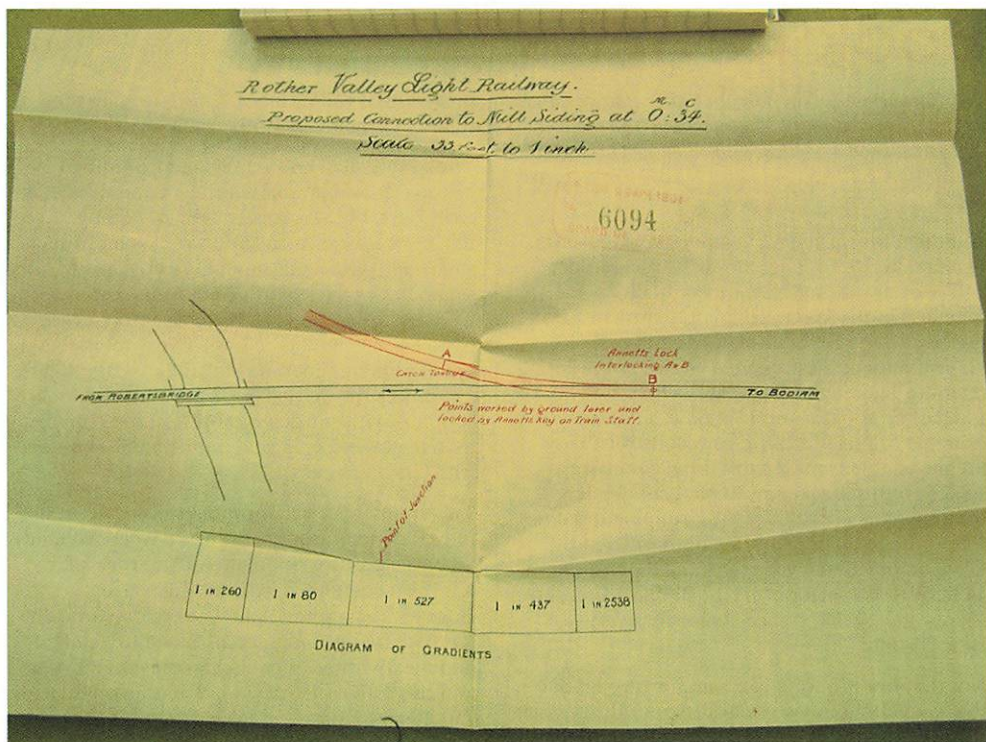
Was there a personal connection between Colonel Yorke and Colonel Stephens?

On behalf of the Board of Trade Colonel Yorke had conducted an inspection of the



Flour Mill Siding, January 2008 (Dennis Nolan)





Map of siding seeking permission to build, April 1901

Lynton and Barnstaple Railway in 1898<sup>3</sup>. His report states:

"...there is a siding connection at Parracombe which is not yet brought into use...the points are at present padlocked and spiked..."

Colonel Yorke seems to have been well aware of the regulations regarding sidings so was the possibility of a personal connection between Colonel's Yorke and Stephens enabling one old friend to help another remains an avenue for further enquiry. Colonel Yorke's main work with the Board of Trade seems to have been writing reports of the causes of railway accidents. His reports span the period 1891 to 1913.

Or was it that perhaps Colonel Yorke's attention was focussed on his research trip to New York on the White Star liner *Celtic* now barely six weeks away<sup>4</sup>. Acknowledging a minor mistake in the depths of rural East Sussex would cause a fuss at an inconvenient time.

The new siding was duly opened. A fire in December 1902 reputed to have caused

£20,000 worth of damage partially destroyed the Mill to which the new siding had been laid<sup>5</sup>. Doubtless the presence of the siding opened just weeks earlier helped in bringing in the necessary materials for rebuilding!

1. The mill predates and post dates the railway. It appears on the Ordnance survey map of 1873 and in 1998 was still operational producing feed for broiler chickens. In 2008 the site was up for sale for redevelopment.
2. National Archives. Board of Trade file 6094
3. Website of West Country Railway Archives
4. The purpose this visit was "to endeavor especially to discover some means of preventing the large leakage of electric power at present experienced by all street railroad systems. Colonel Yorke is the London Board of Trade Railroad accident expert." New York Times September 29 1902
5. History of Robertsbridge: Salehurst Parish and Neighbourhood by JJ Piper. 2nd edition March 1906 p30

# Book Reviews

*The Burry Port & Gwendreath Valley Railway and its Antecedent Canals, Volume Two: The Railway and Dock by A W Miller, published by Oakwood Press, price £ 19.95. 344 pages. ISBN 978 0 85361 685 6*

Although it is fashionable amongst enthusiasts to characterise Colonel Stephens as a builder and operator of impecunious railways (a 'fact' repeated in the Welsh Highland History reviewed elsewhere) he was actually well known, until at least the mid 1920s, as the operator and engineer of profitable railways. Indeed the subject of this book is a notable example of this touch for, as reconstructed by Stephens, it became a substantial commercial success returning steady 10 per cent dividends to ordinary shareholders. At Grouping it did not follow the independent way, but inveigled the GWR to buy it at a very substantial premium of 143 GWR shares for every 10 BP&GV ordinary shares and 10 preference shares for every BP&GV one.

Not that it was always like that for throughout this fascinating railway's history the Burry Port & Gwendreath Valley (English = Wild Water Port & White Beach Valley) Railway had a long tradition of doing things a little differently, and not always successfully. The railway was originally built as a canal (covered in Volume One). This second volume picks up the story with its conversion to a railway. The line served the many collieries in its area, as well as handling iron, steel, copper, silver, lead, tinplate, bricks, stone and even explosives at various stages in its history.

Even with this varied source of traffic it struggled in the 19th century and was bankrupt from 1881 to 1899, mainly due to poor management. Better management took over in 1899 and with good financial management, booming coal traffic, and a first class general manager, Arthur Morgan, things slowly picked up. Authorized passenger trains were introduced in 1909 and it over this period that Holman Fred Stephens became involved with the BP&GV. Appointed to convert the railway into a modern light railway in May 1908 he proved an excellent choice for as the author says 'He must have saved the BP&GV considerably more than the fees and expenses he charged'. Stephens oversaw the complete transformation of the railway for passenger use and is thought to have heavily influenced the

provision of rolling stock before leaving the railway's employ in 1913.

The railway had an interesting locomotive history; it used double-Fairlie locomotives in its early days, but was successfully re-equipped during Stephens' association with some very smart and successful small tank engines. In later steam days a variety of GWR pannier tanks were used, culminating in the use of our own pannier 1638 and its fellows. Even in the diesel era the line retained its individuality, the tight clearances meant that triple-headed class '03' shunters with cut-down cabs were the regular motive power, replaced later with '08' shunters with cut-down cabs.

The untimely death of premier historian of the line, Raymond Bowen, occurred when Volume One was nearing completion. And this volume has been completed by Bob Miller using Bowen's researches. And he has done a worthy job. We are becoming accustomed to detailed and meaty histories of such interesting railways and this follows that trend. Well illustrated with 250 illustrations, although it is Arthur Morgan not Holman Stephens who is the imposing figure identified in the picture of passenger opening on page 80, it is definitive.

If you want to know about one of the great success stories of light railways buy this.

**BMJ**

*An Illustrated History of the Welsh Highland Railway (2nd Edition) by Peter Johnson, published by Oxford Publishing Co (Ian Allan), price £ 19.99. 144 pages. ISBN 978 0 86093 686 8*

This is the second edition of a book reviewed in the Tenterden Terrier in Spring 2003 (No 90). As was said at the time great endeavours need good and constant publicity and Peter Johnson continues to serve the building of the new Welsh Highland very well for this is effectively his third book on the subject in 8 years. Still it is worth acquiring because his researches continue and there is much new historical and topical material, including photographs.

The author continues to strive to unravel the complex history, pre-history and origins of the railway which emerged from a glorious mess of part completed, unfinished and abortive railways in thinly populated Snowdonia. Massive public funding resulted in completion of the



first Welsh Highland by 1923 but the railway was already in trouble and the concern had crumbled by 1936, nearly taking the connected and associated Festiniog Railway with it. That the grossly under funded and thinly trafficked railway lasted this long was due in large measure to the efforts of Colonel Stephens, who endeavoured to manage this impossibly impoverished enterprise from his appointment as engineer in April 1923 till his death. As was said of the first edition his role is not well covered, not least because disappointingly the author has little to say about the operation of the railway.

As is well known the loss of this romantic first Welsh Highland nevertheless kept a dream alive and again with vast government funding and volunteer assistance a new Welsh Highland is effectively complete. Peter Johnson covers the rebirth well, even briefly covering the period 1987-93 when the machinations of the Festiniog Railway and the WHR society and its associates

reflected little credit on either party. Fortunately for enthusiasts and supporters of bold enterprise the original blocking tactics of the then FR management were changed to a wholehearted commitment to rebuild and this process is outlined in full, although many of the colour photos covering this period are disappointingly smaller than the large book format permits.

Although the book, like the others by this author, continues to be a somewhat dense compilation of meaty facts unrelieved by operational and human interest much is new, and to this reviewer, fascinating. Do not be misled by the 'Illustrated History' for it is no more nor less illustrated than most modern history books but buy this edition for its new material and continue to wonder at the money, blood sweat and tears expended over the years on this impossibly improbable railway.

BMJ

## **"BODIAM WEST"** A joint statement by K&ESR and RVR

K&ESR members will be aware that the Rother Valley Railway (RVR) has laid an additional 700 metres of track from the short section beyond K&ESR's Limit of Operation almost as far as Udiam Farm and Junction Road. Many K&ESR members have been asking "what next" and this short note seeks to set out the current position.

Although K&ESR volunteers assisted in the laying of the track, including the use of K&ESR's ballast train, this operation was entirely on RVR land and those working were doing so as RVR volunteers; K&ESR as a company had no role in the work at all.

There are no legal powers at present to run any passenger services beyond Bodiam Station; for the avoidance of doubt, this includes any form of "members' specials" and the only people permitted to travel on the new section of track are staff engaged in the running of engineers' trains. For reasons set out below, neither K&ESR nor RVR has any intention of altering that position in the foreseeable future.

At a meeting of Robertsbridge 20/20 held on 28 April 2009, representatives of the K&ESR and RVR agreed that the lack of commercial benefit and operational difficulties of running beyond Bodiam to the end of the track at Udiam Farm meant that the costs of approving passenger services would not be justified. Neither was

there any economic benefit in a new station to the immediate west of Junction Road, when that had been crossed. RVR's principal long-term objective would therefore remain to build a track to Robertsbridge.

Separately, for reasons related to land acquisition, RVR has given notice to K&ESR, as it is permitted to do under the lease agreement, to quit the length of track beyond K&ESR's Limit of Operation at Bodiam and which K&ESR had been using to store rolling stock awaiting restoration. This means that K&ESR must remove all the rolling stock within the next 6 months and find alternative stabling for those coaches and wagons K&ESR intends to keep. For safety reasons, K&ESR will be installing a buffer stop at our Limit of Operation.

Through the vehicle of Robertsbridge 20/20, K&ESR and RVR will continue to meet regularly to discuss matters of mutual interest and K&ESR will, so far as feasible both technically and economically, support RVR's long term objective of steam train services running from Tenterden to Robertsbridge.

*N R Brice, Chairman  
Kent & East Sussex Railway*

*G Crawley, Chairman  
Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust*



# ***Rails to the Flying Grounds:*** **THE SHEPPEY LIGHT RAILWAY AND THE BIRTH OF BRITISH AVIATION**

*2009 is being celebrated as the centenary of British aviation. The aeroplane pioneers conducted many of their early trials in Kent, on the Isle of Sheppey, and the Sheppey Light Railway which gave access to the flying grounds at Leysdown and Eastchurch played a significant part in their activities.*



*Eastchurch station and level crossing, not long before closure. The road to the left led to the aerodrome. Note the mound of earth serving as a buffer stop (via Tom Burnham)*

The Sheppey Light Railway had been promoted by the Light Railway Syndicate, with Holman F. Stephens as the engineer, to improve access to the agricultural areas of Sheppey away from the western side of the island, and was opened from Queenborough to Minster, Eastchurch and Leysdown on 1st August 1901 (see *Tenterden Terrier* No. 85, Summer 2001). It had many characteristics of a typical 'Colonel Stephens' light railway, but was worked from the outset by the South Eastern & Chatham Railway. It was purchased by the main line company under an Act of 1905, but although the SE&CR made some improvements – for example lengthening sidings and rebuilding some wooden sleeper-built platforms in concrete – its operation remained largely self-contained.

In typically British fashion, amateur flyers and

would-be flyers, first of balloons and then also of heavier-than-air craft, formed themselves into the Aero Club (it did not become "Royal" until 1910) and membership steadily grew. Many of the members no doubt simply wanted to keep up to date with the latest trend, rather than aspiring to their own flying machine. One of those elected to membership on 10th August 1909 was none other than the engineer of the light railway, Major H.F. Stephens, as he then was.

The Club had rooms in Piccadilly, London, but clearly needed somewhere where its members could experiment with their aircraft. The depressed state of agriculture in the early twentieth century meant that flat, low-lying land in Sheppey was cheap, and in early 1909, Francis ("Frank") McClean, a wealthy aviation enthusiast, obtained an expanse of ground



covered with coarse, tufted grass at Shellbeach, about three-quarters of a mile over a rough track from Leysdown station, for the use of Aero Club members. The field came into use in February 1909, and there, between 30th April and 2nd May, Mr J.T.C. Moore-Brabazon in his Voisin 'boxkite' aircraft became the first Briton to fly an aeroplane in Britain.

The Short brothers – Eustace, Oswald and Horace – had acquired the British rights to build the Wright Flyer aircraft from the celebrated Wright brothers, and the company they founded had obtained orders from Aero Club members for a batch of six at £200 each, as well as for aircraft of Shorts' own design. Relocating their business from a railway arch in Battersea, the first building at the Shellbeach site was put up for Short Brothers by Messrs Harbrow of South Bermondsey, a well-known supplier of prefabricated corrugated iron buildings. Quaintly referred to as an 'aero-dock', it can claim to be the world's first purpose-built aircraft factory and was soon full of the Shorts' work in progress.

It was rapidly followed by two more Harbrow sheds put up by the Aero Club to house the members' aircraft, and Frank McLean also had a prefabricated bungalow for his own use. The Club acquired the use of Mussel Manor (a house dating back to about 1540 and now known as Muswell Manor) for use as a clubhouse, together with a golf course and shooting rights over 1000 acres.

The Aero Club arranged with the SE&CR for concessionary rates for members travelling to the flying ground by rail. Return fares from London were 8s (40p) first-class, 6s 6d (37 ½ p) second-class and 5s (25p) third-class. The best train was the 9.45 a.m. from Victoria, arriving at Queenborough at 10.55, where one had to change to a Light Railway train for Leysdown.

Some members chose to travel to Sheppey by motor car or motor cycle, and were advised that the route from London via Maidstone was much pleasanter than that through industrial North Kent, although one had to be careful of tar spraying in progress on the Maidstone road.

Mindful of their motoring members, the Aero Club joined with the Royal Automobile Club in petitioning the House of Lords select committee which was examining the South Eastern and London, Chatham & Dover Railways Bill in 1909. The two clubs wanted a reduction in the toll of 1s 6d each way for motor cars (*about £5 at 2009 values! – Ed.*) on the Kingsferry road and

rail bridge over the Swale, which offered the sole road access to the island.

Access to the Shellbeach aerodrome was difficult because of the poor state of Sheppey's roads, and Horace and Eustace Short began to explore the island in search of a better site in their 7 horsepower Panhard car (its distinctive feature was its ability to negotiate dykes and marshes). They found Stonepitts Farm at Eastchurch, which was very level and free from ditches, and no more than half a mile from the light railway station. Frank McLean acquired it and leased it to the Club at a peppercorn rent in December 1909 for use as an auxiliary flying ground. The SE&CR offered the same travel facilities to Eastchurch as they had to Leysdown.

Over the next few months, most of the sheds at Shellbeach were taken down and re-erected at Eastchurch, and the aerodrome was soon thriving, with many flights being made. Cecil Grace (who disappeared over the Channel eight months later when he ran into fog during a return flight from Calais to Dover) flew a Short-Wright biplane from Eastchurch to Leysdown and back in April 1910, "passing over Harty siding and sailing over a passenger train on the Sheppey Light Railway" as *The Times* put it.

The high point of these early years was perhaps Saturday, 1st July 1911, when the Gordon Bennett Aviation Cup Race was held at Eastchurch. The race attracted an international field of entrants, and a crowd of some five thousand spectators assembled to watch it being won by C.T. Weyman of the United States, flying a Nieuport monoplane at an average speed of 78 mph. As a foretaste of the future, more than a hundred and fifty motor cars were lined up in a special enclosure at a charge of 10s. (50p) each – not entirely surprising as flying was a sport which appealed to the wealthy and mechanically minded. However, most of the spectators arrived by rail, many of them on a special through train from London, leaving Victoria at 9.30 a.m. and picking up more passengers at Herne Hill at 9.40 a.m.. The train had been due at Eastchurch at 11.10 a.m., but working such a long train had proved awkward, as there was no connection allowing direct running from the main line to the Sheppey Light at Queenborough, and it arrived nearly an hour late. The special left Eastchurch to return to London at 7.30 p.m. An informal dinner for competitors, at which the Cup was presented, was held at Eastchurch that evening, and the SE&CR laid on an extra train back to Queenborough at 10 p.m. for the benefit of the diners.

The early aeroplanes were neither reliable nor stable and accidents were not unusual. Two pioneers who had flown from Eastchurch were killed not long after: Cecil Grace, mentioned above, and the Hon Charles Rolls, who crashed at the Bournemouth International Aviation Meeting on 12th July 1910 (the first British aviation fatality). A subscription was raised for a memorial stained-glass window to them at All Saints parish church, Eastchurch, and it was dedicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, on 26th July 1912. For those travelling from London to attend the service, a special saloon carriage was added to the Flushing boat express (10 a.m. from Victoria), with a change to the Sheppey Light at Queenborough. They would have returned by the 4.37 p.m. train from Queenborough, or by the 5.30 p.m. from Eastchurch, changing to the up boat train at Queenborough.

The Sheppey Light Railway was not always appreciated by the early aviators. A correspondent in *Flight*, describing a trip to Eastchurch in 1912 to inspect Leo Jezzi's latest aircraft commented ironically on Eastchurch's "perfectly wonderful train service" as "three shivering mortals... turned out of the lethargic little train that occasionally runs from one end of Sheppey Island to the other". The train would probably have been one of the steam railcars which served the Sheppey Light (except on Sundays) from 1905 until the summer of 1912, but were unpopular with both passengers and crew.

Although one of the Royal Aero Club's reasons for using Sheppey was its isolation, enabling trials to be conducted out of the public gaze, the flying gradually became something of a tourist attraction. On Easter Monday 1914 a record crowd of at least five hundred holidaymakers turned up to watch the flights, many of them no doubt arriving by the light railway.

Early aviation enthusiasts were keen to emphasise the military potential of aeroplanes, and in March 1911 the Admiralty agreed to an offer by Frank McClean to pay for four Naval officers to be taught to fly at Eastchurch. The results were encouraging, and in December 1911 the Royal Navy acquired additional land adjacent to the Royal Aero Club's site to start their own flying school. In the years leading up to August 1914, Eastchurch was the base for much pioneering work into air support for Naval operations.

Following the outbreak of the First World War, Sheppey became an important military area and

railway staff were instructed that passengers were not allowed to alight at Queenborough or at any station on the Sheppey Light Railway unless they were in possession of a permit from the local military authorities or the Kent Police. The aerodrome at Eastchurch became an operational base for the Royal Naval Air Service, as it had become, and the RNAS gradually took over the whole site. Short Brothers had opened their famous factory on the Medway at Rochester in 1913, and as they were now specialising in seaplanes, their manufacturing was progressively relocated there. The company finally left Eastchurch in 1917, following the death of Horace Short, leaving the airfield wholly under Naval control.

In November 1916 the SE&C Managing Committee agreed with the Admiralty to lay in a siding from Eastchurch station to the aerodrome. A tender for building it from Robinson & Co. of £2137.10.9 was accepted. On completion, the works were inspected on behalf of the Board of Trade by Colonel Pringle, who observed that "the general arrangements at this station yard are not very satisfactory". He criticised particularly the facts that the points at each end of the loop were worked by separate ground frames and their distance apart resulted in irregular signal working, and that the goods loop was not provided with catch points at the down end. The SE&CR, forbearing to remind the Colonel that he himself had approved these same arrangements in 1901, proposed some changes to improve the situation. By 1918 a siding leading out of the RNAS siding had also been provided for the use of the Inland Waterways & Docks Department of the Ministry of Munitions. An interesting feature of train working around this period was a contractor's engine which ran light from Sheerness Dockyard to Eastchurch at 5.20 p.m. on Sundays, probably having received its weekly attention at the Sheerness locomotive sheds.

Passenger traffic on the Sheppey Light increased during the war, practically doubling by 1918 compared with pre-war levels. In November 1918 it was agreed to provide a ticket office and station master's office on the up platform at Queenborough, so that SLR passengers did not have to cross to the down side by the footbridge to re-book. Wartime traffic also brought the only regular through carriages (as distinct from excursions) to the Sheppey Light. In the latter part of the War five third-class carriages and a brake van were detached at Queenborough from the 5.45 a.m. train from Holborn Viaduct to Sheerness and run on to Eastchurch – no doubt





*J.T.C. Moore-Brabazon's Voisin 'boxkite' aircraft, 'Bird of Passage' in which the historic 500-yard flight was made in 1909 (via Tom Burnham)*

full of comatose ratings making the most of their leave passes.

In 1918, the usual Sheppey Light Railway train consisted of set 40 – three vestibuled saloon thirds and a brake third of ex-LC&DR 6-wheeled stock plus an ex-LC&DR bogie tricomposite carriage (with 1st, 2nd and 3rd class compartments) – while another saloon third and three five-compartment 6-wheeled thirds were kept at Queenborough to be added when required. Pre-war trains on the light railway had offered third-class accommodation only, but perhaps the military authorities had insisted that officers must be duly segregated.

Of course the War also brought problems. In an air raid by German Gotha bombers on the moonlit night of 29th September 1917, a bomb was dropped 300 yards on the Minster side of Sheerness East station, blowing some of the rails into a neighbouring field. The line was repaired by the following morning.

Eastchurch aerodrome continued in Royal Air Force use after the end of the war, and the RAF legal department spent some time sorting out the ownership of the land occupied by the aerodromes at both Eastchurch and Leysdown. As an aid to aerial navigation by both the RAF and the growing number of commercial air services, Eastchurch station was one of a number throughout the country which had its name painted in large white letters on the roof in the early 1920s. The siding to the aerodrome evidently continued to generate a certain amount of much-needed goods traffic, and according to the 1934 working instructions, wagons were usually collected or delivered between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. on weekdays. The siding had two ungated level crossings and a 5

mph speed restriction applied.

From 1922 to 1938 Eastchurch was the home of the RAF's Armament and Gunnery School, but as war approached again it returned to operational use, mainly by Coastal Command. On 13th August 1940 there was a heavy German air raid in which twelve people were killed, the first of several attacks. During the remainder of the war it was used mostly for armaments training, and as a temporary base for various squadrons. The service on the Sheppey Light Railway was reduced to four trains each way on weekdays only, and, in contrast with the growth of traffic in the First World War, both local people and service personnel deserted the line in favour of the more frequent bus service.

After the end of the war Eastchurch aerodrome was taken out of active use, and in June 1950 the Air Ministry handed it over to the Home Office as a site for an open prison. The Sheppey Light Railway did not long survive the aerodrome, the last train running on 2 December 1950, and few traces of it remain today.

The centenary of these pioneering days of British aviation and of flying by the Royal Navy, is being celebrated by a series of events during 2009, particularly Sky Sheppey 2009, held in and around Eastchurch on the weekend of 25th-26th July.

I should like to thank Jim Stringer of Eastchurch for providing the photograph of the Voisin aircraft. Much valuable information was obtained from the Flight International archive ([www.flightglobal.com](http://www.flightglobal.com)), in which every issue of the magazine *Flight* since its launch in 1909 is available online.

Tom Burnham

# Letters to the Editor

Sir

Returning from an exceedingly good day at the CFBS Fete de la Vapeur our journey home set me thinking.

It would be good to reciprocate with locomotive exchanges. To that end we would need a length of meter gauge track. No, I am not suggesting that we interlace two tracks, rather that we need a length of metre gauge.

So where? My guess is Northiam, behind the main platform, from the station building past the back of the signal box, through the gate as possible as it can go. Unloading a loco would not present problems.

It would surely be a worthwhile further attraction for our visiting public.

*Canterbury*

*Anthony Cooke*

## To the Company Secretary

Thank you for your letter of condolence on behalf of the K&ESR members. Neil enjoyed all his railway experiences – his work as Secretary, Guard and Signaller; the heritage, the smell of steam, the sound of the engines, but above all the camaraderie that he experienced every time he came down to Tenterden or Wittersham Road. He always came back enthused by the happenings of the day and the people he had met and chatted to. Thank you to all of you who made that part of his life so valuable.

I would be grateful if you could pass on to all his friends on the Railway my thanks for all the kind letters and cards I have received. It has helped greatly to know that he was held in such affection and respect.

Thanks too to those who made the time to come to Neil's Thanksgiving Service – it was good to have your support.

I shall continue to come down to the Railway every so often – Neil and I always came to the last train of the year.

With all best wishes.

*Wadhurst*

*Alison Rose*

*01 on KESR near Bodiam (Ian Scarlett)*





## 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 plea 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 CD (floppy discs are now 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 digital photography 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.

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Stella Nuttman



## Looking Back

Looking back to days gone by  
When 'real trains' graced our railway lines.  
When contentment was the smell of steam,  
And driving trains every boyhood dream.

Looking back to days now past  
When locomotives were built to last;  
When Schools and Arthurs served these shores,  
And proud signalmen worked the semaphores.

Looking back o oh that I'd been there,  
Privileged just to stand and stare  
At grandeur, beauty and somehow hold  
Their hearts of fire from going cold.

Looking back – Yes glorious days,  
But still their heartbeat resounds today,  
No power can prize them from our hands,  
For steam still lives and fills our land!

Tim Arnott