



JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

# Tenterden Terrier



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# Tenterden Terrier

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FRONT COVER

View from No 3 at  
Rolvenden (Ian Brett)

BACK COVER

(Robin Dyce)



# Editorial

## 50/50 for the Future?

Readers may be aware that, apart from an occasional interest in cricket and cycling, the Editor is no great sports fan. He nonetheless recalls the occasion some years ago when, following their defeat of the Germans by five goals to one, England's football team returned to the dressing room, looked at each other, and asked "What happened there then?" There has been much the same sort of feeling around the K&ESR of late. We have had a more than satisfactory season, and all in the wake of a loss in 2008 and a world recession of historical proportions. As the Chairman has commented, the last time the bank

account showed figures like those reported to the October Board meeting they had a minus sign in front of them.

But to come back to Earth, we share this good fortune with every other heritage railway, the British have been holidaying at home, the weather in the south-east has been good and the Pound/Euro exchange rate has been in our favour. There is no room for complacency. It could all continue into 2010, or we could find ourselves unable to equal this year's results. It could go either way; the chances could be 50/50, they could be better. We shall just have to wait and see. In the meanwhile, thank you to everyone who has helped run or otherwise support the Railway during 2009, and best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

**Nick Pallant**

### AGM Results

All four candidates for the Board were elected, or re-elected, at the Annual General Meeting on 10th October. Figures were as follows:

	For	Against	Abstentions
Derek Dunlavey	210	20	10
Ken Lee	229	7	4
Carol Mitchell	223	9	8
Philip Shaw	213	14	13

We now have a full house on the Board although it would be nice to have a properly contested election sometime with more candidates than vacancies.



*Martin McFarlane and Sue Woods with Martin's Leyland Titan at the Hoppers weekend (Robin Dyce)*

# Lineside News

Compiled by Duncan Buchanan

## COMMERCIAL

### General Manager

It is a delight to report an excellent summer season, with total passenger numbers in July August and September at 2003 levels. The weak pound has encouraged European visitors and Brits have stayed at home 'stay-cationing' what an awful word! The weather this year was extremely kind to Kent and Sussex and we benefitted from that.

We repeated the 'Kids Go Free' offer for August and this was well received with over 600 vouchers redeemed. On several days we had over 700 passengers and were operating at our passenger comfort limit. Group bookings including catering packages in August were at an unparalleled level.

We again had a successful Hoppers Event and the second weekend of 'Thomas' ensured an excellent September. HiT awarded us a certificate recognising that our opening ceremony for 'A Day Out With Thomas™' was the best in the UK in 2009.

Press coverage this summer has been excellent as a result of using a local PR agency that specialises in tourism. K&ESR has been in an interesting selection of national and regional newspapers.

### Shop

The performance of the shop is always largely dependant on the number of customers the railway attracts, although, of course, an acceptable spend per passenger has to be achieved. A so far excellent 2009 for the railway has enabled the shop to generate net income 9 per cent above budget until the end of September. This is an increase of 3 per cent on 2008, which may look small, but we had no June Thomas™ (which generated £12,434 net of VAT last year). The loss of the Thomas™ meant that June was a slightly disappointing month, with the beer festival certainly not a remunerative replacement for us. Ivor was well down on last year, but nevertheless the July budget was reached and so was August. September was excellent: Hoppers was 3 per cent above the 2008 figure, with an excellent Saturday and a not-so-good Sunday. Thomas™ was our best since February 2007. We generated just short of £20,000 gross income for the event and achieved

a very respectable spend per passenger of £3.74 (gross)/£3.38 (net). The only slightly disappointing feature of the summer season was online sales, which were sparse in what is a very competitive market. However, the onset of autumn has seen orders rise again.

The Dapol Tilmanstone wagon, as re-painted for the Gala, is now available. We now stock guards' whistles and, after achieving a reduction in the amount we have to buy, the long-awaited K&ESR brass buttons are on order.

### Catering

Trading this season has continued to prove challenging, although not in the way that had been initially predicted. Demand has continued at high levels, particularly for our on-train packages, resulting in the most mentally and physically exhausting season we have experienced for many years. It is a tribute to our dedicated staff that we have made it through, although sadly there have been some less than satisfactory situations along the way.

The Wealden Pullman team were reluctantly forced to bid farewell to 'their' Maunsell NBO during the season. This vehicle had been in traffic for ten years and had latterly developed significant water ingress problems. With no immediate slot in the C&W shed available, it was kept in service for as long as possible as out of traffic vehicles deteriorate more quickly than those regularly aired and maintained. Its place has been taken by the 'other' Maunsell NBO 53, 'borrowed' from the day service set. Unfortunately the recent autumnal weather has shown that this vehicle too is not completely watertight! As a result of the withdrawal of an NBO (and with no suitable alternative), we are no longer able to accommodate larger functions. This has already resulted in our inability to host five private functions: Wealden Pullman turnover in 2010 and beyond is likely therefore to be significantly reduced.

Board approval has been granted for the replacement of the ovens within Pullman kitchen car *Diana*. These ovens were installed over 25 years ago and are now life expired: the manufacturers representative was very surprised to find some still in frontline service! The supplier of these ranges is that which provided





RVR track with new fencing seen towards Bodiam (Mark Yonge)

the previous set, although on this occasion suitably qualified in-house volunteers are carrying out installation and commissioning. Our Chef looks forward to being able to regulate temperatures by the novel use of the thermostat rather than having to repeatedly open the oven doors.

We have seen a most welcome number of new staff join the team this season, thanks in part to improvements in the way potential volunteers are recruited and managed. In addition, we have seen some excellent co-operation from our colleagues in the Operating Department who have worked hard to sell our need to new recruits. Despite these most welcome new faces, we remain critically short of staff. At the 2009 AGM for example, our General Manager made a plea for washing-up assistance with that evenings Pullman train. Sadly not one of our members there present felt able to assist in any way. Whilst it is most pleasing to learn of the successful season that we have enjoyed this year and of our plans for future investment, it must be remembered that the continued survival of our railway depends on us generating *profitable* income. Catering has for many years formed the largest source of such income, but cannot continue to do so indefinitely without a

significant increase in volunteer assistance. We have volunteers from all walks of life, some of whom give several days each week and some one day every year. So if you would like to have fun whilst helping to ensure the continued survival of your railway, please do get in touch with André Freeman at Tenterden Station or email [andre@kesr.org.uk](mailto:andre@kesr.org.uk) We look forward to working with you!

### Hoppers Weekend

This year's 9th Hop Pickers Weekend was the best yet with over two thousand people visiting Bodiam station for a nostalgic weekend. The event, held annually to celebrate the important part that hops played in the history of the K&ESR, also provides a reunion for ex-hoppers with the register of ex-hoppers who want to be kept informed of our event now having over 270 names. The event also provided interest to railway enthusiasts with the re-creation of the original 'Hop Pickers' trains with the 'A' set being topped and tailed by 'Terriers' 32678 *Knole* and No 3 *Bodiam* facing, for most time, in opposite directions. The heritage set was hauled by No 1638, the Pannier Tank.

Again we were indebted to Martin Macfarlan and his clippy Sue Woods for bringing along his

1935 Leyland Titan double deck open top bus which shuttled between the station and castle. On Saturday and on more than one occasion, the bus was followed by a (road legal) 1920's 4½" scale Foden 'D' type steam tractor owned and driven by Dennis Hoad. Thanks to K&ESR member Guy Osborne who brought along his 1925 Wallis & Stevens Advance 6 ton steam road roller *Raven*. We also had in steam 1909 Garrett Road Locomotive *Vera* complete with living van. As well as steam driven vehicles there was an eclectic mix of heritage cars, vans, tractors, commercial vehicles and stalls for our visitors to see and reminisce over.

Music this year was provided by InnM8s, a five piece band consisting of students from the Music Technology Department of the University of Kent, at Canterbury, led very ably by Colin Batt who entertained us with some brilliant performances of old London East end and hoppers songs intermixed with very good jazz. Oojah Kippivvy Morris and Hannah's Cat Morris, both from Hastings, entertained us by dancing on Saturday and Sunday respectively.

In many ways the mainstay of our event is the display of Hopping equipment, tools and memorabilia owned and demonstrated by Bruce and Maureen Law where members of the public could strip the hops and have many questions expertly answered. The display tent contained many photographs and articles of Hopping interest as well as memorabilia and models.

The barbecue, Hoppers Kitchen, bar and shop, which were staffed by members of the Railway, all had record incomes and at times the number of visitors almost overwhelmed our capacity to serve them.

We had many expressions of thanks with people saying that it was a joy to attend such an interesting event and not to be ripped off for

excessive entrance or food costs which made the event more satisfying to all concerned.

Many, many thanks are due to the large number of members of the Railway that helped to develop the idea, to erect the displays and lighting; to assemble and staff the barbeque and bar; to erect and staff the Hoppers Kitchen and shop; to man the platform and ticket office and finally to take it all to bits again and get all the equipment back to wherever it was 'borrowed' from. Thanks also go to all the other members of the Railway that contributed to this most friendly and happy of events.

For your diary, the 10th anniversary of the 'Hop Pickers Weekend' will be celebrated on the 11th and 12th September 2010.

More photos of the event can be found on the K&ESR web site.

Historic note:

For generations hops were grown along the River Rother Valley and were added to the brewing process to allow the beer to be kept longer and to impart bitterness to the flavour. The Guinness Hop Farms, centred on Bodiam, were the largest in the country covering 1400 acres of which, at the peak, 850 were under hops.

Special trains were run from London, usually London Bridge, to bring the hop-pickers and their families to the hop gardens. The pickers, mainly women and children and their elderly relatives, spent several weeks in the country and this usually formed their annual holiday.

With Bodiam being at the heart of the Rother Valley hop industry it was natural that the Kent & East Sussex Railway should transport pickers to the hop gardens and about 4000 pickers supplemented the work force of about 100 men each year.

## MOTIVE POWER

### Steam Locomotives

**No 3 'Bodiam' (32670):** In service. Presently on washout and annual boiler inspection. Work has also begun to make a pattern to have a replacement chimney cast. The old one is getting near to the end of its life, and we really need to have a new casting on standby.

**No 8 'Knowle' (32678):** In service. Following a recent failure one of the injectors had to be overhauled and refitted.

**No 11 'P Class':** In service. The ejector shut off

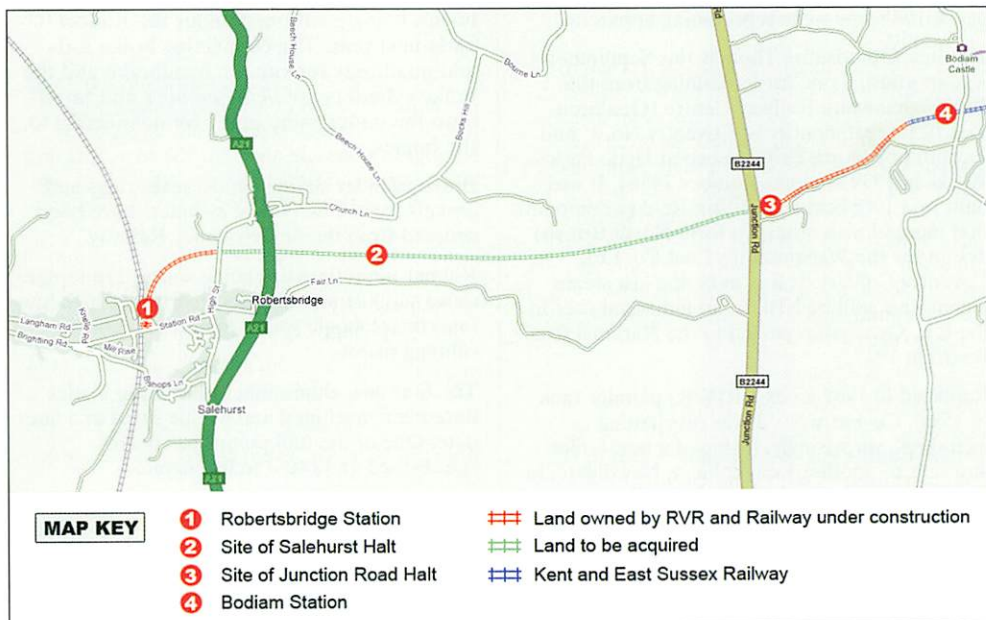
valve has been replaced as the old one failed due to thread deterioration.

**No 12 'Marcia':** The new material for the cab – planed oak – has been delivered and installation has been completed.

The coupling and connecting bearing have been fitted to the crankpin journals and will be installed in the rods when the ongoing painting of the rods has been completed.

All exterior plate work has now been undercoat





Map of proposed RVR layout (Rother Valley Railway)

painted and preparation for the top coat is ongoing.

Painting of the interior of the cab has been completed.

A displacement lubricator of a suitable style has been fitted in place of the original mechanical lubricator feed. A new two feed mechanical lubricator, which will give positive feed to each slide valve and cylinder, is being installed.

**No 14 'Charwelton':** Still under testing following overhaul. A minor fault with the handbrake revealed itself a few weeks ago whereby if undone too much the linkage jams the brake on when the steam brake is applied. After lining out at the C&W shed testing will be finished and 14 can enter service.

**No 19 'Norwegian' (376):** The frames and tender are now in the shed. Work to refurbish the front pony truck is underway. The valve bores have been machined true (with grateful thanks to the Bluebell Railway for the loan of the machinery) ready for the fitting of new valve heads and rings.

Machining of the new axlebox components is well underway- and at the end of the labour 19 will have basically brand new boxes.

The tank has been lifted off the tender body ready for shot blasting and hot galvanising.

Unfortunately the local firm that were to do the job have fallen victim to the decline in engineering in this country and went out of business. This means we need to look farther afield.

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

**No 22 'Maunsell' (65):** In service. Passed annual boiler inspection without issues. Now that the modifications to the front end drafting have been proven a success we have placed an order for the manufacture of patterns. Castings will be fitted to replace the fabricated components that only have a short lifespan.

**No 23 'Holman F Stephens':** In service. Will be due to have a spring changed soon as there is a broken leaf.

**No 24 'Rolvenden':** In service. eight patch screws will be fitted into the firebox to replace worn rivets. This work is needed to ensure 24 can then work through to December 2010 on its current 10 year cycle.

**No 25 'Northiam':** The cab and tank have been removed allowing the boiler to be delagged. All of the studs that secure boiler fittings are being removed for renewal.

**No 30 GWR Pannier (1638):** In service. During the winter period, work on the motion will be

needed as some wear is becoming apparent.

**Thomas:** Our visiting Thomas this September was an unusual one for us, coming from the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre (Quainton Road). Its real identity is 'Coventry No. 1' and was built by North British Loco at Hyde Park Works in 1939 as works number 24564. It was built to a 19th century Neilson Reid (a company that merged with others to form North British) design for the Warwickshire Coal Co. Ltd., Coventry Colliery. It was to be the last steam locomotive sold by NBL to an industrial user in the UK. Ownership passed to the National Coal Board in 1947.

Replaced in 1962 an ex-BR(WR) pannier tank (a 15xx), Coventry No. 1 was overhauled including, surprisingly, fitting of a new boiler and sent to another local colliery, Newdigate, in 1963 proving very popular with loco crews due to its power and free-steaming abilities. Transferred to nearby Haunchwood Colliery in 1965, it returning to Newdigate once more in June 1967 but was little used so it was sold and went to Quainton in January 1971.

### **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 £21,590 including the benefit of gift aid recovery.

A substantial amount of the railcar underframe has been needle gunned, primed and painted black and this clears the way for replacing items removed for refurbishment and/or painting. Often it is necessary, to gain access for painting, that many of the major parts have to be removed and then fitted back onto the underframe. All three fuel tanks have been removed and they and their locations painted black and fuel tanks replaced on the underframe. The two gearboxes and their mated high/low ratio gearboxes have been removed from the underframe for their areas to be painted and then replaced at a later date.

All brake gear on the Robertsbridge end bogie has been re-bushed and new pins fitted as necessary. The bogie frame, wheels and brake gear have all been painted black.

The Headcorn end bogie has been dismantled and the main framework together with the bogie bolster has been cleaned, grit blasted and an initial coat of primer paint applied. The new oilers for the bogie rubbing plates are in stock and will be fitted prior to the

bogies being positioned under the Railcar early next year. The connecting brake rods and quadrants serving the handbrake and the brake cylinders are being painted and fitted onto the underframe ready for connecting to the bogies.

Brake cylinder sliding bands, seals, rings and gaskets for the two brake cylinders have been ordered from the Severn Valley Railway.

Rubber mountings are being sourced to replace those supporting radiators, gearboxes, high low ratio boxes, bogie spring hangers and bogie rubbing plates.

The four new aluminium radiator fan blades have been machined and will be fitted at a later date. One of the fuel pumps has been refurbished and fitted to its engine.

Seat frames, particularly the hardwood mouldings, are being repaired and these will be fitted back inside the railcar at a later date.

We must mention our appreciation to the following organisations that have helped the Railcar team in their quest for information regarding the overhaul to date.

They are:-

Tim Proctor, Curator of Archives and Library Collections at The National Railway Museum York for access and permission to copy drawings held in the NRM archive.

Great Western Society Didcot, for loan and permission to copy some of their drawings.

The AEC Society, for help in locating the AEC Archive now with The British Commercial Vehicle Museum, Leyland, Lancashire. Enquiries are ongoing.

Skefco Bearings, Luton, for drawings and information from their archive on roller bearing axle boxes fitted and dating from 1938. Enquiries are ongoing.

K&ESR members who have information about the Railcar tucked away in their own "archive" in a chest of drawers or on top of a cupboard! Is there anymore out there?

As mentioned above, donations received are £21,590. The project spend, to date, is some £6,500 with an additional planned spend of about £3,000 to be added giving a total spend of about £9,500 to the year end.

**The Planned Sunday Working Dates for the remainder of 2009 are 13th & 27th December.**



There are often 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): Unfortunately work has been held up due to lack of workshop space and therefore the major overhaul is ongoing.

No 46 (Class 03): In service.

Class 33 'Ashford' (33052): In service.

Class 108 DMMU: The Bodiam end carriage 50971 has had the lino replaced in one passenger compartment.

In service.

### 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

## ROLLING STOCK

### Mark 1's

**BSO No. 73 and DBSO No. 75 Petros.** The wheelsets from *Petros* have now been returned (minus flats) from our contractor and both vehicles have now returned to traffic. The necessary lifts and wheel changes were again achieved very speedily thanks to the use of the 10 ton steam crane. It is planned, however, to again withdraw *Petros* from service for the 2010 season for a much needed general overhaul – *Petros* probably holds the preservation era mileage record for the K&ESR!. This of course means that there will be no dedicated

accommodation on the 'A' set for people with disabilities next year but if we don't bite this particular bullet soon we run the risk of not being able to provide such facilities at all.

**SK No. 63** has become badly weathered on the Tenterden station side (which gets all the salt laden air straight off the sea) and will be repainted 'one side only' in the near future to smarten it up for the 2010 season.

**TSO No. 68 (BR No. 4355)** the 'Avon Coach', continues to make good progress despite work having to be suspended on a regular basis to



*Tuesday Group at work on Rolvenden Platform (Graham Hopker)*

allow attention to other vehicles. All repairs to the metal framework and cladding are now complete and attention has turned to filling and priming the exterior. At the time of writing it is hoped to make a start on the top coats in the very near future. The livery will be the lighter bottle green with chrome stripes already in use on No. 64. Interior varnishing is well under way and reinstallation of the seat frames has commenced. It has become apparent during restoration, and ex BR staff in the department confirm, that damp in the toilet areas is a major contributor to corrosion in these vehicles. In an attempt to minimise this problem we have received permission to return only one toilet to working order and fit the other out as a storage cupboard. There is every indication that No. 68 will be a very fine example of the BR Mark 1 on its eventual return to traffic.

### Vintage Coaches

The 'Woolwich' Coach (K&ESR No. 67) is now due for its first intermediate overhaul and full repaint since entering service in July 2004. The coach was, accordingly, taken out of traffic at the end of September 2009.

L&NWR Balcony Saloon (K&ESR No. 82) was also withdrawn from service at the end of September. Attention will be required to the bodywork before a full repaint can commence. It is intended to commence work on both the Balcony Saloon and the Woolwich coach before the end of 2009.

Two of the cream upper panels on Pullman Car Barbara (K&ESR No. 52) have been replaced, this work having been undertaken during the September 'Thomas' fortnight' when the Pullman did not run.

Work on the LC&DR 'Ashford' Brake K&ESR No. 98 continues apace with the paneling and mouldings virtually complete to the side made available when the body was turned round in May. The body itself has been bolted down to the fully complete underframe. As this was being written the first of the grab handles were being fitted to the body side.

'District' Coach (K&ESR No. 100) briefly returned to the TFL system when it took part in the Upminster Depot Open Weekend on 29th and 30th of August. The event hosted a collection of Underground trains representing the past, present and future. Other heritage stock included Metropolitan Railway electric locomotive *Sarah Siddons*.

### Wagons

Medfit Nos. 157 has been receiving much appreciated attention from James Palk assisted by members of his wagon group. Work has included renewal of the floors and a thorough overhaul of the braking systems. Worn rigging pins have been renewed with replacement items being turned up by Ron Nuttman of C&W. Repainting has also commenced. Identical wagon No. 158 has also been at Tenterden with a view to work being undertaken next year.

### People

We were sorry to hear that Volunteer Gordon Young was involved in a car accident during August. It is understood that he was, thankfully, not too seriously hurt. Members of the department are keeping in touch and he tells us that he is coming along nicely. In addition, Craftsman Joiner Julian Coppins had time out for an operation in the early autumn but should be back at work by the time this appears in print.

## WAY AND WORKS

### Tuesday Group

As usual with outside wooden structures, a little probing into what appears to be a tiny amount of rot unearths a far greater problem. This was definitely the case at Tenterden Station. The small canopy over the entrance on the south side had advanced rot and has been completely rebuilt after consultation with the Archivist and checking of historical photographs.

The "A" frame on the end wall of the St. Michael's side of the building also had advanced rot. This required a great deal of new wood being spliced in. Both of the finials were rotten and two new ones were superbly

made by Ron Dunn on his lathe at home using the originals as a pattern to ensure authenticity.

The south face of the building has been repainted.

The station fence has had a large section of rotten wood (rails and posts) replaced and the whole lot given a fresh coat of white paint.

With the very nice weather during September and the repaint together with the hanging baskets and gardens, many favourable comments regarding the appearance of Tenterden Station were received from the public.

We have now returned to Rolvenden Station to finish repairing (please see photograph) and to





*P class and vintage set await No 21 and A set at Wittersham Road (Dave Bott)*

give a coat of paint to the Crossing Keepers Hut/Booking Office on the platform. When this work has been completed the whole canopy site on Rolvenden Station will be finished. We will then move onto Northiam which is requiring attention.

### Operating

It has been a busy year so far for the Ops dept with many promotions to report. Starting on the signalling side, Noel Young, Mike Goodwin, Philip Crow, Kieran Wildman, Rachel Smith, Michael Haizeldene, and John Wellard have all passed out as crossing keepers at Cranbrook Road. With Mike Goodwin passing out at Northiam and Richard Stone, John Wellard and David Blackman completing the list at Rolvenden. Andy Stokes has also been passed as a Tenterden Town Signaller.

James Darling and Ron King have both qualified as Guards with Jon Edwards returning after a period of absence.

Jim Wilson, Terry Hannocks, Gary Stainburn and Ed Gascoyne have all passed as Firemen, with Ed also passing to drive the Ford and the TRAMM. Dan Jenner has also been passed to operate the TRAMM. Matt Green has been passed to drive steam locomotives.

Nearly there! Jamie Douglas and Clive Lowe have been appointed as On Track Machine Inspectors while John Wellard, Ken Catt, Neil

Harrison and Ron King have been appointed as Basic Railway Safety Instructors and Colin Avey has been appointed as the Traffic Assistant.

I think that is all! We wish everyone listed above well in their new positions.

You may have noticed that in the local papers and railway magazines recently there have been several articles about volunteering on the railway. Over the last year the Operating Department have inducted, or are in the process of inducting, over 65 new people to Signalling, Guarding and the footplate grades. We wish every new volunteer the warmest of welcomes.

The winter engine bashing season has started with *Knowle* being cleaned on the 18th October, *Bodiam* the 1st November and the *Yank* on the 6th December. Everyone is invited to get involved, regardless of which department you normally work for! Bacon sarnies, soup and cake are provided for free. The Engine bashing days start at 09:00 at Rolvenden, please wear boots and overalls.

As well as the engine bashing sessions, we have a programme of Mutual Improvement Classes taking place this winter. The first takes place on the 22nd November and focuses on entering and leaving possessions, a useful class for all Operating staff. The second is a two day Trainee Fireman's course from the 28th

November. Details of further classes will be published on notice boards and on the Operating website [www.ksr-operating.org.uk](http://www.ksr-operating.org.uk). For more details please contact Pete Salmon or Matt Green.

With the influx of new engine cleaners and the upcoming engine bashing days, we are in need of more cleaning rags than ever. If you have any old rags suitable for engine cleaning please drop them off at Rolvenden where they will be put to good use.

Finally, a big thank you to everyone who has helped out so much this year, your help is very much appreciated.

As a thank you from the General Manager for all of your hard efforts over the 'Last Train's Gone' gala, the Operating Department has been able to purchase a laptop and projector which will help to improve the quality of training we can provide. Thank you, have a very merry Christmas and here's to a good 2010!

### Gardening

Summer may have been slow in coming to our corner of the country but when it did how amazing the weather has been. The weeks and weeks without rain has been wonderful for holidaymakers, outdoor activities such as visiting heritage railways, etc, but it has made life difficult for gardeners. We always complain about something but it is a problem when plants have to be watered. However, despite the heat, wind and lack of rain the gardens at all the stations have looked very good all year and our thanks go to everyone involved in the gardens at all the stations.

At Tenterden it has been a problem keeping all the tubs, buckets and Pullman Dock alive but, thanks to the assistance of a few people – Mick, Chris Woods and Doug Ramsden (the people we know who have helped and if anyone else has helped in this way, thank you) they received sufficient water to keep them going throughout the running season. Fortunately the watering system worked very well this year and kept the hanging baskets thriving.

During the last quarter as weeds were cleared more perennials were added to the gardens. The triangle in the car park seems to be surviving and a few more plants will be added to this over the next few weeks. Unfortunately the three flower pouches tied to the railings outside the Buffet disappeared in August so these will not be replaced next year.

A vegetable garden was planted as a trial in the Carriage & Wagon Yard but, unfortunately, due to the difficulty of access at times things did struggle and so this project has been abandoned.

During August Caroline returned from Amsterdam for two weeks to help with the gardens at Tenterden. As a result of her generosity 100 tulip bulbs will be planted during the forthcoming weeks. Hopefully, next Spring should be a colourful one.

The little garden at Rolvenden Station has done very well this year. The spring bulbs gave a good show early on and during the summer the lilies, geraniums and sedums have provided colour throughout the whole running season. Stan Kemp and Doug Ramsden have strimmed the areas surrounding the young trees and shrubs in Rolvenden Field to make sure they are not overgrown by weeds. A request has been made for more planters to be put on Rolvenden platform to make it a little more attractive as the station is used regularly for the Driver Experience Days.

Northiam Station, under the care of Paul and Brenda Tanton-Brown, is looking really attractive. They keep everything neat and tidy. The Station Master's garden during the season looked very authentic with the runner beans, tomatoes, onions and herbs all growing so well. Unfortunately, Brenda was dismayed to find someone had been into the garden and cut most of the flowers. This was just before the Ivor the Engine weekend when it was important for the garden to be at its best. Despite that on the day the garden looked good and was appreciated by families having picnics. The hedge on the platform is now really coming into its own following the expert trimming it receives from Paul.

Unfortunately Wittersham Road suffered neglect this year due to the Station Agent being unwell and the gardening team being unable to fit the station into its timetable. However, thanks have to go to Doug Ramsden (again) and Chris Lowry who kindly get their mowers out and keep the grass around the station buildings neatly trimmed. The planters have been topped up with compost and new plants added. In the next week or two it is planned to put in some more bulbs and heathers. It is planned to carry out a clearance of the gardens before the winter with the assistance of the Tuesday Group.

The Bodiam Gardens are always well cared for



as they have a strong team looking after them and are covered in a separate report.

As usual more help is always very welcome and if you have a few hours to spare please contact Veronica Hopker on 01303 862811.

### Forestry and Conservation

The group have completed clearance of bramble, willow etc near Hexden Bridge along the fence line to enable new fencing to be erected. The fencing contractor has now carried out this work, which has completed replacement fencing from Rother Bridge to Hexden Bridge.

The same time as our regular once a fortnight Sunday visits, we have also embarked working on week days, which has enabled the group to carry out a considerable amount of extra works, which includes clearing Willow and Bramble etc from Oxney Straight, also at Harpers removing self seeded Sycamore which has opened up some wonderful views, especially for our passengers.

We have had some much needed help from a rail mounted vehicle with four cutting disks on a hydraulic arm. The machine started from Bodiam Station cutting back foliage growing towards the track, and continued up to Rother Bridge. In addition to this we have also had a flail mounted machine cutting large areas of bramble and scrub away from the track, which has resulted in less damage to the rolling stock and allowing better views again for the public.

The group have recently completed clearance work next to the occupation crossing near Willows Curve to improve the sight lines from the crossing. This has allowed the speed restriction to be removed from this section of line. We then moved on to the crossing next to Dixer, again to clear foliage blocking the sight lines from the crossing. We have spent approximately 138 working hours on this task. We have now, as of 12<sup>th</sup> October 2009, completed the works required, and it is hoped that after an inspection of the site the speed restriction on this section of line will also be removed. All of which should help towards keeping the running times of the timetable and even better times during the year.

All of the crossing areas will be inspected by ourselves and if there is a possible safety issue regarding sighting for pedestrians or landowners with vehicles, this will be dealt with accordingly. We hope to set up shortly an ongoing regular maintenance programme. This will identify areas needing attention and any work will be undertaken by the team.

As always, like other departments we are desperate for help so that we can achieve our task. Can you spare the odd Sunday (once a fortnight) or on our extra week days, Wednesday or Thursday, helping to remove unwanted growth? You work at a pace that suits you and it does give you a chance to see the trains up close. Just ring Peter Thorogood on 01580 761219.

## GROUPS & ASSOCIATES

### Rother Valley Railway

Our planning application for Phase 3 (Bodiam to Udiam) referred to in the last report was approved by Rother District Council (RDC) on the 26 June. It was granted subject to the condition that, prior to the commencement on any work on this phase, RDC had to approve a scheme for the provision and management of a buffer zone for the protection of the Rother riverbank adjacent to the site. Such a scheme was commissioned and this was recently approved by RDC.

Work on this next phase has therefore now begun and it is planned to relay a further approximate 140 metres from the existing railhead at the end of Phase 2 to just inside the garden of Udiam Farm before the onset of winter.

In the meantime, the farmer's occupation crossings and the line fencing on the Phase 2

section have been erected and it is proposed to make a start on the remaining landscaping planting here this winter.

Members of the Railway and the public are please reminded that the Udiam and Quarry Farm Estates are in private ownership and no unauthorised entry is permitted.

### Museum

With the Museum now closed for the season we can look back on a successful year with visitor numbers rising healthily to match the railway's success. We have been blessed with both active and new volunteers both to man the desk and chat to the customers and to work both behind the scenes and on the exhibits; we have acquired interesting new exhibits both large and small; and have been able to obtain good grants to upgrade our archiving and exhibits.

Unreported till now has been another grant from



*Terrier approaches Tenterden Crossing in sylvan setting before Forestry and Conservation are required to create sufficient sighting (Ian Brett)*

With winter some of us will be toggling up and working on the exhibits (you have no idea how cold it gets in that building!). Peter Southgate continues with his never ending cataloguing task. By next Easter, when we open again the Rye and Camber coach frame and the Ashover quarry tub may even be restored and in place outside mounted on pieces of genuine Rye & Camber track. Come and see us then.

the very supportive Kent & Medway Museum Development Service, this time for a large scanner and printer to help us enhance our presentations. This is already bearing fruit with an enhanced Weston Clevedon & Portishead panel and advanced work on the East Kent panel. This panel will include another important acquisition: a porter's lamp bearing the most unusual marking 'EKRY 1&2'; an apparent reference to the original designation of the railway as built; there were to be a further 40 authorised railways! This lamp was acquired at auction with generous assistance from the Colonel Stephens Society; a nice success in the light of apparently continuously rising auction prices and one or two unsuccessful attempts to obtain items. Somebody has some money in this time of recession.

Other additions to the collection have been

- Four timetable posters for our railway for 1939, 1946, 1948 and 1949; one of which was donated from our friends at the Bluebell museum and two from Neil Chamberlain
- A beautifully produced book of photos of the abandoned Shrewsbury Potteries & North Wales Railway (the 'Potts') before it was resurrected as the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway. This book was privately produced by John Clarke from his collection and generously donated to the museum.
- A framed map of the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire presented by the Shropshire Railway Heritage Trust to the Colonel Stephens Society and loaned by them for display.

### Ashford Area Group

We continue to enjoy enthusiastic support for our indoor meetings.

The second of our outdoor visits was to Le P'tit train de la Haute Somme for their September steam gala. We had the generous donation of a guided tour of the WW1 battle fields on the way down. This was conducted by Steve Smith, a badged guide whose web site can be found at <http://www.memoriantours.org.uk/>. We stopped off at Pozieres Cemetery where a wreath was laid on behalf of the British Legion and the group. We then visited Lochnagar Mine Crater before continuing, in stunned silence, to the railway. This return visit was by popular request and the gala lived up to our every expectation

You do not have to be an Ashford area resident to join us at our indoor open meetings. These continue, commencing at 7.30pm, at the Railway Club, Beaver Road, Ashford TN23 7RR, beginning with the following Wednesdays in 2009/10:-

16th December 2009 – "A TASTE OF SWITZERLAND" Seasonal scenes from Noel Tappenden

20th January 2010 - Alan Crotty; Enjoy his wit and enthusiasm

17th February – "Continental European Railways in the 1960's" John Snell

24th March – Note this is the fourth Wednesday of the month.

See you there? Ted Micklam 01233503999

### CFBS News – Philip Pacey

It has been a good summer on the Baie de



*Metropolitan Electric Locomotive No 12, Sarah Siddons, with District coach No 100 at Upminster Depot open weekend (London Underground)*

Somme. I'm told that the vegetable garden at St Valéry Canal which I worked on in April has been very productive. With the 'high season' over, all the signs are that the CFBS is doing well despite the recession. I'm told that there have been fewer visitors from the U.K., and that holiday makers have favoured picnics rather than meals in restaurants, but there has been no shortage of passengers. Between 800 and 1,400 people have travelled on the railway most days, with closer to 1,500 in mid-August. Delays have sometimes occurred on the busiest days while extra carriages have been manoeuvred onto the train on the quay at St Valéry, where it is the intention of the CFBS to extend the track to accommodate longer trains. There has been a marked increase in the number of passengers on the Cayeux line, no doubt in response to the CFBS's experimental 'opening' of Cayeux station during July and August, with not only tickets but also souvenirs and refreshments on sale outside the station, and a billboard outside the tourist information office in the town.

The weather has not been fine every day, however. On 28th August my friend Geoffrey Nickson was driver of the 'diner à bord' train, which met gale force winds on the embankment – an entire helping of the entrée was whisked off a plate in transit between carriages! The train retreated to the shelter of St Valéry Canal where passengers were offered guided tours of the depot by way of compensation.

Recently there has been some discussion by e-mail regarding the 'voiture salon'. Some members feel that it should be given greater protection and used more sparingly – a classic dilemma of preservation versus use. It was very appropriately used on 27th June to form part of an inaugural train hauled by La 'Suzanne', which, after coming to St Valéry for the Fête de la Vapeur, not quite fully restored, left the CFBS on 30th June.

A historic vehicle which is to see more action is the breakdown crane, which I and some K&ESR members have worked on. It has been brought



into the depot and lifted, allowing access to the chassis, and has been fitted with air brakes so that it can be included in the CFBS's demonstration freight train.

The CFBS will celebrate its 40th anniversary in July, 2011. The occasion will be marked by a major event, coinciding with the annual Fête de la Gare at Cayeux, and taking the place of the Fête de la Vapeur. The next Fête de la Vapeur will take place in 2013.



*Our newly appointed Trustee, Ken Lee, poses next to the Birdcage (Nick Pallant)*

# From the Board Room

A selection of topics discussed in May, June and July 2009. More complete details can be obtained from the Company Secretary.

## Safety & Incidents

There had been an instance of vandalism at Cyster's crossing. Ballast had been thrown at, and damaged, S&TE equipment.

The Operating Manager had reported on the incident during 2008 when a tamper struck the platform edge at Tenterden Town. This report made various recommendations.

A wash out plug had been incorrectly replaced on No. 32678. The incident had been investigated and a new procedure was in place.

## Legal

It appeared that the Department for Transport would apply to Parliament for a 'network' exemption for heritage railways from proposed disability access regulations.

HIT Entertainments no longer required CRB checks for everyone involved in a Thomas™ event. This would, in effect, be a return to the previous system where only those most closely involved with young visitors would need to be checked.

The latest version of the Rother Valley Railway's Objectives & Policy indicated that the principal change was the removal of any reference to running to, or stations at, Junction Road.

Changes in Company law would result in the 2010 accounts being submitted to the Registrar of Companies prior to the customary date for the Annual General Meeting (2<sup>nd</sup> weekend in October). Although best practice might seem to dictate that the AGM should be held prior to submission it was felt that this was impractical in terms of operating the Railway and the likely wishes of working members. Trustees were assured that in the event of the accounts being modified as the result of a decision at the AGM they could be re-submitted.

## Finance

By May the K&ESR was trading well, the reasons being thought to be the good weather and the increase in domestic tourism. There was, nonetheless, a continuing need for caution. Due to the economic situation effectively no interest was presently being received on the bank accounts. In June it was reported that spending by managers had been frugal and that the group accounts showed net indebtedness continuing to fall. Income looked both promising and better

than had dared been hoped at the beginning of the year. This trend continued into July with the Profit & Loss account ahead of budget on income.

The GM requested relaxation of financial restraint including a new storage siding in place of the Bodiam end siding, this being approved in May. In June the Board approved carriage wheel turning and new stock proof fencing together with, in July, £8000 for a new information kiosk at Tenterden Town (Brian Janes and Stuart Phillips voted against this). £4,700 for new ovens in RU No. 69 was agreed unanimously but £5000 for lighting at Wittersham Road was not approved.

In May, Ian Legg produced his latest version of the draft Business Plan. This now included reference to the possibility of running to Robertsbridge and Rolling Stock Policy. Philip Shaw had suggested that in its place the Company refinance its debt using a bank loan repayable over 20 or 30 years. This would enable capital investment to be made in the Railway. Norman Brice said that this idea should first be considered by the Finance Committee.

NRB reported that a decision on the InterReg 4 application had been deferred again. An appeal for the Cavell Van was to go ahead in advance of this. The Carriage Shed extension no longer formed part of the application, although the project itself remained active.

The GM presented the proposed Operating Calendar for 2010. This broadly followed the pattern of 2009 although there were to be slightly more diesel services. This was partly calendar driven.

The 2008 Accounts and Annual Report were approved unanimously.

Carol Mitchell asked why the shop no longer sold K&ESR staff uniform buttons. The GM said that the initial outlay was high but sales of these items were slow. The Chairman subsequently instructed that the buttons were to be stocked for reasons broader than the strictly economic.

If there were to be an investment programme, how it would be started? What return could be expected? Derek Dunlavy said that a commercial case could be made for such projects as the carriage shed extension. Brian Janes added that grant money should be available again after the Olympics but the criteria were not known. The Development Committee would look at priorities again, including rates of return. Norman Brice said that the company's heritage objectives should not be forgotten.



Carriage & Wagon renovation projects would be capitalised in instances where expenditure reached at least £10,000 in respect of an individual vehicle in a single year.

Difficulties were being experienced with the Blackbaud computerised ticketing system in reconciling income. The GM had raised this with Blackbaud who were to advise on requesting satisfactory reports from the computer.

Progress with the Business Plan was contingent on consideration by the Finance and Development Committees, including a consultation amongst members.

### **Marketing, Sales & Product**

The Board recognised the considerable efforts made by James Palk and his team in organising the highly successful May Gala and congratulated them on their achievements on behalf of the Railway.

As anticipated, June had seen a drop in figures although somewhat more than had been allowed for in the budget. The major reason was the absence of a Thomas™ event. Bookings for the remainder of the year were however healthy.

Running the Vintage Train as the 'A' set had not proved as popular as had been hoped. It appeared that the apparent success of the train as the 'B' set had been due to the popularity of the timings and, regrettably, not the vehicles in use.

### **Policy Compliance**

Minor revisions were made to Policy Document POL 208, Organisation of the K&ESR and Company Instruction INS 119, Registering Safety Concerns.

The title of Company Instruction INS 127 was changed to Management of Safety Verification.

Volunteer signalman Phil Edwards had been revising other parts of the Rule Book and had now produced an excellent draft of Section A General Responsibilities. This was referred back to the Employment Committee for a report to the Board in September if possible.

The revised version of Company Instruction INS 001 (Company Instruction & Policy Statement Process) was approved,

Policy Document POL 201 (Bringing Rolling stock On/Off the K&ESR) was to be re-written to take into account the post of General Manager. Two versions were considered. Both required the GM to produce a report to the Board, which would take the definitive decision. Version A required applications to be submitted

to the Company Secretary and Version B to the General Manager. Version B was approved on a vote of six to three.

Brian Janes noted that Heritage Policy (POL 202) did not require the author to report to the Board if a request from members for a change was received and, following a review, the author did not feel it necessary to recommend such a change. Derek Dunlavy was asked to review the Policy.

A petition had been received requesting that Rolvenden station site be painted green as a Southern Region station to represent the Railway during the nationalised era. Brian Janes said that the whole issue of Rolvenden, which had begun with the signal box and now extended to the site in general, was to do with image rather than heritage. The Railway's Image, however, is reflected in the Heritage Policy. Had BMJ been making a formal report on the signal box issue, he would have recommended that no exception be made under the Heritage Policy. Geoff Crouch said that there was a great deal of ill feeling among a few people about the signal box. If the Board enforced the Heritage Policy, the decision would be extremely unpopular with that group. Would it be possible to control the Railway's overall image if the Board agreed to a Southern Region image for Rolvenden? It was agreed, with Geoff Crouch and Stuart Phillips abstaining, not to make an exception for any of the buildings on the Rolvenden site.

### **Infrastructure**

The revision of Rolling Stock Policy was under consideration. The GM had hoped to report on this to the Board in September but further time needed to be given to considering the issues involved. Stuart Phillips warned that any proposed rolling stock disposals would be contentious. There was general agreement that the Rolling Stock Policy should go out to consultation with members.

### **Human Resources**

Policy Document POL 215 Retirement of Safety Critical Operating Staff was approved. This allowed relevant staff and volunteers reaching 75 years to apply to be assessed as competent to continue beyond that age.

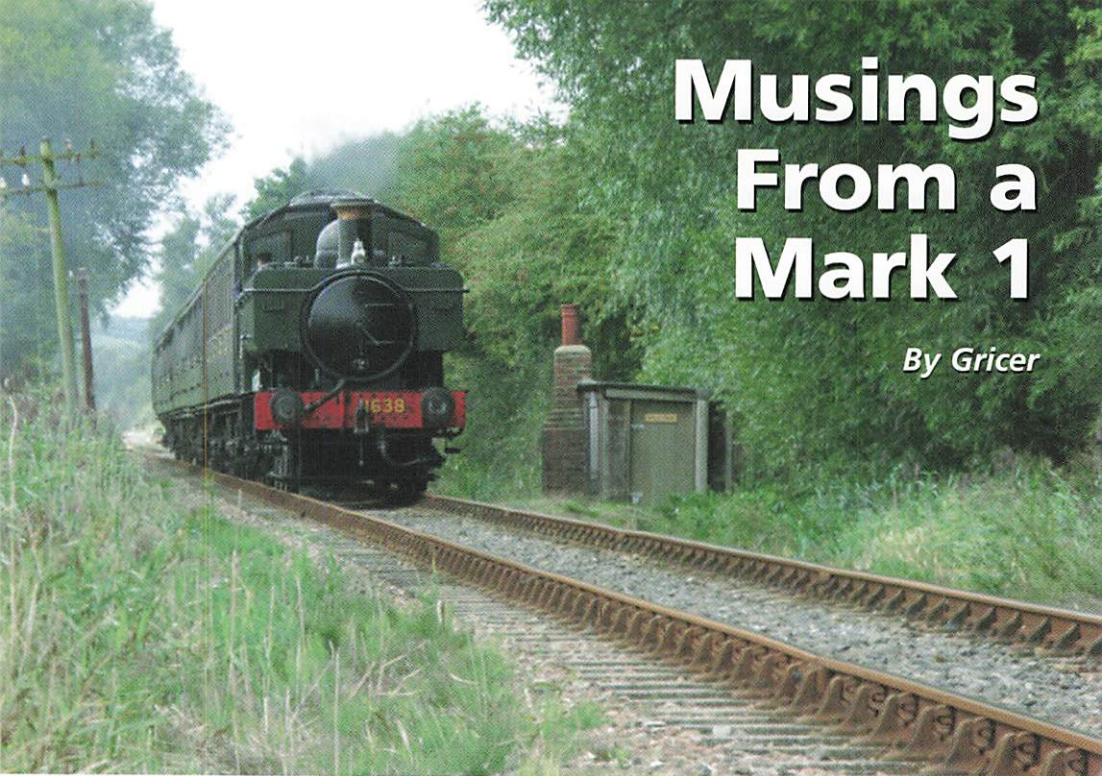
In June Geoff Crouch confirmed that both of his Reports on Volunteering would be distributed to mess rooms during the weekend of the meeting.

In July Carol Mitchell said that recent press reports about the new Vetting & Barring Scheme to protect vulnerable persons appeared contrary to official advice received.



# Musings From a Mark 1

*By Gricer*



*GWR Pannier tank at Popes Cottage with a rake of Mk 1's (Alan Sampson)*

Recently, Gricer was passing the time of day with a colleague at Tenterden when a lady interrupted their conversation with an urgent-sounding, "Excuse me!" Fearing the worst, Gricer and colleague enquired how they might help. "I just wanted to say," enthused the lady, "what an absolutely wonderful time we have had today."

Now, that may not appear to be any big deal, but it occurred to Gricer that, in his front line duties with the public, it's the sort of thing he is hearing more and more frequently. Unsolicited thanks. Yes, of course we regularly ask our customers whether they have enjoyed themselves; and, for the most part, the answer is in the affirmative.

Let's face it, we are all quick enough to complain – Gricer is no exception. But that magical expression – thank you – is surely the most difficult to use in the entire English language. So, it is no mean feat that the railway is attracting more and more unsolicited praise. (Just look at the letters on the Pullman notice board.)

So why might that be? Well, we're a friendly lot for a start. Gricer has heard of one or two steam railways that give the impression they are doing the public a favour by running trains in the first place. Nobody *has* to come and visit us; yet our

level of repeat business indicates we must be doing something very right indeed.

Let's not lose sight of the fact that a day out on the Kent & East Sussex costs a not inconsiderable amount of money. Good value: we hope so. Cheap, no – something of which we must be ever conscious in these cash-strapped times. A family ticket is £34 or, to put it into context, more than half a day's work on the minimum wage. Add to that petrol, spending on catering and in the shop... you do well to get change out of £50. So Gricer thinks we should take a collective bow and of course, not rest on our laurels.

## **Whither Northiam?**

In between duties, Gricer was talking, (and yes, he does do some meaningful work on the railway), with a member of the board. "What's the answer to Northiam?" he enquired of Gricer. Well, if only Gricer knew.

The Northiam situation defies all logic. Situated on a main road, good parking, nearby tourist markets at Rye and Hastings to tap into... Yet, it is not the station of choice for our East Sussex visitors. How times change.



When Northiam represented the western terminus of the railway, it was a thriving place. Many of our passengers started their journeys there and, run with the aid of the Friends of Northiam group, the station was pretty much self-financing. Gricer recalls in his former capacity as Deputy Chief Assistant General Catering Operative in the tearoom there that it was quite common to take £200 in catering income in a day. Now, things are rather different.

Advertising seems to be fruitless; maybe the answer is that there is nothing to do there while waiting for a train. Northiam looks empty – bleak and unwelcoming, even, when unstaffed. Perhaps if we had a bottomless pit of money, it would be good to have a shop, small museum, visitor centre, model railway... In the real world though, three cheers for the arrival of a new Northiam team that is breathing new life into the station. It's starting to look loved again; there's more of a buzz about the place. The team deserves our support – both individually and corporately.

### We've Won the Lottery

Well, no, we haven't - but the forgoing set some of Gricer's remaining grey cells rattling. What if the railway *did* have a bottomless pit of money? What if money were no object? Great Western railcar restored within months; locos awaiting attention – here's the cash to see to them; new visitor facilities at Tenterden – here's a cheque for £2m; extended Carriage & Wagon facilities – a breeze. Ah, manpower: no problem, we have the money to pay for it.

But, muses Gricer, would that really be a good thing? No. Because, Gricer reasons, we need a challenge in life. How stereotypical life would be if we could have everything we wanted, when we wanted it. Where's the satisfaction in taking away all sense of achievement? Where's the pride in that? Would, for example, an angler continue fishing if he were able to hook fish after fish after fish? Of course not.

So it is that Gricer ventures to suggest that it is the sheer challenge of conquering what appear to be insuperable odds; of achieving the nigh-on impossible; of giving something and getting that tremendous sense of achievement in return; and of having so many goals within tantalising reach, that keeps us going - and make the railway the tremendous and successful place it is today.

And if you think that in saying this Gricer is a rivet short of a smokebox, get hold of a copy of

Nick Pallant's book *Holding the Line*. There you will see how those very challenges spurred on the preserved railway's pioneers, against odds of adversity that these days make our perceived difficulties, such as they are, seem like a stroll in the park. (*Flattery and name dropping will get you everywhere* – Ed.) But what a sense of satisfaction those early pioneers must now have.

### The Wood and the Trees

Being a long-standing volunteer, Gricer has seen the railway evolve, experiencing its peaks and nadirs. At risk of tempting fate, we seem to have it pretty much right at the moment.

Even so, Gricer has to say that there are occasions when he feels like he is volunteering not on a steam railway, but at a theme park with steam railway attached. That, and the following, are not complaints; nor are they criticisms. They are observations – nothing more and nothing less. For Gricer is aware that, rightly or wrongly, the great British public expects to be entertained. And that means special events. Gricer feels that a trip on a steam train should be sufficient reason to visit us anyhow – but he's probably living in the past. And the fact is that special events bring in an enormous amount of income for the railway: dare Gricer suggest we would be hard-pressed to survive without them? If we do not lay them on, our visitors will go somewhere that does. It's a harsh fact of the world we live in: a registered charity we may be,



*Crowded Bodiam Platform typical of the 2009 high season (Robin Dyce)*



but we are up there with the big commercial boys fighting for the leisure pound. The world owes us nothing.

However, Gricer does wonder whether we run rather too many events. Sometimes, you cannot see the wood for the trees or, in railway parlance, the steam for the smoke. Gricer feels sure that the mere words "special event" drive some - many, even - people away, fearing that the railway will be packed out. Because generally, "special event" equals crowds. Or does it? Because Gricer posits that one or two events might better be billed as non-events; and that the railway might be suffering a net loss in business as a result. Anybody casually reading our timetable might well choose to steer a wide berth of the weekend when we host the Mid Kent Clog Dancing and Wellie Throwing Convention: but in the cold light of day, they would be hard pressed to find anything different about the place - save that it is rather deserted.

On the other side of the coin, do crowds necessarily equal cash? What a tremendous atmosphere there was at Tenterden for the CAMRA event in June; beer and steam seems like a marriage made in heaven. But... (and at

this stage, Gricer wishes to state that if this is wrong he will be more than delighted), was money being spent on the railway? (At the time of writing, Gricer is not privy to this information.) You could hardly blame people if it wasn't because, yes folks, they were here for the beer - and not necessarily the railway. And how many potential spend-shedloads-of-money-on-the-railway visitors might the event have deterred: visitors who quite wrongly, it transpires, had considered the possible ramifications and difficulties associated with the consumption of large quantities of alcohol.

So let's step back and take a good look at ourselves. Let's prune out the dead wood. Let's hold our heads high and keep those things that we do so well, that have become market leaders drawing in repeat business and income: Thomas, Santa Specials, Hoppers' Weekend, the gala, 40s Weekend and Evacuees' Week, the Pullman, loco driving courses... But above all, lets leave time for the one thing at which we well and truly excel: being Britain's finest rural light railway.

*Gricer is a volunteer with twenty-three years service on the railway.*



*P class and Bodiam ready for the off at Tenterden (Nick Pallant)*





*RXD group pose on Rolvenden platform (Ian Brett)*

## RAILWAY EXPERIENCE DAYS

Some years ago we ran a series of Railway Experience Days from Tenterden to Rolvenden and return, operating short trains, usually with *Norwegian*. We took a total of eight people in a day, four in the morning and four in the afternoon. They all had an hour or so as Driver, Fireman, Signaller and Guard. Staffing was a problem, especially from the footplate side where the need to closely supervise two totally inexperienced people required both the tutors to be Drivers, plus we needed a relief to enable tea and meals to be consumed. The stress levels were immense and a number of Drivers, having covered one turn, refused to cover any more!

After that Clive Groome's 'Footplate Days and Ways' company was used to run courses. During that time Pete Salmon was employed as Operating Assistant with the secondary task of developing, expanding and running Footplate Experience courses. However, successive Commercial Managers took the option of

continuing to use 'Footplate Days and Ways' to run the courses.

In 2005 Paul Wilson took over the internal operation of Railway Experience Days and developed them to a high standard. I took over from him at the beginning of last year, with a brief to develop them further and increase the range of courses available.

From a financial point of view the current income from the RXD family of experiences (on track for a little over £80,000 this year) produces no less than 20 per cent of traditional passenger tickets. Not only is this revenue available to us when the railway is otherwise closed but it is a stable and rising revenue stream. Happily these products do not appear to be subject to the vagaries of weather and recession that traditionally impact on ticket sales. Experiences address a different niche market and we continue to find that demand





*Ted Micklam explains Rolvenden Signalbox to one of the RDX participants during the day (Ian Brett)*

outstrips supply - something many businesses only dream of; although that presents its own problems as our customers have to wait a while.

The following Railway Experience Days are on offer at present -

The **DMMU Cab Ride**, which consists of just that. The participant turns up and rides in the Second Man's seat in the DMMU for a round trip.

The **Footplate Taster** is a round trip on a steam loco, which starts with a fairly comprehensive safety briefing before departure. The participant usually stands next to or behind the Driver and is encouraged to ask what is going on, although it is made clear that the Driver's first duty is the safety of the train. Most Firemen will encourage the participant to 'have a go' on the shovel.

On the **Introductory Steam Locomotive Driving Course** eight people learn to control a loco and by the end of the day most are pretty good at it, although it is made very clear that they will need a few more years training before they can become Drivers! The day starts at 08.30 with tea and chat and at about 09.00 they have breakfast in the Permanent Way mess coach, which is

parked in Rolvenden platform, and have a comprehensive safety briefing before they go near the loco. We then take them two at a time on the footplate and in the course of the day they each drive two trips to the Sewage Works siding and back, learning to start and stop smoothly, two trips starting smoothly and stopping precisely and then two or three goes at buffering up to a brake van. The participant not driving is encouraged to 'have a go' on the shovel. When not on the footplate participants either ride on the brake van, which is coupled to the loco, visit the signal box, visit the shed and yard or sit on the platform or in the mess coach drinking tea and telling tall stories to each other. Lunch is served in the mess coach at about 13.00 and the day usually ends between 16.00 and 16.30.

The **Drive The Bank Experience**, introduced last year, is open to anyone who has taken an Introductory course. It is run on a Wednesday evening when the Fish and Chip train runs and there are Signalmen on duty at Rolvenden and Tenterden. It consists of refreshing the participant's skills by driving up and down in Rolvenden station limits until the down train has passed, then two trips are made light engine



to Tenterden and back, the two participants taking it in turns to drive or fire, although some prefer not to fire. This course is designed to derive income for the railway by utilising equipment already in use and staff already present. The loco used will have been out all day on the 211 timetable and we increase loco mileage by about six and use about four or five hundredweight of coal. The Driver and Fireman are the only staff who come in especially for the turn.

**The Advanced Steam Locomotive Driving Course** consists of two people who have taken an Introductory course taking it in turns to drive and fire a round trip each on an empty passenger train to Bodiam and return. The train usually consists of the 'P' or a 'Terrier' and the Vintage set. Lunch is served in Tenterden Buffet and friends and relations can dine and travel in the train for a fee.

**The Signalbox Experience Day**, tested last year and introduced in April this year, involves one person spending a day with the Rolvenden Signaller. The participant is encouraged to learn about the operation of a signal box and signalling in general, to pull levers under close supervision, to exchange tokens (only on stationary trains) and anything else that involves a Signaller on duty. A packed meal is delivered by train during the morning.

A BTH 'Ford' diesel goods ARXD was run in May for four engineering staff from the Ford plant at Dagenham. We ran from Rolvenden to Bodiam and return twice with a small goods train, plus two trips light engine Rolvenden – Wittersham – Rolvenden. The course was very well received and the participants are now saving up for a 'Crompton' day.

Brake van rides were sold on all goods trains running during this year's gala. We didn't make a fortune but it cost very little to organise and sell.

The following courses are in the pipeline -

An experimental 'Drive The Pick Up Goods' – a 'Terrier' or similar and brake van will leave Rolvenden for Bodiam, picking up and putting down wagons on the way, returning to Rolvenden for lunch and reversing the process in the afternoon. This course is designed for two people and will be run on the same basis as the Advanced Steam Locomotive Driving Course, except that a packed lunch will be supplied. The course, which should have been run by the time you read this, was designed for two people who

wanted something different, having completed all the other steam courses. It will form part of our portfolio if successful.

A two-day Technical Railway Experience is being considered, to take place at Rolvenden and mainly in a classroom. It will cover basic knowledge of the construction of locomotives and their component parts, using classroom props and locos in the yard at Rolvenden. On the second day candidates will assist in preparing a loco, drive in Rolvenden station limits and assist in disposal duties. The course will depend on the Operating Department having a classroom in a portable building at Rolvenden; something that the Operating Manager would dearly like but hasn't a site for at present. It is hoped that the course may prove useful for training new Trainee Firemen as well as the public.

RXD's are now run under the auspices of the Operating Department so decisions regarding their operation are helped by easy access to the Operating Manager for discussion and advice. We are willing to arrange any sort of railway experience that anyone may request, providing that it is legal, safe, within the rules and benefits the coffers of the K&ESR. If you have ever dreamed of driving a special sort of train, try us!

All courses are risk assessed as per K&ESR Company Instructions and staff are well briefed on their roles and responsibilities and are issued with guidance notes as required.

We have achieved a high reputation for our courses. A large number of participants have been on other courses and almost without exception have said ours were the best. One gentleman in particular spends a lot of his time on courses at various railways and has been on the Preliminary, the Drive the Bank and the Advanced and is booked for another Advanced and the experimental Drive The Pick Up Goods this year.

Last year we 'trained' over three hundred participants with no cancellations or complaints. We also carried a large number of Footplate Taster passengers, the only problem being the substitution of the class 33 for the booked steam loco one day when the customer travelled from Belgium for his trip. He ended up being delighted to have a complimentary diesel cab trip followed by a steam footplate trip some weeks later.

I think that the following, from a fellow RXD staff member sums up our ethos rather well -



*Shunting away the brake van and RXD coach after the day (Ian Brett)*

"I was coordinating an RXD last week and, whilst shepherding customers back from the signal box I invited them to wait for the stragglers so that we could all cross the line together. One customer observed 'Martin, you present this day as a carefree fun day but it occurs to me that everything we do here is very carefully controlled and thought out beforehand to conform to your rules'."

A perceptive comment. I explained that he was quite right. In order to offer such a relaxed and enjoyable day we have indeed drawn on many years of experience, hours and hours of thought and a considerable pile of risk assessments. The Coordinator's job has grown and is now a complex one. But it is perhaps here, in the control of our visitors by the systems we have put in place that we see the delivery of fun and learning against the need to enforce a highly disciplined day that meets Railway Rules, H&S legislation, Risk Analysis & Assessment against that increasingly rare and fragile commodity: common sense.

I would like to express my thanks to all those who have helped to run railway experience days of all sorts since I took over the operation of them.

The small band of Drivers, Firemen, Coordinators and Signalmen who run the RXDs, ARXDs and the Drive the Bank Experience. The DMMU and steam loco Drivers and Firemen who happily share their cabs, experiences, humour and knowledge with paying passengers. The Guards and Shunters on the various trains we run. The Catering staff who look after us so well. The Rolvenden Signalmen who share their box for a whole day with a stranger. Last but not least the ladies in the office on Tenterden platform. They never cease to amaze me as they deal politely with even the most difficult customers, although I have noticed that, on a Wednesday when I am in the Operating office wearing my Operating Assistant hat, the odd call to field someone awkward does come my way!

Howard Wallace-Sims



## OBITUARIES

### Robert John Forsythe

1930 – 2009

Robert was born on June 1st 1930 and lived with his parents and brother in a flat on Mornington Crescent, not far from Euston station. Little is known about his early years or whether he was evacuated from London during the Blitz.

It is obvious that he was interested in railways and things mechanical as his parents bought him a tin plate train set of which he was very proud. His father worked as a guard for the London Midland and Scottish Railway based out of Kentish Town and Euston. At the age of 15 Bob joined the LMS as a "premium apprentice" under the scheme overseen by HC Ivatt. He was to train as a fitter/turner starting his railway career at Kentish Town Motive Power Depot. There followed an 18 month period within Bow Works during which time he learnt his trade on steam locomotives.

I am informed that he was seconded to the main works for the LMS at Derby for a period

and ended up working on prototype diesels 10000 and 10001. He also spent time working on the LMS prototype diesel shunter which eventually evolved into the well known Class 08 and 09.

Following completion of his apprenticeship Bob went to Cricklewood Motive Power Depot and became one of the wheel lathe operators in the shed. It was during this period of work that the Amalgamated Engineering Union started to figure in his life and he very soon became a shop steward. He became a staunch cloth capped Union man and although these activities figured less as he became older the cloth cap stayed with him for the rest of his life. 1960 saw the closure of the steam depot and Bob moved across the main line to the newly created diesel depot. He took on a supervisory position which left him in charge of the under floor cleaning of the DMUs prior to maintenance. Promotion saw him in charge of initial and finishing work inspections and a request to oversee the apprentice training at the depot.

With the arrival of a new Assistant Area



Bob Forsythe in front of newly restored engine No 26, Linda. (via Dave Braisford)

Manager, J. J. Groom, who had instructions to improve the reliability of the DMU fleet, Bob was put in sole charge of the DMU Heavy Maintenance Gang. This involved carrying out 72,000 and 144,000 mile services on the units whilst still looking after apprentice training.

Bob had lost his brother who died aged 18 and his father predeceased his mother. He also nursed his mother through ill health until she finally passed away. Having lost his family he immersed himself in his trade union activities and found companionship with fellow music enthusiasts in the Finchley Silver Band. He played regularly and achieved a good standard on Tenor and Flugel Horn. Unfortunately the shift work got in the way and he was often unable to attend practices and concerts. His love of brass and military music stayed with him for the rest of his life and he would often be found in a concert hall or by a bandstand soaking up the atmosphere. It was also during this period that he met his first wife Nora. They bumped into each other at an AEU Branch meeting. He married late in life and moved out of London to Harpenden. Bob was promoted once again to an E Grade Supervisor, responsible for overseeing rosters, quality issues and all the training for the apprentices. Unfortunately Nora became progressively ill with Alzheimers disease and this put a great deal of extra pressure on him at a time when his job at Cricklewood was very demanding.

Bob had always wanted to maintain contact with his first love, steam. Mike Hart recalls that he turned up at Rolvenden for the first time in 1969. Why he chose the Kent and East Sussex Railway nobody seems to know, but as time went on it became clear what an asset the railway had found. On one visit he helped out with the axle boxes on a Terrier that had been jacked up on the crossing leading to Charlie Kentsley's bungalow. The volunteers learnt more from him in one day than they had in the previous two months. Visits to Rolvenden works became more frequent and his blue Triumph Dolomite began to clock up the miles. The back springs suffered greatly as he always brought his tools with him. In the summer of 1977 Bob was asked to replace Mike Hart as the volunteer Locomotive Dept Manager. He held this post until 1988 when, following the closure of Cricklewood Diesel Depot, he was taken on as a full time employee by the K&ESR. There was much to do at Rolvenden, improving the available facilities, running repairs on the operational locomotives and restoration work on steam and diesel traction units. Bob was in

his element. Before becoming a full time employee he had found time to purchase an ex National Coal Board austerity loco from Maesteg in South Wales. This six coupled saddle tank had been worked hard but was complete. Linda arrived at the K&ESR in 1978 and her overhaul was started in 1983. To his great satisfaction and after a great deal of effort by many people, Linda finally entered service in August 1988. He was justifiably proud of his locomotive as can be seen from the photograph attached to this article. At his insistence a 14B shed plate was bolted to the smokebox door just to serve as a reminder of his early railway service at Kentish Town. Linda left the railway in 1993 and moved to the Mid Hants Railway where it was eventually converted into a Thomas the Tank™ engine lookalike. The proceeds from the sale were reinvested in other items of rolling stock.

Before leaving Cricklewood Depot, he was instrumental in helping preserve four Class 127 DMU power cars. Two found a home on the Great Central Railway at Loughborough and are operated and maintained by the Red Triangle Group and the other two are based at Buckfastleigh where they are looked after by the Dart Wyvern Group. During his railway career Bob managed to help save many items of rolling stock from the scrap man. Items that found their way to Tenterden were two Class 14 diesel hydraulics, three Drewry 0-6-0 diesel shunters and an LMS box van that arrived as a kit of parts from Cricklewood when it closed down.

In 1988 Bob moved from Harpenden to Ashford, thereby making his journey to work that much easier. However things became progressively more difficult with Nora and in the end she had to be taken into full time care. The constant stress of having to deal with Nora had a detrimental effect on his health. He had begun to suffer from mild diabetes and had angina attacks from time to time. Nora passed away in 1993. Bob spent the last two years of his working life coping with his problems and he finally retired in June 1995. Friends and colleagues provided him with a fitting send off on board a special train. His heart problems became worse until he underwent a triple heart bypass operation in 2000. He often said that he should have had the 'op' earlier as it certainly made him feel so much better.

He had no wish to curtail his activities in the railway circle once he retired and in 1995 he took on the role of Rolling Stock Director as a





*Alan Feltham, former Education Officer, who also recently passed away.*

member of the Board of the K&ESR. His heart problems forced him to become less active on the railway but that gave him more free time. Bob joined the Ashford Active Retirement Club and it was through this organisation that he met his second wife Gladys. They married in September 2001 and spent almost eight very happy years together. Bob became involved in organising outings and group holidays for the club members. He still kept in contact with his many colleagues in the railway industry and loved to advise or carry out a little deal that helped somebody get some item of rolling stock a little further down the road to full operation. In the last twelve months of his life his health deteriorated further. The primary cause was his diabetes and after a very short spell in hospital Bob passed away on August 31st 2009. Our thoughts must be with Gladys at this sad time of her life.

In everything that he did Bob was a true gentleman. He instilled confidence in those who lacked it and worked tirelessly to ensure the survival of the steam and diesel locomotives that were so dear to his heart. He was a highly respected individual. David Stratton recalls one meeting of the Association of Railway

Preservation Societies where, all the assembled worthies stood up when Bob entered the room. Recognition indeed. Those of us who have had the privilege to know and work with him are truly lucky. The K&ESR is very fortunate that Bob decided to invest in its future. Without his efforts the catalyst for so many developments would have been lost. I know that Bob enjoyed his time in Kent, with its people and its railways. He may have taken his last train but by his efforts he has helped in no small way to preserve an enduring legacy for future generations to enjoy. May we all continue to follow his example.

**David Brailsford**

## **Jim Price**

We regret to record the death on 13th August of Jim Price at the age of 74.

James Gregory Price was born at Bromley in 1935. He was educated at Sutton Valence School near Maidstone and later served for two years with the Royal Artillery (National Service). After various jobs he trained as ambulance crew, based mainly at Dover where he served for over 23 years.



Jim joined the K&ESR over 30 years ago (Membership number 1526) and worked at a variety of jobs including booking clerk, station master, Pullman Bar Steward and in later years Museum Attendant.

He moved to a small flat in Tenterden following retirement and his other interests were traditional jazz and his Goon Show Preservation Society. In later years he became increasingly handicapped and had to use crutches to get about. He enjoyed his Sunday duties in the Museum and looked forward to manning the entrance each year at the 'Hoppers Weekend'.

Jim was admitted to the William Harvey Hospital at Ashford in March and at his death was being treated for lung cancer. The funeral, which began and finished with a jazz record, was on 4<sup>th</sup> September at Charing Crematorium. As far as we know he had no close relatives and those that attended were mainly his friends, carers and railway colleagues.

JRM

## Nicholas Patching

26th November 1959 – 11th July 2009

The "Plumpus Maximus" - or PM as he was affectionately known - joined the K&ESR as a small, round boy in the early '70s, one of an enthusiastic group from Maidstone Grammar School. He demonstrated staying power and became a leading light of the fledgling S&T department which was then designing and putting together the signalling at Tenterden. He passed out as a Signaller on his 18th birthday. Railways were his passion and his knowledge, particularly of signalling, was encyclopaedic. His warmth and dry humour endeared him to all and his quick mind and ready wit brought sunshine and laughter to all occasions, however otherwise dull!

As with so many of our youngsters, University and then work tended to take him away from the Railway, though he remained on our signaller's roster until, in 1987, he moved to Wales. Our loss was their gain, as he joined the Llangollen Railway and very quickly became one of their foundation stones. When their PLC was formed in 1993 he became a Director and their Company Secretary, a dual position he held continuously from then until his death. His wise counsel and diplomatic manner was highly valued in the development of the line, both in

*Nick Patching,  
friend and tea  
on the  
Llangollen  
railway (Frim)*



the restoration and rebuilding of the existing infrastructure and in the extension of public services to Carrog in 1996.

With all this he still found time to come back to his roots and in 1997 he added Rolvenden Box to his portfolio of cabins, making eight boxes in all which he was qualified to work - an achievement that might be envied by many Network Rail men!

The K&ESR was well represented at his burial in Wales, in a small graveyard overlooked by the Llangollen home signals. The timing of the procession was superb - the hearse stopped on the bridge over the railway, waiting for the congregation to catch up. At that moment the last train of the day came round the corner, saw what was happening, slowed right down and whistled in salute. A perfect farewell.

He is sadly missed but our lives have been immeasurably enriched by knowing him.

CAR



# The Station Buildings of the K&ESR

*Brian Janes takes a look at some of the few really enduring and typical Colonel Stephens' features of our Railway*

## Origins

When Holman Stephens was planning and constructing the Rother Valley Railway in the late 1890s there were few precedents for the type of buildings required for a rural light railway. Station buildings on the mainline had evolved from the architectural extravagances of the early construction period, often built in styles to placate the local landowners, to the more sober standardised practices of the mature companies. The fashion for the simple platform with perhaps minimal shelter, usually styled at that time 'Halte' and later 'Halt', had not yet arrived and in any event such simple arrangements made no provision for the goods and parcels so essential for a rural station. What facilities had to be built that would be economical and fit for purpose? Stephens was to prove through the cheapness, utility and longevity of his buildings that he could find the answer.

Stephens had of course initially experienced station building when engaged as site engineer for the Cranbrook and Paddock Wood Railway where the station buildings were simplified to wood framed and mild steel galvanised corrugated iron structures. These were modelled on those built by Messrs Humphreys of Knightsbridge in 1889 for the South Eastern Railway for Bishopsbourne, Bridge and Canterbury South stations on the second phase of the Elham Valley Branch. Even these buildings were fairly large for their simple tasks of sheltering a few passengers and staff in reasonable comfort. Moreover they were accompanied by the customary mainline extravagances of brick built stationmaster's and staff houses and ancillary buildings such as goods sheds. Not to Stephens way of thinking at all. But he must have been interested in the construction form as his first independent exercises, the Rye and Camber and the Selsey Tramways, copied the style on a smaller scale. The builder of these two lines and the Cranbrook and Paddock Wood buildings were Mancktelow Bros of Horsmonden and they may well have had a hand in the design but do not appear to have been further associated with Stephens' lines. Stephens adopted the integrated roof and canopy, with its characteristic triple top stayed supports (although strangely not at Chichester), but the internal arrangements were limited, and the

extravagancies of brick fireplaces and chimneys omitted in favour of iron pot stoves (or nothing).

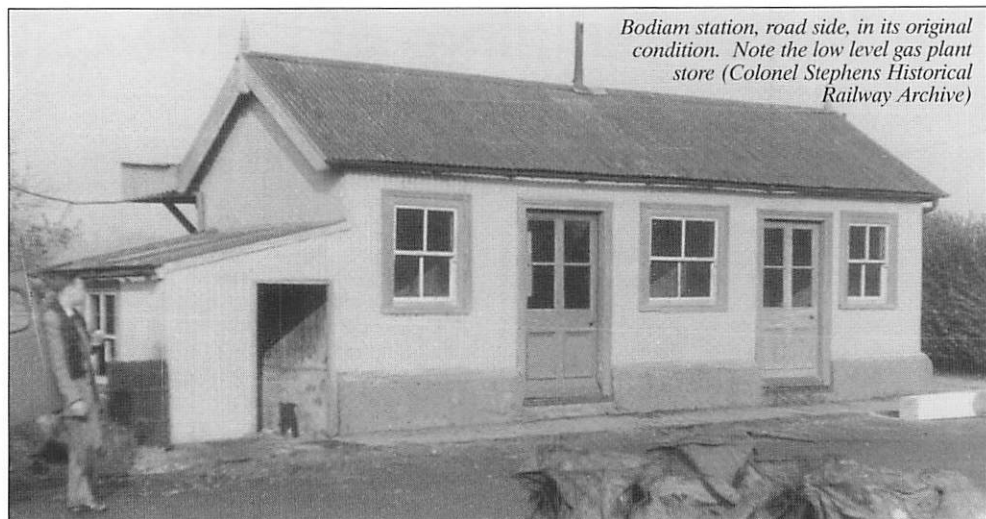
## The Rother Valley Buildings

For the Rother Valley Stephens made a fundamental design change by abandoning the integrated canopy, which he was only to use again in the early 1920s on the ND&CJR. He did however retain the characteristic triple stayed canopy supports, improved in appearance by slightly stepping them back from the front edge. This became characteristic of nearly all his railway station buildings, only departing from it for the principal structures on the BP&GV and the lesser stations, notably those on the S&MLR reconstruction.

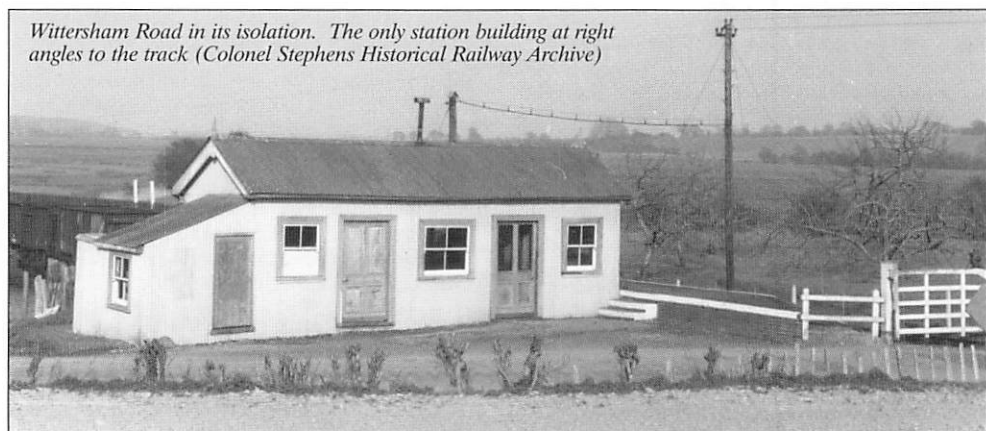
To proceed down the line: the junction station, Robertsbridge (Robertsbridge Junction in Stephens' lexicon) did not have independent buildings or platform. The payment for use of South Eastern & Chatham facilities proved contentious, with the annual payment probably exceeding the cost of building a separate Stephens' station. This may well have biased Stephens for he never again willingly shared station facilities at his junctions.

Bodiam & Northiam were essentially similar but Bodiam was markedly smaller and with similarities of layout to the Rye and Camber building at Rye, apart from the canopy arrangement. This was no longer integrated with the roof but sloped toward the main building; an arrangement that required perfect guttering and regular cleaning – something often absent in more recent years with consequent rot problems. The buildings were wood framed with corrugated iron facing and lined with tongued and grooved boarding for insulation. The walls were mounted on miniature (18") brick walls rendered with cement on the platform side and higher as necessary on the 'land' side

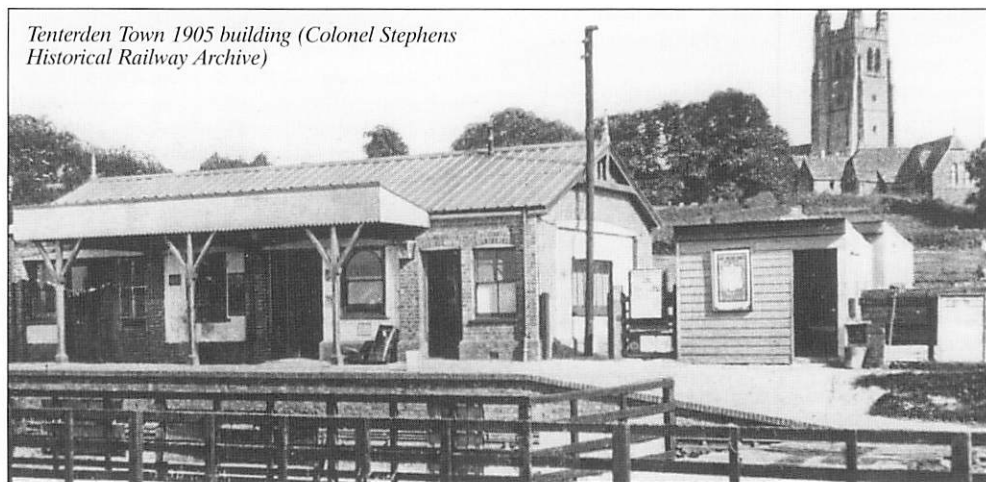
The main facilities were an enlargement on Stephens' earlier buildings; comprised a passenger waiting room with bench seating and a stove, served by an adjacent but separate ticket office; and an office for the receipt and despatch of parcels and other 'smalls' traffic, an important revenue earner. Northiam had steps for passenger entry and took advantage of the change in levels but there were no steps on the



*Bodiam station, road side, in its original condition. Note the low level gas plant store (Colonel Stephens Historical Railway Archive)*



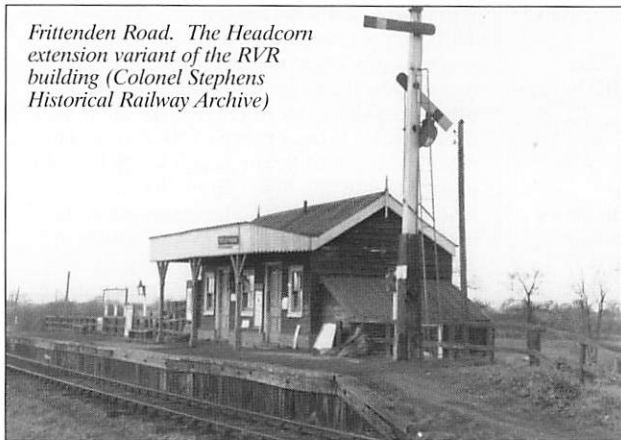
*Wittersham Road in its isolation. The only station building at right angles to the track (Colonel Stephens Historical Railway Archive)*



*Tenterden Town 1905 building (Colonel Stephens Historical Railway Archive)*



*Frittenden Road. The Headcorn extension variant of the RVR building (Colonel Stephens Historical Railway Archive)*



*Headcorn Junction in its first site. The building is the 1903 Tenterden Town building (Colonel Stephens Historical Railway Archive)*



parcels door to allow for level loading of delivery vehicles. A large gate was provided for platform access for larger items. All these carefully thought through features became standard for K&ESR buildings.

The present Bodiam station largely replicates the original, for although the parcels office serves as a shop it has had most of its original features restored. The buildings also contained, of necessity, the required block instruments for train control purposes, for there was no place for signal boxes in the Stephens' scheme of things. An outhouse/store was provided that contained the acetylene gas producer system (see Acetylene Lighting, Tenterden Terrier No 107). A gent's primitive urinal cubical open to the skies and flushed only when it rained with rainwater from the roof, was provided, adjacent to the store at Northiam but at the opposite end of the building at Bodiam. These were only supplemented, for the staff at least, with chemical toilets at Nationalisation and disappeared, perhaps thankfully, in early preservation days.

Staff accommodation of a simple nature was required in such rural areas if staff was to be locally available and Stephens did provide this at several points. Northiam cottages, again cheaply built of wood frames and corrugated iron, survive to demonstrate the type; one currently used as a snug HQ for the Tuesday group, the other a rather derelict S&T store. These were replicated with one at Wittersham Road, two at Rolvenden and one at Biddenden, none of which now survive. At a later date Stephens built with his own money an estate of about 19 such houses up the hill from Rolvenden Station in an area known to locals as Tin Town (officially The Bungalows, Rolvenden Hill) which have in recent years virtually been all demolished and replaced.

Wittersham road is the same standard station layout and about the same size as Bodiam but turned at a right angle to the track and platform with consequently no canopy on the building. There is no obvious physical reason for this layout although the canopy would certainly have been superfluous with the minimal passenger traffic.

With no passing place there were naturally no block instruments, a feature it shared with the later High Halden Road and Frittenden Road stations. The building was demolished in British Railways days, probably at the same time as Rolvenden; and the present building, whilst conveying something of the characteristics of the original, is nothing like it either in size or internal arrangements, the building coming from Borth on the Cambrian Railways.

Rolvenden station, belying its status as the original (Tenterden) terminus was again the same size as Northiam but was soon supplemented by two huts in a style of building with a single pitch roof similar to that later used elsewhere by Stephens. The larger of the two was probably not used for station purposes and may have been purpose built as the company print shop in about 1905. It continued as such under a jobbing printer who did outside work until WW2 when it was shut and cleared in 1946/7. The smaller building, a single pitch roof hut was used for housing the 'fitter in charge' of

the locomotive shed. The station building, unlike most of the others on the railway, was demolished in July 1955, probably as it, like Wittersham, had no staff or parcels traffic nor an autumn hoppers' service.

### Tenterden Town

With the extension to Tenterden Town something grander was indicated for the line's main traffic centre. Expediency dictated an early opening which came in March 1903 to a partially completed station. Facilities were initially provided in a corrugated iron building with a single pitched roof. This had a similar internal layout as the earlier stations but a simpler construction with no miniature brick walls and a single pitch roof extended slightly to provide a canopy. This made it cheaper to erect; and to move... because within about two years it had moved to Headcorn Junction. Even this was not the end of its travels for it moved again during the comprehensive, Southern Railway funded, reconstruction of the station in 1931, only to succumb to the general destruction following the Extension's closure.

When Tenterden Town's permanent building came, probably during 1905, it was to coincide with the Headcorn extension opening. It is superficially a larger development of the earlier stations with the addition of a large office for clerical staff and with the added touch of grandeur of an outside entrance canopy, but its construction is most unusual, possibly unique. It was, and to a large extent still is, formed of a series of brick pillars and flat brick arches in-filled with substantial tongued and grooved boarding; indeed its only solid wall is that backing onto the brick built urinal and wooden store at the Headcorn end. To the author's untrained eye this always looked most unstable as the load pressure on the arch should destabilise the pillars but the roof load is in fact transferred to longitudinal timbers along the top of the wall. However, after passenger closure British railways clearly experienced problems with the Robertsbridge end wall, for the arch and infill was removed and replaced with a severely utilitarian brick infill, which does nothing for the appearance of the station.

The form of construction for this station was presumably experimental, for in theory it provided the flexibility to enable alterations between the arches to be quickly and easily done. In practice this opportunity was never taken and Stephens never carried the idea forward. Internally much has changed over the

years, principally during the preservation era. The biggest change is that the formerly spacious passenger waiting area has been turned into the current draughty booking office corridor so as to enlarge the shop, which occupies the former parcels office area. The extent of the waiting area can clearly be seen in the shop by the high ceiling that was restored to its former state, complete with dowel coving, when the shop was rebuilt in 2001. Externally too this former layout is evident as the sash windows are rather more ornate with the top sash divided into three by a gracefully curved wood feature. The large former office/booking office has been partitioned to become a small booking clerks area, enquiry office and station master's perch on the grounds of security, quiet and, perhaps, practicality.

### The Extension Buildings

St Michaels was opened with the extension in 1905, probably as an afterthought to the other stations, and together with its near contemporaries at Salehurst (c1903) and Junction Road (c1903) followed the simple platform format of many contemporary halts on the mainline railways. It was however graced with a small wooden hut probably used solely as a parcels office with a single pitch roof, slightly detached on the approach path, for the shelter of the resident, probably part time, member of staff, who for many years was a village lady resident, Miss Goodsall.

The Headcorn extension stations followed the pattern of the early Rother Valley examples, but with the important visual distinctions of being clad in wood with what I believe is called Italian style corrugated (rather than the then conventional ribbed corrugated) roofs like the new Tenterden Town building. This was probably for economic rather than aesthetic considerations, although the use of creosoted feather-edged timber cladding was a local building style (the authors Wealden home is so built), High Halden Road, Biddenden and Frittenden Road were all identical, and until October 2003 when Frittenden Road was, much to the distress of its owner, burnt down, they had survived the holocaust of closure. Biddenden has been much rebuilt, almost beyond recognition, as a bungalow but High Halden Road stands, albeit unused, unchanged in a reasonable state of preservation.

*With Thanks to John Miller*



# Letters to the Editor

Sir,

Colourful as Dennis Nolan's article in the last Tenterden Terrier (The Case of the Suspicious Civil Servant, Tenterden Terrier 109, summer 2009) is, I can see no basis for his assertion of nefarious dealings between Colonel Yorke and Holman Stephens, who incidentally did not become a (Lt.) Colonel until 1916. Stephens was of course well known to the Railway Inspectorate, and he is reported to have undertaken casual work for them in the 1890s, but he would not have been given favourable, and perhaps illegal, treatment by that august body.

The history of the flour mill siding was very fully covered by the late Neil Rose in his article Traffic at Hodson's Mill (Tenterden Terriers 30 & 31, Spring and Summer 1983). Neil pointed out that the building of the siding was a requirement of Section 9 of the Rother Valley (Light) Railway Act 1896 which was imposed by the Mill owners. Other records in the PRO show it was later found that powers to build the siding were inadequate so the necessary powers were obtained under a further Light Railway Order in 1902 (the same act that authorised the Headcorn extension). At the enquiry several objections were made to the additional level crossing; the East Sussex Council wished to restrict hours and a Colonel Andrews, a Mr French and a Mr Robertson-Lumford objected in principle. The Commissioners however found that two level crossings would give rise to little public inconvenience, balanced against the otherwise necessity to bridge the River Rother, and granted the necessary powers. Major Pringle's 1902 inspection was therefore part of normal procedures as he was asked to inspect and approve the physical installation of the connection of an authorised siding. As it was further disputes with the Mill owners delayed opening until 12 August 1903.

Brian Janes

Sissinghurst

Sir,

Every time I read the *Terrier* it never fails to jog my memory of something I remember from the long distant past.

Reading with great interest 'People in Profile',

summer 2009 issue, I noticed mention of the contractor's yard in Catford (*which housed a line of steam rollers – Ed.*). I was very young at the time but it was situated half way up Sangley Road on a site which I believe is now a housing complex. It used to catch my eye every time I passed it. A lot of the machines were large rusting hulks, a bit like a miniature Barry scrap yard.

J.E. Horton

Bexhill-on-Sea

*Volunteer Support Officer Stan Kemp also tells us that he recalls this once fascinating site which as Mr. Horton correctly states, has now been redeveloped. The same scheme also took out what was left of the adjacent former Timpson's coach station and garage. In the very distant past this had been an LCC horse tram depot but in our early memory featured Timpson's splendid AEC Regal half cab coaches – Ed.*



*Original milepost discovered during works west of Bodiam (Paul Hutchinson)*

# A Small Boy's Sunday

*Monty Baker presents – somewhat in the tradition of Chaucer - an anecdote from the social history of Tenterden and tells us that escaping to the Railway is nothing new.*

It was on 5th August 1919 that I was born on the second floor of 9 High Street, Tenterden, a site now occupied by the former Woolworth's building. There was deep suspicion among my elders, later to prove correct, that my father, Quarter Master Sergeant Sidney Herbert Baker of the Canadian Motor Corps, who had returned to Canada to be demobbed might decide to relinquish his matrimonial responsibilities. This he duly did and was never heard of again.

My Grandmother, Sarah Goodman, a God fearing Wesleyan, insisted on my attendance at the Chapel more or less continuously from when I was Christened. My Grandfather, Arthur Walter Goodman, was completely the opposite. He was a friend of Colonel Stephens and managed Bristows, later Adin Coates, which sold gents outfitting to the great man. Grandfather was also a very keen fisherman who spent most Wednesdays and weekends on the banks of the River Rother during the fishing season. He was also a part time Water Bailiff for the Rother Fisheries, issuing licences and enforcing purchase of the same. Seeing him going to catch the train to go fishing whilst I had to go to Sunday School gradually had its effect and a yearning to go with him developed. This was quickly snuffed by my Grandmother, followed by a sharp clip round the ear as confirmation not to pursue the idea further.

By now I started my schooling at the National School in Church Road (*now the Day Centre and occasional venue for Company Board meetings – Ed.*) From the playground I could see and hear the Kent & East Sussex Railway trains that took my Grandfather fishing. Our playground was at the top of the hill, and the station goods yard, with sidings and signals, were at the bottom. As I pressed my face against the playground railings a semi-aerial panoramic view unfolded before my eyes from the station as far as St. Michaels, still a lovely view today but sadly lacking in the plume of steam and smoke which slowly faded out of sight with the diminishing sound of the hard working locomotive as the train headed laboriously towards Headcorn.

My Grandmother always maintained it was the

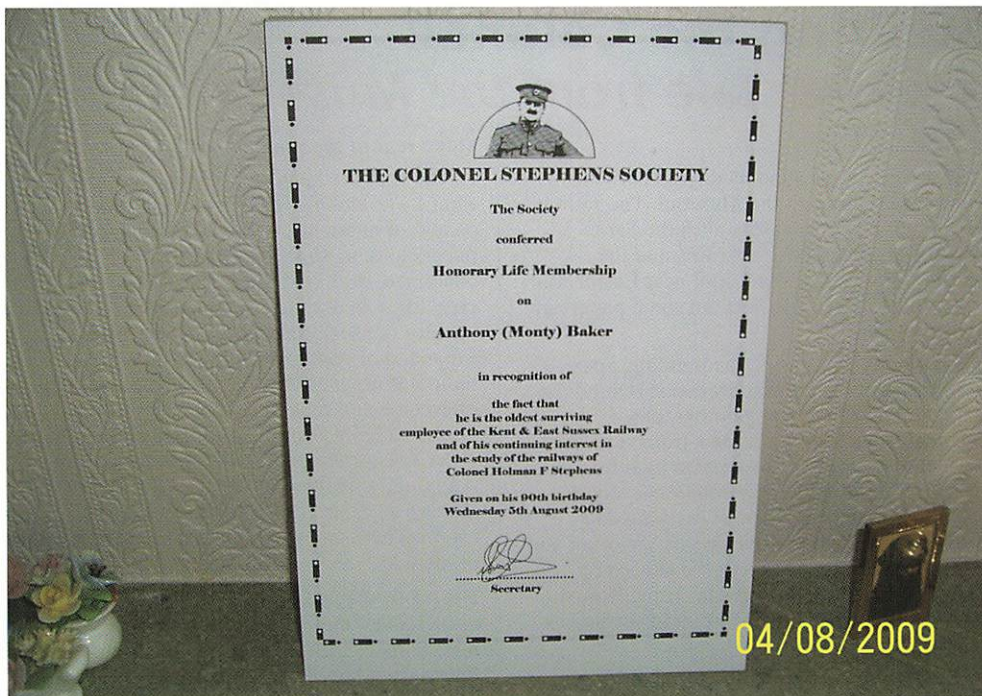
work of the Devil that struck the Chapel organ blower down with Influenza, but it was she who volunteered me for the job the following Sunday. I might have dozed off if the organist, who sat out of sight round the corner of the keyboard had not had, to put it delicately, an embarrassingly audible digestive problem. His tummy had been rumbling for some time when I heard him whisper "Oh dear" and guessed it was turning into a race between his bowels and the end of the sermon. The Reverend at last said "Amen. We will now sing...". But too late; before the offending sound could be drowned with the organ the Reverend's last words were followed by what sounded like the tortured cry of a trapped curlew. I honestly didn't burst into laughter deliberately but they did not believe me. I was hauled ignominiously out by one of the sidesmen – who was tittering too – and sent home.

I slunk up the High Street sorely troubled over what wrath would be vented on me. The receding sound of 'Jesus Wants Me For a Sunbeam' did nothing for me now as I knew in my heart that there would never ever be a vacancy for me. I needed my Grandfather at this time for support, but he was away fishing without a care in the world and here was my world falling apart round me. Top level discussions followed as to what should be done with the disgraced redundant sunbeam. Fortunately Grandfather volunteered to take me fishing the following Sunday which could not come quickly enough. Grandfather made up the fishing tackle I would need and fitted it on me correctly for carrying as there would be a considerable distance to walk later.

Off we went to Tenterden Town station. I hoped it would be a steam train that would be taking us, but it was a pair of the back-to-back railbuses, or the 'Motor Train' as it was called by the locals. I met Arthur Taunt, the Station Agent. (There were of course no Stationmasters on Colonel Stephens Light Railways). The Tenterden Agent was senior to the other Agents on the line. Mr. Taunt managed to combine a coal merchant's business with his Railway position. He owned at least two private owner's wagons which travelled regularly between Tenterden and a colliery bringing supplies to his coal wharf in Tenterden goods yard.

Arthur Taunt was a rotund character similar to Mr. Pickwick. He also sported a very large snow





*Certificate presented to Monty Baker on the occasion of his 90th birthday by the Colonel Stephens Society (via Monty Baker)*

white moustache which half covered his mouth, not unlike a Walrus. My Grandfather told me that in cold weather Arthur's breath condensed in his moustache and he had to wring large quantities of water out of it. At this time I foolishly believed him. Let's face it, up to now any knowledge imparted to me on the Sabbath had decidedly religious overtones. Nobody told jokes, apart from the choirboys during the sermon.

As I have related before in the *Tenterden Terrier* I later went to work for Colonel Stephens, became an engine driver, and in 1937, together with the late Nelson Wood, drove the engine *Gladstone* (actually K&ESR No. 2 *Northiam*) in the film *Oh! Mr. Porter*. The stars were Will Hay, Moore Marriott and Graham Moffatt and I was finally required to crash the engine into the buffers which rapidly broke four of my front teeth and my nose.

*03 and ballast train on Rother Valley extension (Paul Wright)*



# Meeting the Colonel: *a winter tale from the Museum*

by Peter Southgate

It was one of those gloomy days in early winter when I went down to the Museum. The railway was closed now for visitors until the Santa Specials around Christmas time, and the Museum itself was closed until next Easter. But I was going in today to sort out some papers in the archives.

It was always dark inside the building, apart from the lights in the display cases. Behind the glass panels the models, photographs, documents and other artefacts from years past sat silently waiting for inspection by future visitors. The little locomotive *Gazelle* stood quietly, dreaming perhaps of her long and varied life, first on the railways of Victorian and Edwardian England, then in the service of Colonel Stephens and then the army. Now she rested in the care of the Kent and East Sussex Railway.

After *Gazelle*, one of the largest, and most complex, exhibits was the re-created office of the Colonel at Salford Terrace in Tonbridge. Surrounded by the paraphernalia of his empire was the man himself, Colonel Holman Fred Stephens. Only a dummy, of course, but a very lifelike one, seated at the same big roll top desk that he had used in life, its pigeon holes filled with documents, pens, rubber stamps and other bits and pieces that he would make use of during a day's work. In front of him on the desk were letters and memos which he was signing, and in the shelves around the walls were timetables, almanacs and other reference documents. On a hook by the door hung his hat and coat.

I'd closed the outer door as I entered, and switched on most of the lights. It was very quiet as I went through to the back of the building and up the stairs to the office where books and documents were stored. On the way I had to go past the glass screen in front of the Colonel's office. As I passed, he moved slightly, activated by the sensor in the corridor. This was a recent innovation, designed so that as visitors approached the display the Colonel's head would turn towards them; a simple device, but very effective. I carried on past and up the stairs, dropped off my coat and then went back downstairs. I needed to go into the Colonel's office to check some papers that were on a shelf

at the rear of the room.

I went in at the back and bent down to find what I was looking for. I squatted there for a couple of moments, leafing through a pile of papers looking to see exactly what they contained. As I bent over them I heard a creaking sound, but I took no notice for that was not unusual; the building sometimes expanded or contracted with changes in temperature, and the odd muffled noise could often be heard as well from activities outside. Then suddenly I heard a different sound, that of a chair being scraped on the floor behind me. And then a shadow fell across the papers I was looking at. Startled I stood up and turned round. There, standing tall and straight in front of me was – Colonel Stephens!

His neatly clipped military moustache bristled as he looked me up and down. I stared back at him, fairly petrified, and for a moment the tall figure stared back at me with his dark penetrating eyes, a mixture of curiosity and annoyance in his face.

'And what do you think you're doing in here my man?' he said in an authoritative voice.

I felt a mixture of panic and confusion, and I was shaking. What was happening? Where was I? Who was this?

The answer to this last question was quite obvious; it was Colonel Stephens. It was not a dummy dressed up in a stiff white collar and high-buttoned jacket to look like him, but it was the man himself. And I was not in a museum exhibit, but in his office. But, as this man had died nearly eighty years ago I must somehow have been transported back to the 1920s, when he had ruled his railway empire from this very office in Tonbridge. Or had he somehow come forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the Museum at Tenterden?

'Er, excuse me,' I stuttered. 'I was looking for the 1925 invoices from the Festiniog Railway.' I'd made this up, but on the spur of the moment it seemed a plausible excuse for being in his office.

'They should be in the cabinet over there,' he said gruffly, pointing behind me. 'You ought to know that, we've had enough headaches over them.' Then he stared at me, looking me up and down again. 'I suppose you're that new man



Austen took on last week are you?

Still nervous and confused I carried on improvising. 'Yes, sir, that's right. Mr Austen said I should sort out the invoices.'

'Funny place to look, I must say. Anyway, what the devil do you think you're doing coming to work dressed like that? I won't have my staff turning up looking damned scruffy. Woolly jumper and dungarees; I won't have it, do you hear?'

'No sir, I'm sorry. I was just popping in for a short while ....'

'Popping in for a short while! What on earth are you talking about man? This is a place of work. You're meant to be here all day. Look here, there's something fishy going on.'

He turned away and surveyed the office, taking a step first to one side then the other. 'Damn strange.' I heard him mutter. 'Somebody's been interfering with things here. Half the stuff isn't in its right place.'

I couldn't keep up the pretence any longer, I'd have to try him with the truth and see what he made of it. But then what exactly was 'the truth'? I wasn't sure myself any more. Was I in Tenterden in 2008 or was I in Tonbridge in the 1920s? I cleared my throat and tried to be bold. 'Colonel Stephens,' I began, 'I think I'm as confused as you are, but let me be honest. I'm not one of your staff at all; I work here in this museum.'

'Museum. What museum?'

'It's a museum dedicated to your life and works. All your railways. The Kent and East Sussex and all the other ones you used to run. And this room is put together with the things from your office at Salford Terrace; but it's not actually your office at Salford Terrace.'

'Damned nonsense!' was his first response, then he fell silent, sat down at his chair and stared at me for a moment. He looked around again, and then down at his own body. He stood and walked over to the small mirror on the wall and peered at his reflection. He registered no surprise. 'Well it looks like me,' he said. 'And these are certainly my clothes; I remember putting them on. So of course it's me.'

'Yes,' I said. 'It certainly is you.'

'Extraordinary.' He sat down again, then looked back at me. 'So you're saying this whole place is a sort of memorial to me and my railways?'

'Yes, and very popular it is too. There's a lot of interest in all that you did, and lots of people still love all your railways. They write books

about them and there's even a society that's dedicated to you and the railways themselves.'

'Pon my word! I suppose I should be flattered.' He seemed to perk up a bit at this news. 'But hang on a moment. If this is all a museum and we're in the future somehow, then I must be dead?'

'Well, you are, but then again' ... I was confused again myself ... 'obviously you're not because you're here now.'

'I say,' he frowned, 'you're not one of those spiritualist chaps are you? There's a lot of 'em around these days. Lot of nonsense I call it myself, but they say it's very popular. I don't hold with it though.'

'No sir, I'm not one of those. Not at all.'

'So when did I die for heavens sake?'

'In 1931.'

'Good grief, is that right? What happened to me?'

'Well they were never quite sure. You were found dead at the Lord Warden in Dover one day when you were staying over there.'

'In an hotel!'

'Yes.'

'Good gracious! What an ignominious end! To die in a public hotel, indeed!'

The manner of his ending had obviously come as a shock, but in a moment he had recovered himself. 'I trust they gave me a decent burial?'

'Of course. The funeral was at Hammersmith and you were buried at Brompton Cemetery in the family grave. All the staff were there; people from the Southern Railway, and from the Army. You had a good send-off.'

'Hmm. Glad to hear that anyway. So what's happened since then?' He sat back down in his chair and fixed me again with his penetrating stare. 'Come on man, spit it out. I want to know the rest of the story. Or what you say is the story at any rate.'

'Well,' I began, thinking desperately, 'After you died Mr Austen took over running your business and all the railways.'

'Did he now? And what sort of a fist did he make of it I wonder? I gave him a hard time now and then, but he was a sound fellow. I imagine he did his best.'

'Yes, he certainly did, and for quite a few years. But you see during the 1930s times were hard in the countryside and traffic fell off a lot. And what made it worse was the motor car, and the bus.'

'Oh, I know all about that. It was bad enough even in my day. Damned charabancs, taking away the railways' trade all over the place. And the motor car too.'

'Yes, more and more people were buying them and getting themselves around so they didn't travel by rail any more.'

'And the goods?'

'Those as well, yes. More and more lorries came on the roads, and they could collect and deliver from door to door. Things got very difficult indeed for the railways.'

'Yes, I saw it coming, ever since the war.'

'You mean the First War.'

'What do you mean, the First War? There wasn't another one was there?'

'There certainly was I'm afraid. 1939 to 45.'

'And how did that one get going might I ask? Was it the Germans again?'

'Yes, a man called Hitler.'

'Never heard of him. Caused some trouble did he?'

'You could say that, yes.'

'So what happened then to my poor old railways?'

'Well, it gave them a bit of a stay of execution in a way. Several were taken over by the Government to carry war supplies and so on.'

'Not a bad idea if it kept things running.'

'Yes, and after the war all the railways in the country were nationalised; run by the state.'

'Dear me! Well, I suppose we all saw it coming in 1923 when they grouped them into four big companies. Just another step on to put them all into one huge organisation. Bad thing, though. So did the blighters take my railways as well?'

'They did in the end. In 1948. And that was when Mr Austen finally retired. Reckoned he'd done all he could.'

'Stout fellow! He's not still about is he?'

'No, he died eight years after that; more than fifty years ago now.'

'Fifty years eh?' He smiled to himself and shook his head in disbelief. 'Well you amaze me, sir. I can't quite take it all in. So that was the end of it all was it? No more railways, no more Salford Terrace. All closed down did they?'

'No not straight away. The railway here at Tenterden kept going a few years longer, then closed down. But now, of course, it's all running again.'

At this he looked up quickly. 'And how is that pray, if all was in such a bad state? Didn't the damned motor car take away all the traffic in the end?'

'It did, but then once they started to close down railways like yours there was so much outcry, and people started getting together in preservation societies to keep them running. Groups of enthusiasts worked to rebuild them and run trains on them for tourists to ride on.'

'Whoa there! You're leaving me behind now. What is a 'preservation society' pray, and who are these enthusiasts you're mentioning?'

I still wonder whether I should have done what I did next, but it seemed to me a logical move and one that would show Colonel Stephens just how much his railways were still admired.

'Look, sir,' I said, 'why don't you come with me outside this building and I can show you what all this means. It's much easier that way than trying to describe it to you. If you look outside the door you can see with your own eyes what railway preservation looks like. I think you'll be pleased by what you see.'

At the time I wasn't thinking through the implications of this suggestion. If Colonel Stephens himself were to appear on Tenterden Station, what would people think? Would anyone believe that it was the man himself? The thought flashed through my mind that he might even be an impostor, or someone playing a trick on me, but so taken up by our conversation was I that I didn't take this seriously. I knew somehow that this was the real man.

'Come out this way and I'll show you.'

He paused a moment, then stood as if to follow me from the office. But it was then that I heard the outer door of the museum slam.

'Hello!' called a voice, then I heard footsteps. I turned and went quickly out of the rear door of the office to see who it was. 'Oh, hello,' I said to John as he came along the corridor. There's someone here you might like to meet. ... I mean I was just here talking to ... er, I mean sorting out ....'

I stopped in confusion, and he looked at me oddly. 'Are you OK?' he asked.'

'Yes, I'm fine' I said.

'Well, you look a bit pale, that's all.'

'Do I? Yes, well. Look, quickly, come in here there's something I want to show you.'

I stepped back through the door into the Colonel's office. He was no longer standing up, but sitting in his desk chair in much the same pose



I'd seen him in when I'd first gone into the room half an hour ago. 'Colonel Stephens,' I said to him, 'there's someone here I'd like you to meet.'

He didn't move. Then his head turned slightly, but he said nothing.

'How's the Colonel today?' asked John. 'I adjusted the mechanism last night, so he should be moving well now when people come past.'

'Moving, I'll say! He's been ...'

I stopped myself. I knew I hadn't imagined what had happened, and that I'd been talking to Colonel Stephens himself. But what a fool I'd look if I started trying to explain. Nobody would believe me. And looking at him now I could see very well that there was nothing more than a dummy sitting in the office chair.

So what had I been doing? Who had I been talking to? To this day I'm still not sure. Every time I walk past the office window I nod and say

'Morning Colonel', and his head moves very slightly. He's never spoken to me again, but somehow I just don't feel I want to go into his office any more.

We very much hope that readers have enjoyed this seasonal fun item. Unlike a number of heritage railways there seems to be a shortage of genuine ghost stories on the K&ESR -think of the mileage the Bluebell Railway has made out of the supposed happenings in Sharpethorne tunnel. Does anyone have any tales of the supernatural that we could feature in future issues of the *Terrier*? If you do know of any appropriate folklore or other strange occurrences the editorial team would be delighted to hear from you.

If you do, please write to the Editor at Nick@kesr.org.uk or Tenterden Town station.. Ed.

## KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB

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# Book Reviews

*Sussex Motorman, The Hubert Hobden Memoirs, Volume Two: 1935-1961, Editor: Anthony P Vent, Buggleskelly Books, No ISBN number*

This volume of Hubert Hobden memoirs continues from Volume One (reviewed in Terrier No. 104) and brings the story forward into an era when some of us of a 'certain age' began our passion for railways among much of what is described.

The book covers Hubert's transfer to the grade of Motorman in 1935 and his transfer to the new electric trains depot at Ore, built for the extension of Southern electrification to Hastings via Eastbourne. He retired in 1961, the year in which the grade of Motorman was abolished by British Railways. Apart from the Hastings services he also covered the Brighton line including the Brighton Belle

The training of Motormen would today be considered primitive being mainly by observation from the cab, with the response after the first few days of "You take her, you'll get it quicker that way" Training took two weeks, half being on the running road. The transfer away from steam meant a new routine with preparation and disposal taking only about 15 minutes at the start and end of a shift (a contrast which will be familiar to our own steam and diesel crews).

Hubert details the trials and tribulations of keeping the service going during the Second World War together with the problems of running through frost and snow, including getting out and scraping the conductor rails. He was also a thorn in the side of the management in that he expressed his views forcibly; an example being the 'Lewes Rodeo' a drawn out saga of section timings around the approaches to Lewes station,

Hubert started his spell as a Motorman driving the new 2BIL units and saw the introduction of

the 4CEP/BEP stock in 1956, being the driver on the press run for the local press.

Hubert's memoirs take up about half of the book, the remainder covering the reminiscences of other Sussex railwaymen two of whom were contemporaries of the Motorman. One was a signaller at Polegate (and father of one of the current Carriage and Wagon Volunteers) who knew Hubert as 'a goer'. The other contemporary was a steam driver at Eastbourne in the early fifties before also becoming a Motorman.

The other two were apprentice electricians at Lancing Carriage Works, one of whom was sent to live at the Southern Railway Servants Orphanage at Woking before his apprenticeship.

The book includes a brief synopsis of the Southern electric passenger stock and finishes with a good selection of colour and black and white photographs of electric units and locomotives of the period. All the memoirs give an insight into the lives of railwaymen during a period of change through electrification, the second world war and nationalisation and are an interesting and fitting conclusion to volume one.

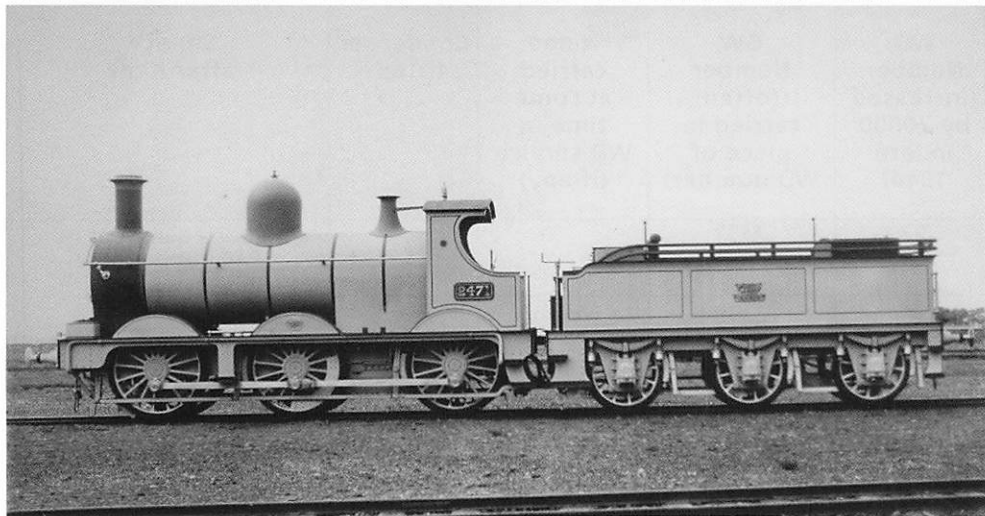
FTK



*Ford Diesel with advanced RXD at Northiam (Arthur James)*



# THE DEAN GOODS IN WARTIME KENT



*A Dean Goods in original condition and full late Victorian finery before Churchward rebuilding (Colonel Stephens Historical Railway Archive)*

*Seventy years ago Dean Goods Locomotives arrived on our railway. Their use in Kent by the Military in WW2 is well known but very little has been discovered about the allocation of individual locomotives. Charles Judge attempts to fill in some of the gaps*

The Great Western Railway's Dean Goods have attained almost mythic status amongst enthusiasts probably because they became, through the agency of two world wars, a much travelled class. Starting in 1883 as an entirely typical main line goods 0-6-0 of the period (with a tank locomotive equivalent later developed to the standard GWR pannier tank), they reached some 280 in total over the next 16 years. Blessed by a characteristically good Churchward re-boiling they were chosen by the Military in WW1, along with many other British locos, as suitable for military service in France and Salonica. Although some remained in the Middle East, most returned and resumed their now more humble duties on the GWR. With the coming of the Second World War in 1939, someone in the Military remembered their earlier service and 100 were called up and renumbered WD101-200 for further service in France in anticipation of another war of static defence. Of these 79 went overseas in early 1940, and following Dunkirk, remained there; many to reluctantly work for the Third Reich, two even reaching as far east as Minsk and

Orscha in what is now Belarus; presumably after the track had been re-gauged from the Russian standard 5 ft.

Some were left behind however and these, together with eight more (that became WD 93-100) which were called up in September 1940, are the ones that command our attention; for most were destined to work in Kent. They were put to the very necessary task of counter invasion coastal defence as the motive power for rail-mounted artillery, known as Super Heavy Batteries from the 12 and 9.2 calibre of the old, originally battleship, guns used. These had a range of 8 to 12¾ miles so the trains, which weighed around 800 tons and consisted not only of the guns but ammunition wagons, service wagons and personnel vans, had to be conveniently located. Initial deployment seems to have taken place in late summer 1940. At first some guns were stationed in East Anglia and Lincolnshire but as the threat was most acute in Kent the majority were eventually stationed there. A locomotive in constant steam, with a relief for servicing etc., was required for each gun so that it could be moved for targeting and evasion. If they moved station two engines were required to move the whole train.

The Kent locations of the heavy guns have long been known but the allocation and identity of the locomotives were fragmentary. However in searching for some wartime records about the

# DEAN GOODS IN KENT LIST

WD Number (increased by 70000 In late 1944)	GW Number (often carried in place of WD number)	Name carried at some time in WD service (if any)	Condenser fitted?	Service after Kent
93	2433			Reported in Kent in 1944 but based on the S&MLR
94	2399	Monty		At WD Bicester 8/42; to S&MLR 1946
95	2470			To Cairnryan 1942; to WD Bicester by 1943; to S&MLR 1946
98	2415			To Cairnryan 2/42 ; later to S&MLR
99	2528			To S&MLR 1944
100	2521	Virginia		to Algeria, February 1943
156	2529			to WD Kineton by 12/41
167	2463	Margaret		to Algeria, February 1943
168	2548	Rosemary		to Algeria, February 1943
169	2479	Gert		To WD Burton Dassett; to S&MLR 1944
170	2536	Daisy?		To WD Burton Dassett; to S&MLR 1944
171	2545	Betty ( later Voiara)		to Algeria, February 1943
172	2478	Wavell		to WD Kineton; Algeria, February 1943
173				To Bicester by 1942
174	2451	Jean Ann		To WD Kineton; ,; Algeria, February 1943
175	2511			Returned To S&MLR
177	2430		Yes	To Longmoor by 1945; To China 1947
178	2446	Fagan	Yes	To WD Burton Dassett; to WD Bicester by 11/45
179	2466		Yes	To Longmoor by 1945; to China 1947
180	2514		Yes	To S&MLR 1946
195	2531		Yes	To Longmoor by 1945
196	2576		Yes	To S&MLR 1946
197	2540	Daisy	Yes	To S&MLR 1946
198	2559		Yes	To Longmoor by 1945; to China 1947
199	2517		Yes	At Cairnryan by 1947
200	2552		Yes	

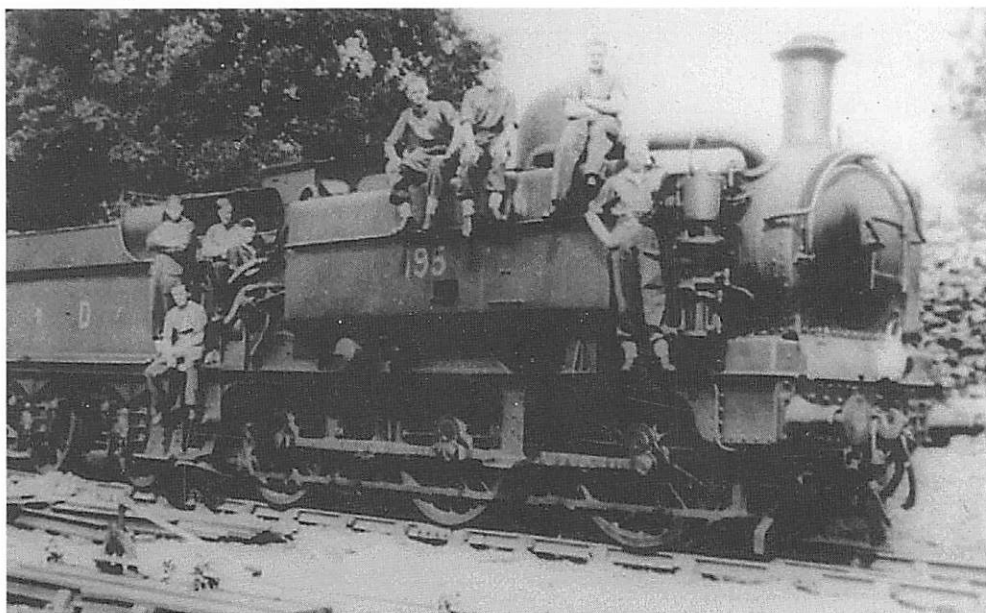


Shropshire and Montgomeryshire the author came across details of allocations covering the period March 1941-November 1943. Initially nine Dean Goods came to Kent, soon joined by three more from the 1940 recruits. As the strategic situation changed they were reinforced and replaced. Eventually at least 26 of the 29 individual locomotives served. Indeed the only UK based Dean Goods not to serve there were WD 96, 97 and 176 on Stephens' Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Light Railway, which the Military had taken over. A full list of locomotives is appended together with a further list of their locations during 1941-43. For the purpose of this article the WD number is used, though it was not always carried on the loco and the GWR number used instead. The rail gun locations are listed in Lyne's 'Military Railways in Kent' but do not always correspond to the known allocations of the locomotives, certainly due to locomotive servicing requirements and to looseness in clerical reporting.

The limited availability of locos in the crisis year of 1940 clearly caused problems and there was an unsuccessful request in the late summer for another 14 of the 50 remaining on the GWR. The Military in its desperation called in at least three large (7 foot) wheeled ex SER F1s (Nos 1110, 1031 and 1215) to try and help out. However the attempted use of two of these to move the huge cross-channel guns in the Martin

Mill area was a pretty predictable disaster. Mind you even when two Deans were tried they failed too, and the diesel electric shunters with their good low speed torque were from the outset the only suitable locomotives for such loads. With 17 Deans in place by early 1941 the locomotive situation had eased but the F1s hung on with the Military till mid-1941 ending up on odd, indeed very odd, duties. Two at Martin Mill (1457 & 1459) were permanently in steam attached to concrete filled wagons to block lines in case of invasion; another shunted the same 15 wagons continuously round Westenhanger station to fool the Luftwaffe into thinking that was an ordinary station rather than one specially equipped for unloading tanks.

Deans were certainly stationed on the Elham Valley line from Folkestone to Canterbury (which the Military took over), Adisham, Folkestone, Hythe and Shepherdswell by late 1940. Matters were consolidated during 1941; the guns stationed in Lincolnshire, Essex and Wareham in Dorset were progressively withdrawn and moved to Kent where they served in clusters based round Canterbury, the Elham Valley line, Ashford, Shepherdswell and Rolvenden. With the consolidation of early 1941, test firings took place at Kingston (in the Elham Valley), Shepherdswell, Eythorne, Wittersham Road and Rolvenden. All caused



*Rolvenden's 195 (ex GWR 2531) with her crew. The only known photo of a Dean Goods in wartime service in Kent (Charlie Turner)*

# DEAN GOODS ALLOCATIONS IN KENT 1941-43

		March 1941	July 1941	August 1941	Nov 1941	Dec 1941	March 1942	June 1942	Feb 1943 ( Part List)	March 1943	Sep 1943	Nov 1943
Ashford		94	173 174	173 174 198	174(+1)	198	174 198	174 198				
Ruckinge ( Golden wood)									177	177	177	
Kingsnorth ( listed as Kingsworth)									200	200	200	200
Appledore		167 168	167 168	167 168	167				167			
Canterbury West		95 169	169	169 179	169 197	100 167 179 197	100 169 197	169 197				
Canterbury East		179 180										
Faversham		172 197	172 197	172 197	172(+1)		172	172				177
Adisham						195			178	178	178	
Selling									198	198	198	
Snowdown Colliery		170 171		170 171								
Elham		156 100				180	180	180		175 180 195	175 195	175 180 195
K&ESR	Rolvenden		195 196	195 196	170(+2)	170 196	170 196	170 196	196 197	196 197	196 197	196 197
	Headcorn	195 196										
EKR	Poulton [farm siding]	98 99	98 99	98 99								
	Staple					98 168				95	95	95
	Shepherdswell			180	168 195	169	168 179 195	168 179 195 394		179	179	179
	Eythorne				171(+1)	171	171	171	199		199	199



such damage and nuisance to adjacent property that they were never again fired at these points and thereafter the complete trains were hauled off by double headed Dean Goods to Salisbury plain or Okehampton for test firing; with a train weighing 800 tons or so quite a feat for 50 year old, and comparatively small, locomotives. The Rolvenden firing incidentally destroyed the carriage shed there, a deficiency that is still felt.

As a result of the further reinforcement of Kent and the general shortage of motive power a real stranger came to help the Deans on the East Kent. The Wareham gun had been equipped with a pair of ex LSWR K10s: small wheeled Drummond mixed traffic 4-4-0s known as 'Small Hoppers' on their home territory. No doubt with the F1s in mind the Kent Military initially refused but then relented and No 394 arrived at Shepherdswell in September 1941; and it did the job, staying on till January 1943 when it was returned to the Southern. By then matters were more relaxed, for although the Baedeker raids on Canterbury in early June 1942 clearly caused the Canterbury concentration to be more widely dispersed, these were the last conventional heavy bombing raids and tension further eased after the Allied victories at El Alamein and Stalingrad in late 1942.

The individual locomotives were only slowly changed or rotated and, with the lowering of invasion risk, numbers fell from around 17 in 1941 to about 12 in 1942/43. The build up for military offensives overseas was now creating a heavier demand for locomotives at ordnance depots and ports. The most important of these were the two new military ports in Scotland: Cairnryan and Faslane, and depots at Bicester, Kineton (also known as Burton Dassett- built over the remains of the Edge Hill Light Railway) as well as the extended depot created around the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire. A larger turn around came about when the Allied invasion of North Africa called for locomotives for use on the standard gauge lines there. Six went in February 1943 including five (100, 167, 168, 172 & 174) from Kent: these followed the troops and eventually ended their days in Italy as the property of the Italian State railways. These were however the last major call on the battle services of the Deans for the familiar Austerity locomotives came into volume production at the beginning of 1943.

Further changes now awaited the disbandment of the coastal defence regime starting in March 1944. The Elham, East Kent and K&ESR guns

started to leave from that time, although Austen recorded that final departure from Rolvenden was not until the 8th August. The East Kent also lost WD 93, 95, 177 and 197 in that month. So the Deans left after a continuous presence of 3 to 3½ years: Elham having one or two locos from summer 1940, the East Kent usually three from late 1940, and the K&ESR two which arrived from Folkestone and Hythe on 8th February 1941. That event probably precipitated the clearance and disposal of the scrap stock that had been lying around Rolvenden yard, some of it for many a year.

Charlie Turner, a long time Oxford driver and wartime Sapper fireman and driver, has left us reminiscences of his time on our railway where he had Dean Goods 195 with condensing equipment. Joining it at Hythe he moved with the Battery to Rolvenden arriving with a second gun, stationed at Wittersham with locomotive 196 although the official listing was initially at Headcorn. On arrival at Rolvenden, 195 spread the track in the little used siding nominated and was derailed. The Royal Engineers had re-laid the siding to be used for the gun with good sleepers and chaired track to replace the original, Rother Valley, flat bottomed rail but had omitted to do this for the loco siding. Later the non condensing 170 temporarily replaced 195 which went to Adisham and the Elham before ending up at Longmoor as the derailment demonstrator, becoming the last, nominally active, Dean goods in 1959. After six months 170 was replaced by another condenser, 197. At least the army hierarchy set some importance to the need to reduce steam emission by condensing, but the crews never used the gear. Charlie recalled how, with the static life involved, the gun train became part of the neighbourhood with the local people taking an interest in their welfare and little boys looking for rides on the locomotive.

Charlie and his locomotive only left the K&ESR line to go to Ashford for servicing. At lunchtime on Saturdays he and his mate took 195 into Ashford for wash-out and any other servicing required. The locomotive's fire was dropped on the shed and the locomotive left to cool. Charlie changed into his best uniform and with his gas mask over his shoulder set off into Ashford for relaxation in a cinema and perhaps a pub. Coming back from their night out, the soldiers slept in a camping coach, stabled at the back of Ashford shed. In the morning they washed-out 195's boiler, cleaned her tubes, re-lit her fire and left it to raise steam while he and his mate retired to the Alfred Arms.

Although both crew and locomotive were suitably refreshed at these weekends we do not have a record of what would have happened if the guns had been needed on these days, for there were not too many, if any, spare locomotives. Indeed the Military had, in October 1941, asked if there were suitable Westinghouse brake equipped stand-ins available at Rolvenden on a six or twelve hour notice depending on the perceived danger. Unsurprisingly they were told that there were none so then no doubt it was realised that the locomotive could be recalled from Ashford on those timescales. What an odd, almost surreal, waiting war it was.

Fuller details of the operation of the super heavy guns on the K&ESR can be found in Tenterden Terriers 30 (Spring 1983) 39 (Spring 1986) and 3 (Spring 1974) and on the heavier Diesel loco powered Cross Channel guns in Tenterden Terrier 57 (Spring 1992).

With the disbandment of coastal defences and movement of the Super Heavies away from Kent, supposedly on their way to the Continent with diesel power (although they were never used there) the Deans moved away from Kent.

Initially they moved to Longmoor then to military supply depots, particularly the S&MR for which the relatively lightweight Deans were essential. Stephens', much rebuilt, railway became a last redoubt for the Military Deans in the UK and they served there for three or more years until the bridges were further reconstructed. However three wandered even further for, together with 22 of their repatriated colleagues, they were shipped to China in 1947 where they became class ZK3. Only WD 200 lingered on in Kent at Ramsgate, to be last seen being towed in forlorn condition through Borough Green on 20 February 1948.

#### Sources

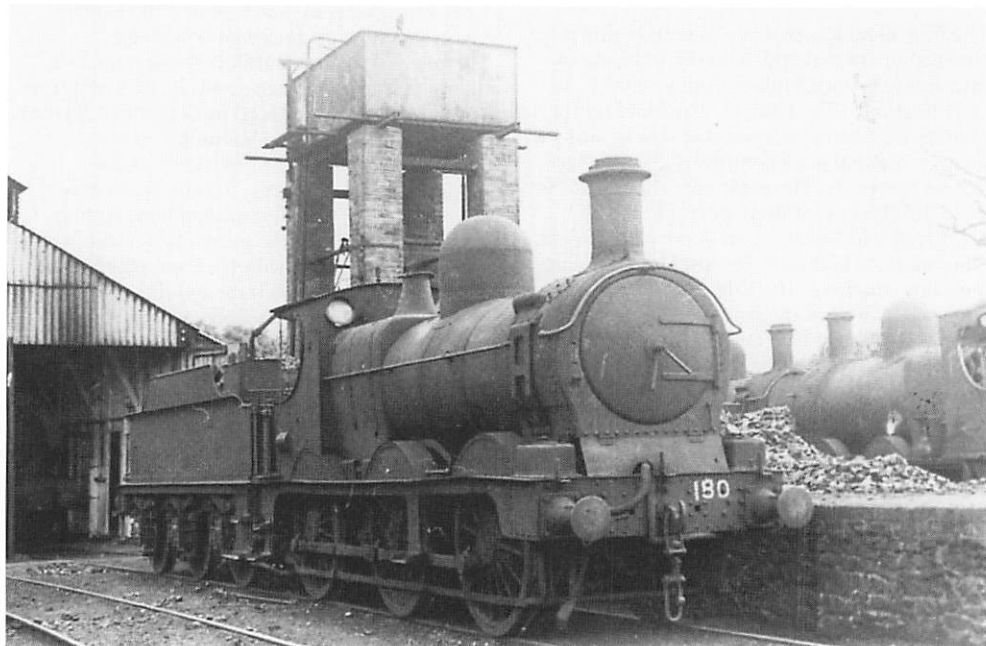
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After long wartime service on the Elham valley WD 180 (ex GWR 2514) lost her condensing gear and served her time out on the Shropshire and Montgomeryshire. Resting at Kinnerley here with two sister engines in 1947. (Colonel Stephens Historical Railway Archive)



## 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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