



JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

# Tenterden Terrier



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# Tenterden Terrier

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**FRONT COVER**

32670 leaves Rolvenden with  
a rake of vintage carriages  
(Phil Edwards)

**BACK COVER**

A winter moon above  
Bodiam (Robin Dyce)

# Editorial

## Once More Unto the Breech...

Here we go again – yes the running season is nearly upon us and as I write the February Thomas™ event is only days away. By the time this appears in print we will know the commercial outcome and all sorts of managerial tea leaves will be read in an effort to foresee the possible course of the 2012 main season. The trouble is that 2011 was such a good year that anything that happens will be measured against it. Then there are the Olympics – will the nation (and our near European neighbours) stay at home glued to the TV or head for the High Weald in an effort to escape enforced sportiness? Well, by the time you are reading the Summer issue of this journal we may have some idea of the effect.

## Quit While You Are Ahead

After nearly five years in post, and as working members will know, I have decided to stand down as Editor of the *Tenterden Terrier*. One reason for this is to be found in the heading to this paragraph. All products need refreshing from time to time and having been fortunate enough to enjoy the job and receive the occasional compliment it's time to go before both the journal and I grow stale. Another reason is that with other duties around the K&ESR and having had a recent health-related 'scare' it seems a good idea to take things a 'bit easier' - which should cause amusement among those who (allegedly) sit in mess rooms asking exactly what one does.

An advertisement for the post of Editor is to be found elsewhere in this issue!

Nick Pallant



*Snow at Bodiam (for the third winter running) (Robin Dyce)*



# Lineside News

Compiled by Duncan Buchanan

## COMMERCIAL

### Chairman

I am often asked "why don't we do this" or why can't we do that"? My answers usually contain the words "can't afford it" and "not enough Volunteer resources". Since the issuing of the Northiam Bonds, we have been unable to invest as much cash as we would like. This situation was compounded in 1998 when we issued the Bodiam Bonds. During the trading year 1st January to 31st December 2000 our debt soared to over £1.3M and we were hours away from bankruptcy. We shall never allow this to happen again. Those who purchased the Northiam Bonds were very generous people. Only 35% was redeemed, effectively donating £90k to us. Indeed many of our Bondholders do not ask for their interest payments which is another example of just how lucky we are.

In 2013 we have another date with our Bondholders when the Bodiam issue is due for repayment. We have to plan for maximum redemption and have to look to borrow to pay them back. As if someone on high was looking at our impending problem, we have received donations in the form of legacies this year. They total over £240k and we shall use this money to reduce our borrowing requirements. If the Bodiam Bondholders are as generous as those who held the Northiam issue, then ...

From a peak debt of £1.3m+ in 2000, we aim to have reduced this to £400k at the end of 2013, having paid off the Bodiam Bonds. To have paid off £1m in 13 years will be an extraordinary achievement, made possible by the hard work of our paid staff and volunteers. I take my hat off to each and every one of you.

In my last article for the *Terrier* I wrote about the huge improvement that our finances had seen, thanks to generous donations from past members. In 2010 we were doing very well during December until the weather hit us. So we crossed our fingers this season and were blessed with good weather. In fact our Santa season was so successful that it took us all by surprise. Well done to everyone who made so many children (and therefore their parents), so happy.

We look forward to 2012 not knowing how the economic recession will affect us. There are two schools of thought, each having merit. Will we get

more people visiting us because they won't go abroad, or are the holidaymakers so hard up that they won't be taking so many holidays, even in the UK? Of course we can then add the Olympics into the equation and any accurate predictions become impossible!

There are many jobs around our Railway which would benefit from more volunteer input. For example there are clean jobs such as office, station staff, catering, and then there are dirty jobs such as Engineering, Permanent Way and Loco preparation and driving. If we could get a few more volunteers, we could do so much more and our current volunteers would be under less strain. If you know of anyone who you think would help us out, don't be embarrassed, go on, just suggest it to them!

2012 brings with it the prospect of a carriage storage shed emerging from Field 51a at Rolvenden. We have appointed a Project Manager, Neil Sime, and I look forward to Neil bringing the project to a successful conclusion. At the appropriate time, he will need volunteer input and I am sure that when the time comes, our volunteers will step up to the plate again. This is a major project requiring input from Permanent Way, S&T and of course a shed construction company. The benefits of holding our rolling stock under cover are tangible, but difficult to measure. The stock will undoubtedly require fewer complete overhauls, will suffer less water ingress and less damage from sunlight, and our sidings will be free of some of our stock. Hopefully this will enable our Operating Department to do fewer shunts in the run up to events.

### General Manager

As I write this I have just completed a presentation for our annual staff meeting and I pose the question "Was 2011 our best ever year?" Getting over 100,000 passengers for the first time since 2000 was quite an achievement, coupled with a calendar full of spectacular events ending with our best ever Santa Special season in terms of turnover. Although there was little capital spent we grew the business well.

Inevitably with all the economic gloom and despondency around we pontificate on the subject of 2012. Coach bookings are buoyant (and there are none from Greece), so are Pullmans, but the February Thomas™ event has been disastrous due



to the dreadful weather and one cannot expect parents to bring their toddlers out for the day when temperatures are around freezing point. There is little capital to spend again but we have to maintain the existing infrastructure (some of which is deteriorating rapidly). We are going to introduce EPOS (Electronic Point of Sale) into the shops and Tenterden Refreshment Rooms. Interestingly many other heritage railways are doing this or have done this recently as we all try to manage our businesses better.

Work progresses on the carriage shed project for Rolvenden and we should be able to apply for planning consent by the end of March, which could mean that we are able to start work in the summer. The new waiting room for Bodiam station is progressing well, and so our visitors will certainly see something new in 2012. We are also refreshing some of the signs.

By March we will also see the new audio visual guide. This is a fantastic interpretation of the K&ESR and currently the plan is to have the voice of Tom Baker. It is not a history of the railway or indeed a guide in the traditional expectation. It will include some of Ken Percival's pictorial interpretations, some previously unseen pictures and much more. You will also be able to download an "App" if you have an I-Phone or I-Pad as a permanent keepsake.

I am delighted to report that Mike Wood has been appointed Station Agent for Rolvenden, and Linda Brocklebank for Bodiam. We have a great team of Station Agents and this (not forgetting the work of the Tuesday Gang!) is a key aspect of why the appearance of the K&ESR continues to improve.

We have a great team and Jim Williams our Volunteer Recruitment Manager continues to bring in more new faces and we welcome them all. We are still unable to recruit a leader for the Terrier Club, which is disappointing and it would be great to be able to staff the sales office in the afternoons at weekends. Perhaps, dear reader, you might like to give that a try?

### Catering

December is always a busy time for caterers and we are certainly no exception. The 2011 Santa event proved very popular and the consequent staffing requirement really did stretch us to the limit, if not beyond, at times. To operate a Santa daytime service, plus the Wealden Pullman, requires 57% of our catering staff per day! Add to this cover for the inevitable 'no shows' or sickness and it will be appreciated just how great a commitment is needed from the team. Even after 30 years, I am still amazed at how

well we do with so little.

Northiam Tea Rooms have seen some marked improvements in presentation, which was recognised in the award of top marks in an independent hygiene inspection. The tea rooms are popular with our Sunday Luncheon customers, so thanks to the team for a superb effort. Bodiam Station catering continues to perform well, although we shall have to invest in some new equipment here before reopening at Easter.

Thanks, in part, to the end of year peak, the catering department again managed to meet or exceed budgeted income. However this has only been achieved by propping up staff (sometimes literally) with a greater degree of casual paid staff input. As a result, our staffing costs have been higher than desired. Although this is disappointing, a comparison with other heritage railways shows that we still outperform all those examined. There is no room for complacency however if we wish to remain in the top of the pack.

We shall shortly be replacing our point of sale equipment in the Station Refreshment Rooms. Although our current equipment was a considerable step up from the "heritage" mechanical till we had, until relatively recently, the new EPOS (Electronic Point of Sale, aka bar code reader) equipment will enable us to better monitor sales and margins, stock levels and trends. It will also enable us to easily provide special offers and promotions. Integrated bank card processing (ePDQ) will also considerably reduce errors and transaction processing times, a problem we experience particularly during special events.

The absence of the severe weather that hampered operations during December 2010 was most welcome. However writing of these notes has been delayed by the onset of severe frosts and snow, which resulted in the freezing and subsequent damage of just about every pipe within the loft of the Refreshment Rooms despite thorough lagging. Rerouting of the worst affected pipes has been effected in an attempt to mitigate the effects of any further incidents.

In the last edition of this journal, I made an appeal for volunteer assistance. Whilst that is not unusual (nearly every edition has a plea for help somewhere within!), on this occasion I am pleased to report that members took note and responded well. To all those who joined us and those who didn't manage to translate their offer into an attendance, I hope that we shall see you during the forthcoming season!

## Wealden Pullman

As anticipated, private charter trade was poor in 2011. The continued absence of the 'other' Maunsell carriage (NBO 54, used on the Pullman to boost capacity) has certainly not helped this situation. Although still some way off completion, encouraging signs of paint have appeared: we look forward to its return in due course.

After a rather slow start, occupancy figures for the year (which stand at upward of 96%) show that the Wealden Pullman remained as popular as ever, which is a tribute to all our staff and their unstinting efforts. At the time of writing, it would seem that 2012 will follow a similar pattern with early season services filling slowly and may need some promotion.

A number of training sessions have been planned for the early part of 2012. Whilst primarily aimed at existing staff, these offer an ideal introduction for newcomers as they are arranged for non operational days. If you would like to join our eclectic team, do please get in touch on 01580 765155 or email [andre@kesr.org.uk](mailto:andre@kesr.org.uk)

## Shop

The continuing sluggish retail spend on non-essential goods, such as souvenir gifts, meant that the shop's gross turnover of £167,000 in 2011 was 4% down on the previous year. This percentage figure is pretty much in line with that experienced by other gift shops within the tourism sector. It appears that, although the desire amongst the public for a nice day out with a cup of tea and sticky bun remains relatively strong, they are being more careful about what they are spending in the shop. The staple favourites: postcards, fridge magnets, jars of chutney and the kiddie's cheapies continue to sell all right, but books and DVDs have slowed up; which is no surprise when even K&ESR members buy them cheaper on Amazon. On a more positive note; the combined shop/refreshment outlet at Bodiam saw a 25% increase in sales to £21,800.46 (shop £9486.21, catering £12314.25). Shop sales at the Northiam refreshment outlet increased by 54% from £872.50 to £1346.84. Shop online sales in 2011 floundered in the face of a very competitive market and the gross total of £2467.59 was 16% down on 2010.

The big change in the shop in 2012 will be the introduction of the Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS) system which will drag us into the twenty-first century and allow us to keep a keener eye on stock levels and controls, amongst other benefits.

After having acquired a more competitive price, in addition to being thicker and warmer fleeces, the staff prices for fleeces has been reduced from £20 to £15 and polo shirts from £12 to £10. Larger sew-on badges are also now available.

Finally, we would like to welcome Jean Hook and Brenda Adams to the happy band of shop staff.

## Operating Department

We have lots to report with the latter part of 2011 and early part of this year being particularly busy, or so it seems.

The Santa Specials went off without too much trouble. We even managed to include three days worth of engine banking. We also had the weather on side this year! Thanks are due to everyone who helped right through 2011.

Peter Lamont, Tony Ramsey and Graham Bridge have taken up their roles as Assistant Signalling Inspectors. They will be picking up on the excellent work undertaken by Peter Parascandolo and Gerald Beck. Peter Parascandolo has retired from the post of Assistant Signalling Inspector as he wishes to focus more on his efforts on the Swanage Railway. He will still come along and signal trains. Gerald Beck is soldiering on helping the new ASIs settle into their role. Thanks must be passed to Gerald and Peter for all of their hard work. The new ASIs have got off to a good start and are already tackling some quite major projects.

We also have to report that David Johnson has qualified to operate Tenterden Town Signalbox, Michael Haizelden Wittersham Road Signalbox and Mike Harwood to operate Northiam Signalbox. Congratulations to all three Signalmen. They have all put in a huge amount of time and effort and will hopefully be signalling trains for many years to come, well done!

In the motive power department we have to report the promotion of Dan Snowden and Chris McNaughton to the position of Passed Firemen. This is a tremendous achievement and one that can only be done by putting in a huge amount of effort and time so well done lads. Already we have had many positive words back about their handling of trains, a true credit to their hard work and of those who are engaged in training. We can't forget Nathan Tutty who has been promoted to the grade of Steam Raiser. Nathan has put in a lot of effort to complete the relevant sections of his logbook and learn the theory. Well done!

Lesley Lee has made a marvellous job of painting all of the tail lamps for the passenger brake vans.



Lesley has also painted the lamps for D2023, the DMMU and D9504 (these are all diesels for those who do not keep obscure numbers in their head). So would all Guards, Shunters, Fitters and Drivers please keep the lamps clean.

Following a meeting with the Guards and Shunters supervisory staff in November the Guards logbooks are ready for issue. Those trainees who are already in place, will have lots of the elements backdated so as not to hinder progress. It was also reported at the meeting that there are 11 trainee Guards and Shunters; which is excellent news.

At the close of 2011 we took delivery of the new section A of the Rule Book, this and section B are bound together. We also received the new local instructions. This is the first stage in a major overhaul of the Rule Book. Please don't fret though, the existing frame work will remain, in so much as it will still be a sectional rule book. The rule book will ultimately be an up to date version of the 1989 Rule Book. Thanks are due to Phil Edwards and everyone else who has had an input into this major project.

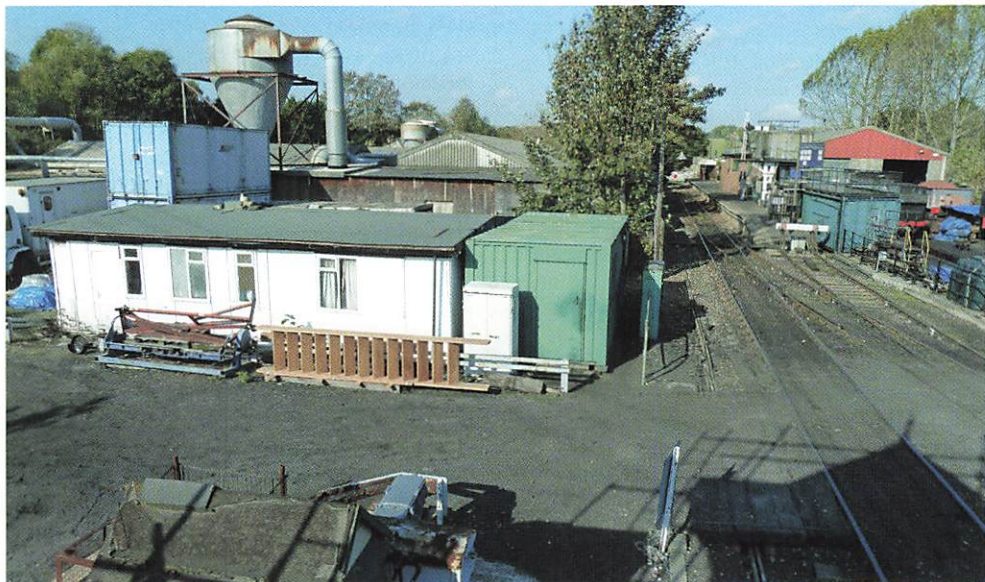
Then came 2012 (it's only the 21st January at the time of writing).

The Working Timetable has for the second year running been published ready for the start of the year. James Palk has put an awful lot of work into this document. The Calendar of Service at last tells you where the A set starts from and where it

ends up! Please study the WTT carefully as there are some minor changes from last year. Guards will also note that Guards bag and Guards van equipment audits appear on the rear of their journals this year. Thanks are due to Cathy Roberts for this useful suggestion.

On the 3rd of January the heavens opened. The QE2 bridge was closed due to poor weather and right across the UK there were hundreds of weather related problems; this tied in beautifully with the start of filming for our basic railway safety DVD. Despite the weather, despite the actual fallen tree and everything else thrown at us, we managed to film everything we wanted. Hopefully by the time you are reading this we will have shown this DVD at the first Basic Railway Safety Course of 2012. Everyone involved in making the film should be really proud of themselves. What we managed to achieve was fantastic considering we only had four days to do the filming. Everyone worked really hard and every now and then a blooper worthy of commercial TV appeared! This has produced a first class training aid and really shows the K&ESR in a good light so well done and thank you! Thanks are due to Owen Bushell, in particular, for coming down from Norfolk, doing the filming and editing the DVD.

The Palace opened in time for Thomas™. A huge amount of work has gone into tidying up the place, special thanks must go to Pete Salmon for his decorating expertise (just don't trust him with



*The Palace against a panorama of the woodyard and Rolvenden Station (Duncan Buchanan)*

a hammer, battery drill or saw), Ben Swan and Adrian Landi for their electrical work. Paul Wilson for installing the kitchen units and new sink. Charlie Masterson for installing the new toilet, and anyone else who has helped on this project. The place is looking far better than it has done for years. Thank you.

Fire extinguisher training and a train evacuation exercise took place on the 28th January. This was a well attended course and despite being a bitterly cold day was enjoyed by all.

The Operating Department has been working on a project to make collation of footplate availability easier and ultimately remove some of the errors that appear due to the current collation method. The Railway has invested the huge sum of £0 into a piece of software that has been designed for use on the K&ESR. This software albeit in another form, has been in use on the North Norfolk Railway for a number of years. Just by using the smallest amount of the software the footplate roster clerks are set to save at least 16 man days a year. Hopefully with some careful

expansion we can save even more time and ultimately look to make it a volunteer role once more. Unfortunately for the minute you will still have to put up with Pete Salmon, Howard Wallace Sims and Matt Green phoning you up or collaring you in the street to get turns covered. Just in case you haven't seen it the footplate roster looks by and large exactly the same as the 2011 roster, the 2010 roster, the 2009..... We can't change too much!

Plans for the May Gala are progressing well. The GNR 0-6-2T N2 1744 and GWR 2-8-0T 42xx 4247 are confirmed. There are lots of exciting things set to take place so look for updates on the website. If you fancy getting involved on this project please contact Pete Salmon or Matt Green and they will direct you to the right person.

Finally I am left to say that no matter how small your contribution it is very much appreciated, thank you so much for all of your hard work in 2011. Lets hope we have a fantastic 2012! Thank you.

## MOTIVE POWER

At this time of year when running locos are not required they are winterised - that is to say the boilers are drained, the firegrates removed, the smokeboxes and fireboxes thoroughly cleaned of ash and soot and the pressure gauges taken off and stored.

### Steam Locomotives

**No 3 'Bodiam' (32670):** Successfully passed annual boiler inspection. It was used on a couple of turns as banking engine on the Santa services. Presently winterised.

**No 8 'Knowle' (32678):** More investigation was needed to establish the reason for the air pump continually stopping. A thorough clean up of parts and the removal of oil deposits from the very small connecting steam passageways seems to have done the trick. *Knowle* was also out on Santa banking duties. Presently winterised and due annual boiler inspection once *Charwelton* has been completed.

**No 11 'P Class' (5753):** The boiler has been detubed, the cladding and lagging removed and all the fittings safely stowed away. There is still a lot of work to do needlegunning the boiler to remove rust - perhaps someone reading this might fancy a go at this most important job? The motion has been removed and stored, it was noted how very worn the components were. The P class is a volunteer dependant project -

so please contact Henry Mowforth on 01580 762308 if you would like to assist in this overhaul as he is heading up the work.

**No 14 'Charwelton':** On washout and annual boiler inspection. Due back into service for the railway experience days that commence in March. *Charwelton* has replaced the popular P class on railway experience duties.

**No 19 'Norwegian' (376):** At last looking like a locomotive again. The wheels have now been fitted into the frames and the motion is connected. During the lift of the boiler on 4253 (detailed later) the opportunity was taken to shunt the chassis around the yard to make sure things all did what they were supposed to. Happily they did. Work is now progressing to fit lubrication pipes, these can be better accessed without the boiler in place, as well as erecting the refurbished brake gear. The boiler has passed an initial hydraulic test and over the course of a week was gradually brought into steam to full working pressure.

**No 21 'Wainwright' (DS238):** The overhaul has now commenced. Stage one is to prepare the boiler for examination and ensure it is fit for the next period of service. The tubes are in excellent condition having been renewed only four years before the loco was withdrawn from service. The construction of this type of locomotive is such that the whole boiler can be





*No. 4253 makes use of limited facilities at Rolvenden (Charles W. Masterson)*

inspected in the frames, or more correctly on the frames, as it sits above them.

**No 22 'Maunsell' (65):** Passed annual boiler inspection last year and now in the shed for running repairs and intermediate exam.

**No 23 'Holman F Stephens':** After installing and testing the Armstrong blast system the results were initially disappointing. Further analysis by Chris Greatley identified that the system was possibly far too efficient thereby causing problems with air flow through the fire tubes and smokebox. A re-design was carried out and the results now appear to be excellent. Due to the non availability of large diesels, 23 has been used on winter P.Way trains.

**No 24 'Rolvenden':** In store awaiting overhaul

**No 25 'Northiam':** The boiler is now complete and laid up in store. When the weather improves and daytime temperatures are higher an initial hydraulic test will be carried out. Work has now started on the chassis to assess the condition and what repairs or renewals might be required.

**No 30 GWR Pannier (1638):** The eccentrics, on exam, did not require re-metalling. Whilst this was good news, during the exam white metal was seen to be extruding from the right hand

rear axlebox. This required the loco to spend time in the shed so it could be jacked up, the axlebox removed re-metalled and refitted. P.Way trains have been useful running in duties.

**GWR side tank (4253):** During the two-week window of time in late November the group was able to use the facilities of the shed and pit to remove the springs and other parts in order to prepare the wheels for removal. As a result, a mobile crane was employed to lift the boiler and remove the wheels. The frames have now been returned to the yard behind the shed, where a tent has been built to keep out the elements. Work has started at the front of the engine by removal of buffer beam and gussets. The exposed frames have been needle gunned and painted. A new drag box has been fabricated and the gussets along with a new buffer beam are being reinstated. Meanwhile work on the bunker floor continues depending on the weather. Working parties continue every Tuesday and Sunday. Progress can be followed with photographs on [www.4253.co.uk](http://www.4253.co.uk). More shareholders always welcome!

### **Diesel Locomotives**

**No. 20 (GWR Railcar):** The final checks of work done over the years continue. We have completed the under floor checks of correctly



*DMMU Bodiam end car under repair in Carriage & Wagon(Duncan Buchanan)*

fitted woodwork, metal work including brackets, bolts screws etc. below the large saloon and the luggage compartment. All remedial work as a result of these checks is again complete. No work will be done in the area of the Headcorn end cab until fitting out of the Robertsbridge end cab is complete. All refurbished window top light assemblies have been installed in the large saloon.

Each of the two engines has an epicyclic gearbox and these have been overhauled by Queensbridge Engineering PSV Limited in Wakefield. No particular problems were met apart from fair wear and tear taking into account the age and design of the gearboxes. All seals have been replaced together with all brake bands. The brake bands are now of a non asbestos material in line with modern practice. Using our EP valves, functional checks were undertaken to check air seals and operation. Queensbridge initial costing was £1-5,000 per box depending on condition and availability of parts. Substantially more if parts had to be

made. Total costs for both gearboxes came to £3,240 including VAT. Project cost £2,700. The gearboxes have been returned and should have been fitted back under the Railcar by the time the magazine is published.

The strategy for overhaul of each of the AEC engines has been agreed with the repairer. There will be an initial engine start and engine run with the engines in the Railcar. After this stage, the engines will sent away and stripped down and checked for wear etc. etc. After rebuild, the engines will be returned, run up and tested in the Railcar.

As part of the agreed strategy we are now connecting the engine cooling systems. The north side engine together with its refurbished radiator and refurbished header tank is now holding water for the first time since the early 1990's. Connection of the south side engine to its cooling system is in hand. Each engine exhaust system has been checked, painted and part re-

assembled. Our friends in bus preservation are trying to find a manufacturer for new silencers as those on the Railcar have very large holes in the outer casing. The next stage will be a basic engine start circuit for the engines to be run up for the initial evaluation prior to complete overhaul at the contractor's workshop.

Planned Working Dates - March to December 2012.

EVERY WEDNESDAY throughout the year March to December.

Also every other week on the following SUNDAYS.

March – 11th & 25th	April – 8th & 22nd
May – 6th & 20th.	June – 3rd & 17th
July – 1st & 15th & 29th	
August – 12th & 26th.	
September – 9th & 23rd.	
October – 7th & 21st	
November – 4th & 18th.	
December – 2nd & 16th & 30th.	



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

**No 41 (Ruston):** Available for service.

**No 46 (Class 03):** In service. A exam completed while some minor maintenance has been done to ensure availability.

**No 49 (Class 14 14029):** Not in service. The locomotive was back in service early in November. Early in December the engine starter ring failed and as a consequence the starter contactor and starter motor were damaged. A new starter ring was fitted together with the repaired starter contactor and a new starter motor from reserve stock. The locomotive was back in service.

Unfortunately the engine has suffered another failure. At the moment, the engine re-manufacturers are resolving an issue with failed cylinder liner seals. They have partially dismantled the engine, to inspect the damage and undertake the repairs under warranty. Hopefully this will be resolved by the time the magazine goes to print.

**Class 33 'Ashford' (33052):** Currently out of traffic to allow minor repairs to the battery boxes and the internal air intake guttering. Whilst the battery boxes are under repair the opportunity has been taken to check the state of the individual cells, some of which have been

giving trouble of late. The traction motor blower has also had its impellor cleaned and painted. Following repairs it is intended to return the loco to traffic by March.

**Class 108 DMMU:** Not in service. B exam completed. External body repaint is underway on Bodiam facing car 50971. This entails substantial work on roof, body sides and the drivers cab.

## Cranes

**No 133 (10T Taylor-Hubbard):** In regular use on P Way duties. Due annual lifting test in the Spring.

**No 151 (36T brakedown):** Delays in arrival of the new boiler tubes has delayed this project. It is needed to refit the boiler in 19. The new tubes are now in stock and work on fitting them has started.

## Plant

**TRAMM 98211:** Not in service

**07 Tamper (73250):** This machine has had a change of ownership and is now owned by four volunteers on the railway. It still resides on the K&ESR, and is available for use. It is hoped that over the coming months we may be able to carry out a few repairs to the machine and give it a bit of a spruce up.

# ROLLING STOCK

## Mark 1's

We are able to report continuing progress with the heavy overhaul of **DBSO No. 75 Petros**. The refurbishment and updating of the disabled accessible toilet is almost finished and external paintwork has now been completed. Once the bogies had been overhauled and reinstalled, it was possible to temporarily move *Petros* outside the shed to allow for other urgent work described below. Once the vehicle is again under cover work to the interior, including new lino, will be completed prior to *Petros* returning to traffic during the 2012 season.

**RMB No. 59** has received its 18 month examination. This was rather more complex than usual as it was decided to change the roller bearing fitted wheelsets from the Commonwealth bogie at the 'Headcorn' end. This might sound straightforward but C&W had not previously ventured into the world of 'modern' (well, 50 years plus) bogie design. Enter Volunteer Clive Lowe, ex C&W Manager

of a decade and more ago, who's 'big railway' expertise with Commonwealths was invaluable. After an expedition to the undergrowth at Wittersham Road, a pair of suitable and serviceable wheelsets were retrieved and brought to Tenterden and Clive got to work aided by Martin Butler. The RMB's smooth ride should now be guaranteed for a few more years.

## Vintage Coaches

**Maunsell BNO Brake No. 4443 (K&ESR No. 54).** Following completion of the restoration of SE&CR No. 3062 some further work has been possible to No. 54. In particular Ken and Lesley Lee have been busy installing the new window mouldings which we have had manufactured. In addition some internal varnishing has been carried out by no less a figure than Chairman of the Finance Committee Philip Shaw who seems to find the carriage shed a most congenial spot.

Following a successful test run to Bodiam and



*SE&CR No 3062 at Bodiam during test run (Robin Dyce)*

back behind Terrier No. 32678, **LC&DR 'Ashford' Brake, SE&CR No. 3062 (K&ESR No. 98)** entered service on the Remembrance Day train on 11th November 2011 in company with the Cavell Van, the Birdcage and the Woolwich coach. Everyone involved with this splendid restoration is to be congratulated, not least Ken

Lee for leading the project and doggedly plugging away at the high quality work involved.

The **'District' Coach (K&ESR No.100)** has had to be withdrawn from traffic for attention to the bodywork on the Tenterden platform side of the vehicle. Craftsman Julian Coppins has this



*District Coach under serious repair in C&W (Duncan Buchanan)*



urgently in hand whilst overhaul of the doors, which are in relatively good condition, are being undertaken by Ken and Lesley Lee. The opposite side of the vehicle and both ends have fortunately proved to be sound. After 30 years in traffic No. 100 is the K&ESR's longest serving restored vintage vehicle so it is perhaps not surprising that some attention is due. **The GER Brake (K&ESR No. 81)** is still withdrawn from traffic and will be attended to once repairs to No. 100 are complete. L&NWR Balcony Saloon (**LMS No. ED 33, K&ESR No. 82**) has now returned to C&W from Orpins Siding, Rolvenden, and will follow No. 81 into the carriage shed in due course.

### Wagons & Vans

Roof repairs to **PMV No. No. 1145 (K&ESR No.79)** were successfully completed, the vacated space in the shed promptly being taken up by **Shark Brake Van No. DS62862 (K&ESR No. 165)** for similar attention to its

roof plus repairs to its floor.

The Shark has now returned to traffic.

### Assistance to Other Groups

Clive Lowe's **Ballast Regulator, No. DR77329**, is in the shed at the time of writing for attention to bodywork corrosion. This has required the welding skills of C&W Shed Supervisor Alan Brice and has effectively been a *quid pro quo* for Clive's help with **RMB No. 59**. The Regulator is a vital piece of the Railway's infrastructure equipment and C&W department has been pleased to help get it back into service as quickly as possible. We have also been pleased to provide shed space and labour to assist with repainting of the bodywork of **Class 108 dmmu 'Robertsbridge' end car No. 50971**. This has enabled TREATS to concentrate their attention on the continuing problems with **Class 14 No. D9504** which also required shed space following the failure of its starter ring.

## WAY AND WORKS

### Permanent Way

Since our last update, we've had a busy time in the department.

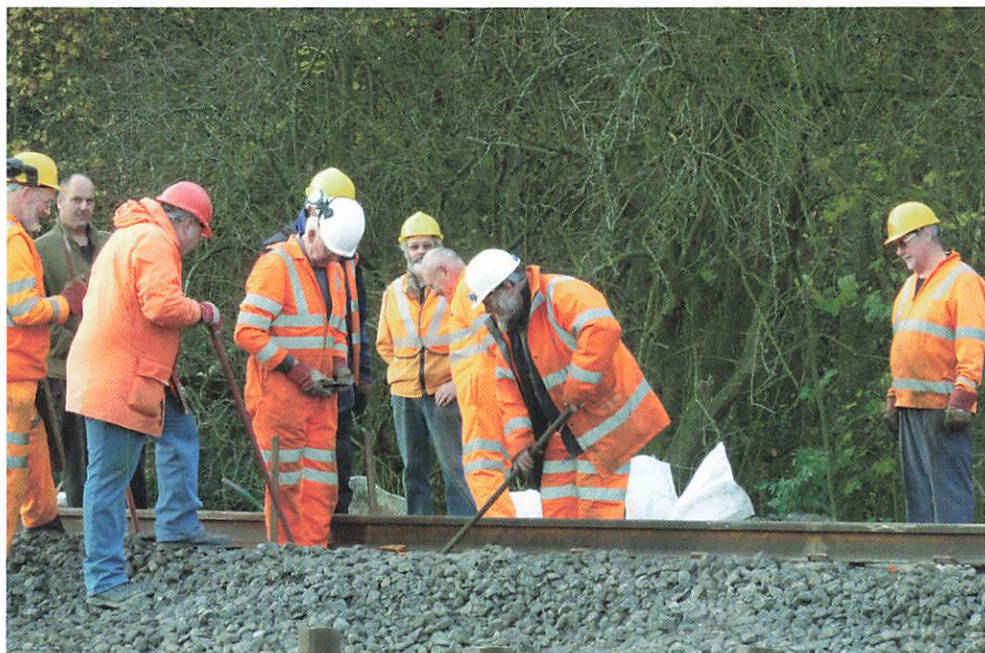
November saw the completion of the short five panel renewal at the top of the Wet Cutting, approx. ¼ mile west of Cranbrook Road level crossing. This work included digging the embankment at this location down by approximately 2-3 metres to allow the damage to the embankment by rabbit infestation to be rectified. As the embankment was rebuilt the opportunity was taken to install retaining walls on either side of the embankment using defective concrete sleepers, allowing significantly more width to be available at the top of this earthwork. This has the significant advantage that we can now put a ballast shoulder on either side of the curve at this location to improve the lateral stability of the track. This in turn will ensure that the track alignment at this location remains more durable.

During December the team spent a few days at Northiam, stripping some of the ex-London Underground panels down to release sufficient materials for the planned track renewal in March, which will start at Tenterden Home signal and renew 250m of track towards Cranbrook Road linking up with the track which was renewed in March 2011. Since December,

the rails have been Thermit welded into circa 60' lengths by a contractor and we have had engineer's trains out on the first five Saturdays of 2012 delivering materials to site for this job. This includes some 400 concrete sleepers, 30 lengths of flatbottom rail, 800 rubber rail pads, 1600 clips and insulators. Other preparatory works for the March renewal have included the installation of French Drains either side of the track through the cutting to help dry the formation out. Who said that January and February were the railway's quiet periods?

We have also managed to spend a little time on various other activities, including making a start sorting through the various piles of spare materials to give us some idea of just what we've got kicking about. We've spent some time planning works in conjunction with S&T for the projected yard development in Field 51A at Rolvenden, and spent a little time watching the exciting developments unfold at Robertsbridge, where tremendous progress is being made and where the sharing of ideas and knowledge has produced some useful results to our benefit.

Of course it goes without saying, that all of these works have been carried out alongside the routine track inspections and maintenance we carry out to ensure the safety of the existing running line, as well as the significant time spent in the office at home, constantly working to improve the department management



*P Way gang at work above Wet Cutting in November L-R: Mike Popplewell, Andrew Wood, Geoff Crouch, Paul Rand, Paul Dodds, Dave 'Moggie' Smith, Richard 'Frim' Halliwell, Jim Tooke (Duncan Buchanan)*

systems and procedures; so I'd like to take this opportunity to thank 'Her Indoors' for her support and putting up with the stacks of railway paperwork that infest our house, alongside the paperwork from my actual job!! And a big thank you to all the members of the team for their continued support and hard work doing the far-from-glamorous work of the Permanent Way Department; without us there would be no K&ESR!

Finally, the usual plea for volunteers goes out. All too often it is the same few volunteers who carry the bulk of the burden in doing the vital work of the department, and I am keen to try and expand our numbers so that we can spread the load across more people. If you feel like you may be able to help, please get in touch [jamedouglas@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jamedouglas@tiscali.co.uk).

## S&T

The last few months have seen work continue on preparations for the layout and control changes at Rolvenden for the planned new carriage storage shed and associated new sidings. The base has now been laid in preparation for the new relay room and, during a possession week in January, the cable ducts under "Charles" crossing outside Rolvenden box were dug out and renewed, as these had

failed and we were unable to access or replace the cables they carry. New telecomms cables are now being installed to upgrade capacity for the future.

Several shunt signals from Rolvenden have been overhauled and worn parts renewed in house. Two signal motors from Wittersham and Northiam have been overhauled by local contractors due to wear of the commutators – not bad for 1930's technology.

Rolvenden box has been nearly completely repainted. However some areas that were inaccessible, due to the scaffolding used by the painters, remain to be addressed once the weather is warmer and it is more conducive to the paint drying that day, before any dew falls. There have been repairs to the cladding, new windows at the Northiam end, which takes the worst of the weather, and new stairs. These are made of iroko, a hardwood which gives much better life than modern building softwoods.

The annual round of pole inspections has been carried out. This essential task not only ensures that they are fit for purpose, and will continue to do their job, but looks for the hidden danger of rot which commonly occurs from the inside core of the softer wood. Treatment with a preservative mixture requires excavation around





*Tuesday Gang on recently renewed steps of Rolvenden Signalbox. From left on ground Norman Bowden, Humphrey Atkinson, Iain Davidson, RHS Doug Ramsden (almost hidden), John Rose, Matthew Burrows. On steps from top Ron Dunn, Dave Brown, Graham Hopker, Alan Goss (John Rose)*

the base, application and subsequent reinstatement.

Six pole replacements have been executed. These involve arranging delivery of the pole to the site, digging the hole by hand, normally to a depth of more than four feet, then simply inserting the pole and filling in the hole. Two of the poles were put in Rolvenden car park for security and lighting. Lastly tree cutting and tree branch reduction has been carried out to keep the wire route clear. John Pocock and Barry Fisher have assisted Chris Lowry in this task.

Wittersham Road box has recently had a full locking service carried out, with some repairs to parts of the conditional closing out arrangements which were becoming troublesome. The frame will now be subject to a full pull test, which will ensure compliance to the interlocking tables, and further inspection for worn parts in need of replacement.

The level crossing inspectors have continued to make considerable inroads into the inspection and management of our not inconsiderable portfolio of level crossings. Readers will know, from the national news, that crossings are an

emotive subject in public risk perception. All crossings require to be inspected on at least an annual basis, and any defects or required works programmed. The legislation and standards for crossings are both complex and prescriptive, but there is an ongoing Law Commission review which may make this less complex or confusing in the future,

Just to give you some figures we have:

1 open crossing, where both the user and train driver look out to check that the crossing is clear, with a 10MPH speed limit for trains at all times;

7 manned gated crossings;

6 footpaths;

34 user worked crossings between fields, riverbanks etc. of which 25 are active, the others have been locked up by K&ESR, but three are locked by the user and they give notice to use.

Since the 1976 survey, 1 access gate, and 15 crossings have been closed and completely removed, but two new crossings have come about, or were previously unrecorded. Both are Environment Agency crossings on riverbanks,

probably reflecting increased machinery use and rising water levels.

## **Tuesday Group**

Since the last report the Tenterden car parking lights have been finished and turned out to be a great asset during the Santa running.

Most of our time since completing that installation has been spent at Rolvenden where we started by fitting new windows to the west end of the Signal Box. This proved to be an extended job with the window frames not fitting squarely due to movement of the Box. However, after plenty of planing and juggling the windows finally fitted and slid open correctly.

A start was made on the painting, and in fact is now completed, at Rolvenden to bring the station area in line with the Company colours of mid purple brown and cream. The Crossing Keepers Hut has been repaired and repainted.

The Signal Box was repainted by Contractors but the Tuesday Group had the job of replacing the steps which had been made offsite. This turned out to be quite a challenge for a bunch of "old men" as they were very heavy and help with a mechanical lift by another department proved difficult to obtain. However, with many hands and Dave Brown's version of a sky pulley, we manoeuvred them into place. After securing the steps to new posts at the bottom and to the Signal Box at the top, the finished job was given a good test as the accompanying photograph from the lens of John Rose shows.

We disconnected and removed the electrics of the remaining vandalised lamp post on Wittersham Road platform before contractors moved in to replace the stolen lamp posts with the new smart, albeit fairly tall, plastic ones!

We had our annual festive lunch on Tuesday, 13th December, which was attended by a good group of people and much jollity was had by all.

The Tuesday Group covered the whole weekend of 10/11 December for the trolley service on the Santa Specials which, again, was good fun and plenty of positive comments were received from the general public about the whole experience.

On 3rd January we had our, what appears now to have become, annual trip and lunch on the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway. This year we organised a very interesting conducted tour of the Engine Shed and Workshop at New Romney.

So far this year we have found that old wooden fence posts in the ground and strong winds do

not live happily together. We have repaired three at Northiam and six at Wittersham Road using short concrete spurs and studding.

The saplings to the right of the exit from Northiam Station have been cut down and this improves the visibility one hundred percent.

We will shortly be moving to Tenterden to work our way through a rather long list of items needing attention.

## **Gardening Report**

As I write this report I am drying out after a miserable, drizzly day at Tenterden. It is January and the weather is freezing one day and then grey, wet and mild! All the bulbs and plants are totally confused in the gardens – we have summer bulbs pushing their heads up months too early and our first daffodil blooming 17th January! I really do not know quite what will happen as the year goes on.

My last report finished with clearance work at Rolvenden. From Rolvenden we moved onto Northiam where we set to work tidying the picnic garden. It has been decided to plant shrubs and ground cover plants in the lineside garden which used to be treated as "the Station Master's" garden by growing vegetables but this proved to be impractical due to the very dry conditions and the rabbits. We will, hopefully, manage to find plants which will tolerate the dry conditions and the rabbits!

We briefly moved back to Rolvenden to tidy the little garden at the entrance to the station. Now we have a newly appointed Station Agent for Rolvenden it might be the time to change the old wooden tubs and conifers on the platform for something a little brighter.

During November the trees in the Memorial Garden at Northiam were tidied and thinned. More bulbs were donated in memory of a past member of the Railway.

At Tenterden three conifers, together with a few perennials, were planted on the buffer stop. It has always been difficult keeping this area tidy but, hopefully, we are gradually getting on top of the worst of the weeds.

We have been clearing the fallen leaves and cutting back various plants at Tenterden to clear the gardens ready for a delivery of well rotted farmyard manure which we hope will boost the condition of the soil to help with water retention during the summer.

Plans are now in hand for ordering the annual bedding plants for the hanging baskets and tubs



at the various stations. As it is the Queen's Diamond Jubilee year and also the Olympic year we hope to have a good display through the busy summer months.

Help, as always, is needed around the gardens so if you are interested in joining us for the odd hour or two please contact me (Veronica Hopker) on : 01303 862811

## GROUPS & ASSOCIATES

### Rother Valley Railway

The Rother Valley Railway restoration project continues to thrive with construction taking place on budget and on time at the Robertsbridge end of the line.

Our project manager, Alasdair Stewart, seconded from the Welsh Highland Railway, continues to work on the completion of the new bridges and at the time of writing with heavy February snow on the ground, four out of the five structures are almost completely installed.

By way of a reminder to readers, the bridges from Robertsbridge towards Tenterden have been renumbered for simplicity, starting with No. 1 and increasing numerically. The recently completed bridges are No's 2,3,4 and 5, the decks of which are all to the same design. To comply with modern railway rules, these single track decks have a galvanised steel walkway on each side. These can all be best seen from the

sports field at Robertsbridge.

They look extremely professional and, following shot blasting, repair and painting, should be serviceable for several decades to come. The casual visitor would never guess that these spans are as old as the Headcorn extension of the Kent & East Sussex Railway itself, being originally installed on the main South Eastern Railway line near Staplehurst in 1904.

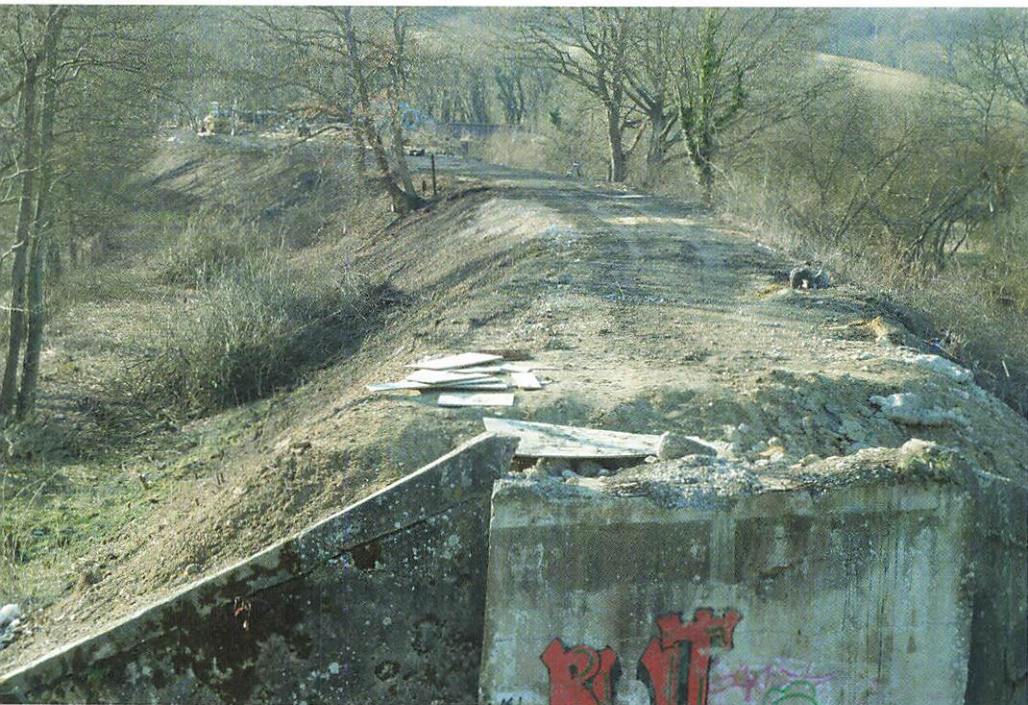
The process of deck placement was not an easy task as access along the track bed either from Robertsbridge Station or Northbridge Street was not possible by crane or lorry. This left the cricket field and sports ground as the only option and permission was amicably granted by the Parish Council and cricket club for heavy vehicle access to take place.

It's a well-known feature of Robertsbridge village that floods are not unknown particularly during the winter months. So far this year and



*Hodson's Mill forms a backdrop to bridge No. 4 suspended from 'skyhook' during installation at Robertsbridge (Mark Yonge)*





*View towards Robertsbridge Station from bridge No. 1 ahead of final construction work (Duncan Buchanan)*

last the Rother Valley Railway has been blessed with a dry summer and a moderately dry winter which has allowed work to continue almost without a break. However, no chance could be taken in regard to the heavy equipment being driven on to the cricket ground and an aluminium roadway was installed to prevent damage.

In the event, matters went very smoothly, almost without a hitch. The bridge spans were returned, following restoration by Brunswick Ironworks in Caernafon and painting by Beavers in Lamberhurst and delivered by road to Northbridge Street on the 31st January. Fortunately, we were able to take advantage of an East Sussex County Council Highways Road closure which enabled access without the need for traffic management which was a great advantage. Three spans were delivered directly to the track bed and the fourth placed near the railway on Northbridge Street itself.

Once the temporary road had been rolled out, the walkways and handrails were fixed to the decks and a lorry and high lift crane were utilised to move the spans parallel with the track bed to each of the prepared locations on

the 1st February, starting with numbers 5,4,2 and then 3. The high lift crane was necessary in order to lift the decks over trees without injury. This was sheer poetry in motion.

#### **CFBS News – Philip Pacey**

In June, the Baie de Somme was designated the 10th 'Grand Site de France' by the Ministère d'Ecologie, a tremendous boost for the region from which the CFBS is sure to benefit. Can we look forward to further growth of passenger numbers, after another record-breaking year? A stunning total of 151,227 was recorded in 2011.

Towards the end of the year, there was both a notable arrival and departure. An ex-SNCF sleeping car arrived to provide accommodation for volunteers until a volunteer hostel can be built. The dormitories at Valery Canal are now deemed unsatisfactory, a verdict I for one will not quarrel with having been kept awake by mice in the roof when I last stayed there.

The departure was diesel locomotive BA 12, which has gone to SABA (the 'Train du Bas Barry'). This loco is of particular interest in having been constructed on the chassis of a steam loco, at the workshops of the Chemins de



Fer Départementaux at Neuillée-Pont-Pierre (Indre-et-Loire). It arrived at St Valery in 1989. Since then it has served the CFBS well, but has been made redundant by recent additions to the fleet of diesel locos.

The long awaited 'fourgon cuisine', a restored and adapted ex-BOB *fourgon*, officially entered service as part of the traditional 'train de fin de saison' on 16th October. It will now take its place in the dining trains.

The new season begins on 1st April. The Fête de la Gare at Cayeux takes place on 8th July. Steam will also be seen on scheduled services on the Cayeux line on Sunday afternoons in July and August and on certain days in April, May and September. Journées du Patrimoine, including guided visits to the depot at St Valery Canal, are scheduled for 15th and 16th September.

For more information visit [www.cfbs.eu](http://www.cfbs.eu). More English content is to be provided on the CFBS web site shortly. Have you heard this before? I have been lined up to assist with translation and it really does seem as if this time the CFBS means business. Watch this space!

### Wittersham Road

As the year wound down, Wittersham Road returned to a state of quiet slumber; fortunately none of the previous year's snow was seen, and only a couple of frosts!!

The largest item of news was the return of the platform lights; these were put up over a couple of days prior to the first of the 'Santa Specials', in what can only be described as the most appalling weather – cold, overcast and pouring with rain!

However, in true railway tradition, the work was soon finished and the platform now has regained its status. The replacements are made of steel tube and plastic and hopefully will not be as attractive to those who help themselves to items with a scrap value. Talking of which, it is interesting to note that the government is now taking steps to make scrap metal dealers more accountable for the way in which their business is conducted, thus making it harder for those who have acquired items in an unlawful way to make any profit.

Whilst it is wonderful to see the lamps return, a few comments have been made about the height of them (they were supplied by a firm who specialises in street lighting), but as with all things new, I'm sure that in time they will blend

in! They do provide the correct ambiance when lit, and this was evident during the Santa Specials, especially as the gloom descended later in the afternoon.

Plans are now under way to incorporate the station in this year's Gala, by providing a display of the Permanent Way Department Track Maintenance Machines; this will enable a close-up view and access to what some may consider the 'odd looking yellow machines' normally only glimpsed from passing trains, and will enable a greater appreciation of the sterling work carried out by the department under their manager, Jamie Douglas. There will also be a 'craning' demonstration, which will be an opportunity to see one of the railway's steam cranes in action.

Whilst most people may regard these machines as 'odd', there is a surprising amount of enthusiasm for them, and I have recently added more details and photos (in addition to adding the K&ESR location details!) on the website which exists for enthusiasts of this breed – [www.ontrackplant.com](http://www.ontrackplant.com), and hopefully this will encourage such enthusiasts to visit our railway.

As we close 2011, and look forward to 2012, I would just like to add my personal thanks to Roger Temple. Having now completed his Signalman's training course, and actually passing the exam, I look forward to being 'passed out' for Wittersham Road signalbox; Although it involves a lot of work, the course is really enjoyable and can be thoroughly recommended to anyone who is contemplating becoming a Signalman.

### Northiam

Three years have gone by since I started as Station Agent at Northiam. It had suffered a few years of neglect since the demise of the many husband and wife teams who had formed the Friends of Northiam. How well and with great affection we remember Laurie Reed, always with a roll up in his mouth and the Wilcox, the matriarch and patriarch of the station. Not forgetting Jim Durrant and his wife. Jim was the previous station agent and is to be thanked for his many years of service to Northiam. Things have, of course, progressed and I am sure they would all be proud of the many improvements that have been made to the station.

After a clear up, the station has had a new coat of paint on the south side and in the Booking Hall. The Tea Rooms were put in order and opened up again, the chimney swept and the

fire re-commissioned in the booking hall, a joy to staff and passengers alike in the cold weather. The gardens and grounds were being looked after by Paul and Brenda Tanton-Brown and an excellent job they were making of it. They have now hung up their spades, so if anybody would like to take over please let Peter Walker know.

I must mention the piece of land to the south side of the station which was occupied by a scaffolding company when I joined. Not long after, the company left leaving an awful mess. We decided, with the help of Tuesday Group to tidy up as much as we could, then after many months it was sold to the present owner who is a car dealer. He has done a super job of tidying up the area and erecting the building which is a copy of the railway cottages already at the station. The old derelict portacabin has gone, This is a great improvement to our passengers and staff as it badly obstructed their line of sight along the A28 when exiting the station.

For the future, with Robertsbridge looming and the station having two platforms, we are looking to providing a footbridge. We are also talking about a carriage in the car park adjoining Platform 1 to provide an educational facility for the railway.

I will finish by thanking Tuesday Group for their continuing help, Paul and Brenda Tanton-Brown for their help in the garden and now as station staff, Valerie Lucas for her major input to the improvements of the Tea Rooms and all the station staff who continue to support Northiam.

### Bodiam

Following the visit to Tenterden for November 11th, the Cavell Van was returned to Bodiam where it will be on display from the start of operations in 2012. It was decided to locate the van in the Bodiam siding but against the buffers. The relative positions of the Cavell Van and the Bodiam Team's PMV (paint shop) were therefore interchanged. This caused a problem in that the power supply mounted on the platform wall in the siding could not be connected to the PMV or the van and the bespoke access steps, made for the original position, no longer fitted.

We therefore had to call on the masterly electrical engineering skills of Ron Sparrow assisted by his rather less skilled apprentice, John Harding. First, it was necessary to provide a permanent extension from the original power supply to a fixed outlet near the new location of the PMV. Next we installed a new cable from



*The Cavell Van, normally kept at Bodiam, seen here on the Remembrance Day train at Tenterden Town, 11th November 2011 (Brian Stephenson)*



the PMV distribution box to the fixed outlet allowing sufficient cable so that the PMV could be parked at the buffers on occasions when the Cavell Van was being exhibited elsewhere. As previously, the van's power supply is obtained from the PMV.

We now have safely installed power, lighting and heating to both vehicles ready for the 2012 season, with flexibility as to the location of the vehicles in the siding.

As regards access to the Cavell Van the original steps have now been adapted to fit the new location by the original makers, Messrs. Attree, Griggs and Christie of Eastbourne. Ultimately it is the intention to provide full disabled persons access to the Cavell Van but the funds are not currently available.

With the winter somewhat warmer than usual the bees have been seen flying around the hives during certain days in January, which is probably quite rare. Primroses have been flowering and daffodils beginning to show. Chris Crouch has continued his correspondence with our professional Hop advisor as a result of which tons more farm manure has been delivered to the station in his faithful Morris Minor Traveller with a high potash top dressing to be also applied. More trees, grown from seedlings at home, have been planted down the edge and bottom of the car park field. John Hicks has continued to service the level crossing oil lamps and to restore platform seats which, being out in all weathers and not always treated with the respect they deserve, require continuous upkeep. John Liddell has stripped down two station platform lamps and has repainted them prior to their re-erection in time for the new season.

The late John Miller had been concerned about the lack of shelter on the platform for our waiting passengers and had prepared proposals for a new waiting shelter just beyond the hedge. It was to mimic station architecture with wrinkly tin sides and a traditional canopy. However, the heritage lobby was not keen. This decision was subsequently supported by the managers group, so proposals were put forward for a new waiting room at the back of the yard.

This was to be a proper enclosed building of traditional appearance with wood weatherboarded walls and a wrinkly tin roof. Block built retaining walls to three sides would be required as the building was to be set back into the bank as had been done for the adjacent station toilet block. Thanks are due to

Humphrey Atkinson, of the Tuesday Group, who designed the building and Paul Vidler who guided the project through the planning stage. Financial support for the project was obtained from the 300 Club, the Peter Kynvin Memorial Fund and a top up from the Railway to whom, collectively, we are extremely grateful.

However, before the project could get underway on the ground 'enabling works' had to be carried out by hand to locate the sewers, drains, electric cables and ducts that were known to be in the area. As a result of this we had to construct a new manhole, divert an incoming electric cable and adjust our proposals accordingly. Pam and Sheila Stevens relocated a hawthorn tree, that was within the area to be excavated, to a new prime position further down the yard.

In early October Matt Stubbs, using a mini digger and small dumper, excavated the site and deposited most of the excavated spoil elsewhere on site. A number of interesting objects were found ranging from a locomotive boiler water glass, which unfortunately subsequently broke, wooden ground anchors and cables for telegraph poles and hop poles, a locomotive fire bar together with various bottles and beer bottles.

The excavation revealed an ironstone layer in the clay on which we then laid the base material and then the concrete slab. Luckily, volunteer Gordon Lilley was available to lay the block walls and by the end of December the building was beginning to take shape. After delays, caused by the wet and then the cold weather, the block walls were completed early in February with the wall plates, on which the timber upper walls and roof would be erected, in place. A land drain has been incorporated around the bottom of the retaining walls to prevent them being pressurised by ground water.

At the time of writing this article we have started erecting the upper walls and hopefully the roof can go on with minimal delay. In the meantime John Liddell has almost completed the double front doors and the front windows have been sourced so that the building can be made weatherproof. An electric cable will be run in from our new manhole to provide lighting and heating together with a cable from the platform announcement system as we don't want our passengers to miss their train! To keep waiting visitors occupied and entertained the internal walls will be used to exhibit some of our



*The ultimate railcar at Froissy on the Cappy-Dompierre railway as seen by the Ashford Area Group (Alan Crotty)*

hopping memorabilia and artefacts, heritage seats, which are in stock, will complete the room. The project to provide the new Bodiam waiting room is being undertaken entirely by volunteers so if you feel that you have something to add to this dynamic group please contact us via the Tenterden office.

### **Museum**

Like many departments, winter always seems to find us somehow busier than when we are open in the season. First, we welcome Peter Southgate who has taken on the task of Assistant Curator. As nobody has yet come forward as the Curator, the usual team very much welcome Peter's commitment to the massive tasks facing the Museum.

The bid for museum accreditation is, if not forcing change, requiring a searching examination of systems and the writing down of those things we have been doing happily for years. Government claims the new procedure is 'simplification' but one wonders whether pre-qualification, then registration and logging-on

to access an online application of 29 pages (plus 15 enclosures) justifies such a definition. Nevertheless we passed pre-qualification and are now officially 'working towards Accreditation'.

This endorsed the reorganisation of the Museum and, when we have time and resources, we can now apply for government grants.

Paperwork will hopefully give way to the social world of volunteers for the spring 'get together' in the station buffet in early March. It will be nice to chat about progress in the Museum and plans for the future.

Rumours have proved true and *Gazelle* is now in green, 'Ashford' Southern green with black and white lining and mid brown frames, in preparation for her short visit to RAILFEST at the National Railway Museum, York, in June. Further she has a new chimney, a replica of her 1937 pattern to go with her restored livery, crafted in his usual masterly fashion by Ron Nuttman. The old chimney, which was a wartime cast iron bodge-up with a turned



wooden top added in her Longmoor parade ground days, is relegated to store. *Gazelle* now looks rather more like the demure little lady she really is, rather than a brash blue and scarlet lady with an odd hat.

Come and see *Gazelle* or even better volunteer to be her carer at York when she will be showing off with her big sisters. *Gazelle* will be accompanied by one of our pump trolleys. We have been invited to have a free show stand, to be set up with *Gazelle* in the main exhibition hall, so it is a first rate publicity opportunity. Free entry (the Museum itself will be free to all but not the special exhibits) and Luncheon Vouchers for use in the refreshment room are promised for volunteers. We need at least two attendants each day and already have some offers. With more, and I hope you would all like to help, there will be plenty of time to wander round what promises to be a great, once-a-decade show. Just fill in the form accompanying this magazine if you can help.

On the museum exhibits front the National Railway Museum agreed to extend the loans of *Gazelle* and the six nameplates we have of theirs and lend one or two other items. We also have the promise of the donation of some WC&P carriage items from the London Transport museum which were due to arrive in February. This is a great vote of confidence in us by the two most important national transport museums

and a great tribute to all the work John Miller and his team have put in over the years. We have also been the grateful recipients of a nameplate from *Arthur*, an early preservation era loco, and its number plates. Also acquired, at auction, is a very rare North Devon & Cornwall Junction Railway share certificate signed by Stephens.

During the winter the usual suspects have been tidying up and rearranging exhibits. In particular John Doody has redecorated the lobby and Matt Stubbs has produced a new cabinet for Colonel Stephens' cherished collection of free passes covering a wide range of pre-1923 railways in Britain and Ireland. These have never been displayed before. Come and see something special; a display that can be matched only by the NRM.

Amazingly, the new season looms and the museum, and its associated Cavell Van, re-open for the season on 24th March. We have been doing a lot of work on the exhibits in the museum so repay the efforts of volunteers by paying us a visit, or better still join our team.

#### Ashford Area Group

Last year was a good one for the group. We had a very varied and interesting programme. Attendance at individual meetings has always been difficult to predict. In 2011 we had a

*One of the famous Prussian  
designed P8 class 4-6-0's No. 64.169  
due to be seen by the Ashford Area  
Group (Keith Mapley)*



period when income from the meetings fell but no common cause was evident, save that of time and transport difficulties. After the summer break attendance improved considerably and we ended the year well satisfied with the overall income from indoor meetings. Thank you to our speakers and visitors.

Thanks go to Andy Wood who after six years of outstanding work has had to give up arranging our programme. Andy remains on the committee and Keith Mapley and I will jointly coordinate the programme for the time being.

In June we visited the fortieth anniversary of the P'tit train de la Haute Somme in France. We were not disappointed and the highlight for the frequent steam hauled services through the tunnel and up and down the zigzag. This year Adrian Shooter's Darjeeling Himalayan Railway B Class of 1889 made this thrill extra special. The light railway operating procedures employed allowed for a very intense passenger, freight and private railcar service. Varied motive power, including a vertical boiler loco recently built in Lancashire after De Winton, gave shunting demonstrations. Nice scenery too. A very well presented museum kept many engaged for hours. Please reserve 30th September for a possible return to this wonderful railway. To show that we will never forget the origin of this railway, Battlefield Guide Steve Smith led us to the Thiepval Memorial where Reg Laker conducted a wreath laying ceremony on behalf of the Ashford British Legion and ourselves.

Our funding of the SECR coach 3062 is now at an end. We were privileged to witness the K&ESR Chaplain, Rev. John Emmott, bless this coach prior to it re-entering service on Armistice Day. Our next project is forward looking, details when confirmed.

This year's programme started with Alan Crotty's Suitably Spiced New Year Miscellany which attracted the large audience it deserved. By the time you read this we will have shared in Brian Stephenson's Fifty plus Years of Railway Photography. Then we continue with:

21st March Railways of India and Pakistan by Donald Wilson.

18th April Sparks – The Southern Electric System by Rob Poole.

Sunday 6th May Maldegem Steam Festival, Belgium day trip by coach.

16th May Out and About with My Video Camera by Andy Main.

20th June Steam in Eastern Germany in the early 1980's by Geoff Dunster.

Sunday 15th July – An invitation from the Railway Correspondence & Travel Society to join their coach trip to the Mid Norfolk Railway.

Indoor meetings are on the Wednesday stated at 7.30pm in The Staff Rail Club. Beaver Road, Ashford, Kent, TN23 7RR.

This year's first outing is to the Maldegem Steam Festival in Belgium on Sunday 6th May. We appreciate the clash with the K&ESR Gala, preventing many from attending, but this is the only intense running weekend they have. Four visiting locos include the massive P8 Class 4-6-0 64.169 on a mainline special to Brussels. Four locos in the working home fleet include the newly restored Saint Leonard 947 of 1893. There is much to see and experience.

Continuous runs up and down the preserved line to Eeklo of passenger and freight trains with changes of motive power take place. Railway operation enthusiasts will enjoy the manoeuvres required to safely overcome the difficulties imposed by the restricted track layout. The narrow gauge line runs along the old track bed in the opposite direction to the mainline connection and frequent services are hauled by a selection of steam locomotives. There are many attractions, museum exhibits and usually an example of Belgium's latest mainline diesel locomotive class. The Maldegem Stoomcentrum people concentrate all their effort on this gala and it shows! Scenic locations include a classic canal bridge. If time permits we may be able to stop at a chocolate shop on the way back. Combine this with Belgian hospitality, informality, freedom to roam and an effortless, hassle free ride on our panoramic luxury coach at an affordable price and you have an irresistible day out for any railway enthusiast and his or her family and friends. The only arranging you have to do is ring or email Keith Mapley on 01303 269138 Email: keith@mapley.fsworld.co.uk to book a place and post a cheque. DO IT NOW, only a few places remain! These trips are now our main fundraisers for projects on the railway. Thank you Keith for the seven such trips you have faultlessly planned over the years for us.

Ted Micklam (Group Chairman) 01233 503999  
Email: edward.micklam@tiscali.co.uk

*Right: Wittersham Road platform lights (Duncan Buchanan)*







# KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB

## PRIZE WINNERS

### September 2011

1st	Tony Mighell	No. 002	£80.00
2nd	Vic Grigg	No. 320	£70.00
3rd	A J Clark	No. 064	£60.00
4th	R S Pannell	No. 566	£40.00
5th	Alan Dawes	No. 010	£35.00
6th	T P Howell	No. 530	£30.00
7th	Dave Felton	No. 312	£25.00
8th	Mr J Bignell	No. 582	£20.00
9th	Keith Howell	No. 536	£15.00
10th	James Veitch	No. 617	£10.00

### November 2011

1st	Mr J M Woodgate	No. 443	£70.00
2nd	Mike Dawes	No. 685	£50.00
3rd	Mr D L Taylor	No. 266	£45.00
4th	Nigel & Kathy Moxon	No. 560	£30.00
5th	Frank Kent	No. 022	£25.00
6th	J R Price	No. 490	£20.00
7th	Mr R G Sparrow	No. 616	£15.00
8th	Maggie Remnant	No. 248	£10.00

### October 2011

1st	Mike Hockley	No. 524	£70.00
2nd	Mrs E Rodgers	No. 461	£50.00
3rd	John Cooper	No. 049	£45.00
4th	Kent Evenden	No. 168	£30.00
5th	L R Davies	No. 403	£25.00
6th	Mr & Mrs J P Fry	No. 645	£20.00
7th	Alan Marshall	No. 632	£15.00
8th	John Clark	No. 037	£10.00

### December 2011

1st	Kenneth Percival	No. 356	£100.00
2nd	B A Rees	No. 142	£100.00
3rd	Ian Cullis	No. 256	£100.00
4th	J W Charman	No. 162	£100.00
5th	S W Sparkes	No. 462	£ 90.00
6th	David King	No. 626	£ 80.00
7th	Alan Marshall	No. 632	£ 70.00
8th	Tony Mighell	No. 002	£ 60.00
9th	Nigal Franklin	No. 061	£ 50.00
10th	Mrs E Rodgers	No. 461	£ 45.00
11th	Carol Read	No. 060	£ 35.00
12th	R J Delves	No. 585	£ 25.00
13th	H K Simons	No. 593	£ 20.00
14th	P J Pass	No. 046	£ 15.00
15th	C Garman	No. 160	£ 10.00

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



Class 14 with P. Way train during November 2011 (Phil Edwards)



# TICKETS PLEASE

*Roger Allin, Chief Booking Clerk, reports on passenger numbers for 2011.*

Passenger numbers during 2011 increased by an impressive 7.1% over the previous year, and as a result the 100,000 barrier was broken for the first time since the extension to Bodiam was opened in 2000.

Table 1 analyses the month-by-month figures, and Table 2 shows the fortunes of the major events over the last 2 years.

Table 1 Monthly passenger figures

	Days	2010 Trains	Passengers	Days	2011 Trains	Passengers
January						
February	8	48	6044	8	52	6563
March	4	28	1293	4	26	1637
April	19	100	7228	20	109	8069
May	22	128	10849	22	117	11804
June	19	111	8338	20	104	8196
July	25	129	12878	23	124	12826
August	31	155	17480	31	158	17512
September	19	107	9884	19	107	9947
October	15	70	5097	15	75	5536
November	1	1	55	1	1	142
December	15	91	10515	15	91	13797
	178	968	89661	178	964	96029
Pullman Trains						
Evening and Charters		30	1699		35	1961
Lunches		22	1447		22	1433
Fish & Chip Suppers		15	736		14	695
Non-Pullman Charters					2	223
Grand Total			93543			100341

Table 2 – Major event results

	2010	2011
February Thomas	4466	4733
Junction Road weekend		921
Kent Big Day/Weekend out	420 (1 day)	716 (2 days)
Gala	1962	2438
1940's weekend	2122	2573
Last Train Commemoration		467
CAMRA Beer Festival	556	507
July Thomas	3300 (2 days)	4352 (3 days)
Hoppers Weekend	1032	1414
September Thomas	3911	3455
Santa Specials	9168	12346

Fortunately, with few weather problems to worry us in 2011, most of the special events did us proud, and many were outstanding:

The 40s weekend was again very successful with passenger numbers up by over 20%. The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight obviously attracted the crowds (helped by being advertised in that morning's Times newspaper as 'one of the best things to do' that weekend). Townsfolk came down to the station area to enjoy the spectacle - although they may not have contributed financially to the railway, they created a wonderful atmosphere and you could feel the excitement mounting as the time for the display approached. Lewis Brockway, the railway photographer, captured some wonderful images to commemorate the event.

The Gala also brought in the crowds and the interest in seeing visiting locomotive *City of Truro* resulted in passengers up by almost 25% over the weekend. And the ever-popular nostalgia of the Hoppers weekend at Bodiam continues to appeal, with numbers up considerably.

For two other events, the July Thomas™ and the Santa Specials, trains were running at near

capacity, such was their popularity. Following its inauguration and huge success in 2010, the July Thomas event was extended to three days in 2011 and continued to please. The Santa Specials bounced back spectacularly from the disappointment of the dreadful weather in 2010.

As usual, I would like to thank the hard-working team of booking clerks at all the three manned offices at Tenterden, Northiam and Bodiam. I'd also like to thank the sales office staff and the General Manager, who willingly assist at the second hatch at Tenterden at busy periods.

The booking clerks at Tenterden are used to the various pronunciations of Bodiam offered when passengers are asking for tickets. It's not a problem and we can diplomatically tell people the correct way of saying it.

We do also get the occasional request for a ticket to Bodmin (in deepest Cornwall) - again we understand that people can't always get these things right. But even I was a bit taken aback when I was recently asked for a ticket to Bodrum (a holiday resort in Turkey, I believe) - now that would be an interesting train journey.

## Kent & East Sussex Railway

### JOB ADVERTISEMENT

## EDITOR OF THE TENTERDEN TERRIER

Nick Pallant has decided to stand down from the post of Editor of the Tenterden Terrier. We are now looking for a member to take on this key volunteer position, with effect from the Summer (July) issue.

The Terrier is published three times annually. The Editor is responsible for obtaining and editing written and photographic contributions, ensuring that the magazine is published on time and within an annual expenditure budget. At present, the Editor is assisted by a team of volunteers including, proof readers and others involved with distribution. The Editor's line manager is the Company Secretary. Copies of the formal job description can be obtained from the Chairman (addresses as below).

The person appointed will be expected to balance the content of the Terrier to reflect the present day railway as well as of its history. Basic word processing skills and home broadband access are a necessity.

Applicants are asked to write (hard copy or email) stating why they consider themselves suitable for the post. They should also include a brief CV. Applications for this position should be made NOT LATER than 18th May 2012 and addressed to:

**Geoff Crouch, Chairman, K&ESR, Tenterden Town Station, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6HE**

If you have any queries please email at [Chair@kesr.org.uk](mailto:Chair@kesr.org.uk)



# The Grand Draw

*Bryan Atkins releases the results of the 4253 prize draw*

I have to admit to having had a slight degree of caution in regard to the staging of this idea. With a VAT increase, high fuel costs and the economy generally in the doldrums, I was sure that we would make only a modest profit, particularly as Christmas was likely to absorb any remaining spending power from consumers everywhere.

How wrong could I be! When the first envelopes with completed tickets and cheques started to arrive, they were stored in a small cash box. This soon became a larger cash box and ended as a large empty fertilizer carton

which, even then, became stuffed to the gunnels with tickets and cheques.

We sold an incredible number of tickets, well in excess of 5,000 in number and took donations as well. As things stand the draw has turned over a figure of around £5,300.

A few supportive letters were received wishing the scheme well and our thanks are due to those who requested more tickets to sell to their friends. Our thanks are particularly due to Mr Blackman of Ashford who amazingly sold tickets to the value of £70! If this had been replicated by every member of the Kent & East Sussex Railway, we would have had enough money for a new 4253 boiler.

*And now to the winners and results in reverse order:*

**12th, 11th, 10th and 9th prizes** of 1 bottle of English Wine to each winner – Bob Underdown, Charlotte Howard, Isabelle and Mrs Laws ( phone numbers supplied)

**8th prize**, 1 bottle of vintage port – Mr P. Ryan ( phone number supplied)

**7th prize**, 1 bottle of Martell Cognac – Sarah ( phone number supplied)

**6th prize**, 1 bottle of Prince William Royal Wedding Champagne – Lynn ( phone number supplied)

**5th prize**, A digital radio – Mr P. Harmer ( phone number supplied)

**4th prize**, A limited edition painting of 4253 at Cranbrook Road – Mr P. Griffin London (no relation to the artist)

**3rd prize**, A weekend for 2 in a holiday apartment overlooking the K&ESR – Mr & Mrs Robinson (Wealden Pullman)

**2nd prize**, An evening meal for two on the ‘Wealden Pullman’ – Mr J. Hunt, Sittingbourne

**1st prize**, A drive a steam train experience day – Mr P. Haskell, Chatham (4253 shareholder !!)

Congratulations to all winners and our thanks to all who bought and sold tickets to make this draw a stunning success.

## A Reminder to Members regarding Free Travel Benefits

Members are entitled to a number of free journeys, depending on their type of membership. Please be aware that these journeys can only be taken by the member and cannot be transferred to friends or relatives.

The booking clerk needs to endorse the back of the membership card, so please present the card at the booking office. If all the free allocation has been taken, then members are entitled to travel at the concessionary rate (currently £7.50).

## OBITUARIES

### Monty Baker

It is with great sadness that we have to announce the death of Monty Baker on 6th January 2012 after a short illness. He was 92. Monty was one of the last surviving staff members of the old Kent & East Sussex Railway, which he joined in 1934. He kept a close interest in the affairs of the railway and in the Colonel Stephens Society and his reminiscences have been published on several occasions in *The Colonel* as well as the *Terrier*.

Anthony Baker (known as both Tony and Monty to his friends) was born on 5th August 1919. He was brought up in Tenterden and attended the school which was then in Church Road and is now occupied by the Tenterden Day Centre. His father died when he was quite young but his Grandfather was manager of a men's outfitters shop in Tenterden, which Colonel Stephens patronised from time to time. Stephens spoke to young Monty whilst he was in the shop and promised him a job if he should need one when he left school. By 1933 Stephens had died, but Monty duly approached W. Austen, reminding him of Stephens' promise and as a result he started work at Tenterden station as a general factotum to the Stationmaster George Dobell. After six months Austen sent him to Easry on the East Kent Railway as station agent, which he found particularly boring due to the lack of activity, and in 1934 he returned to the Kent & East Sussex at Rolvenden, where he was put under Charlie Turner, the fitter in charge. He then had a wide range of jobs including driving the railcars and firing on the locomotives. He

accompanied driver Nelson Wood, when locomotive No.2 *Northiam* was loaned to Gainsborough Pictures for use on the Basingstoke & Alton Light Railway in connection with the making of the film *Oh Mr Porter!*, starring Will Hay, Moore Marriott and Graham Moffatt. In 1940 he returned to the East Kent as a driver for a short period and then left railway service to join the armed forces, where he served overseas.

On demobilisation in 1945 he went to the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway as a driver and, many years later, recalled driving a train with Laurel and Hardy on board, when they visited the line in 1947. However, the pay was poor and Monty decided to leave railway service in 1949. He went into estate management for a time and in 1962 entered the licensed trade by taking a tenancy of the Maids Head in Thorpe-Le-Soken in Essex for 10 years, before buying his own pub, the White Hart at Wix, a few miles away. He finally retired in 1979.

He and his wife Esme, moved to Frinton and enjoyed many years of retirement, taking a close interest in railway affairs generally, giving interviews to the press and visiting Tenterden from time to time. Our condolences go to Esme in her sad loss.

PDS

We also report with regret the passing of **Laurie Read** (whose well remembered contribution to *Northiam* is referred to in *Lineside News*), former TREATS Volunteer **Terry Gibbons** and long standing member and K&ESR supporter **Derek Chalk**.

### Letter to the Editor

Sir - I write briefly to say that the *Terrier's* contents are invariably a thought-provoking read, but those of the current issue especially so. The understandable prominence you give to the legacy issue is, sadly, indicative of the situation in which many preserved railways currently find themselves. Also the divergence of views on the K&ESR's future is graphically illustrated in microcosm by on the one hand, the General Manager's wish list including four automated level crossings, and on the other, the observation in Doug Lindsay's article that "modern automatic lifting barriers have no place on our traditional rural railway". I seem to have unwittingly nailed my colours to the

GM's masthead when I wrote to Ian Legg following his excellent Developing the Railway article in the Spring *Terrier* to urge automatic barriers at Rolvenden on safety grounds. Ian's courteous reply noted that I was the only person to write to him following his article, so I hope that the two above-mentioned articles provoke some discussion! I wonder if in say 20 years time, the only things left outside the museum that the redoubtable Holman F Stephens would have recognised will be the Terriers, a couple of stations, the (superb) vintage carriage stock and a bridge or two. My very best wishes.

Guildford

D. Morgan



# GRICER'S MARK I MUSINGS

Basking in the glow of an excellent year for the K&ESR, a sudden flash of the realities of life brought Gricer back to earth with a bump. Could the Railway, he mused, ever be *too* successful? Is there a risk that it might become too big? Which, in turn, raises a further question: will the railway ever reach a state of perfection – that is, being just how we want it?

Not that there's anything wrong with ambition or striving to be better; arguably, if we do not continue to offer an innovative product, many of our visitors will go elsewhere. But Gricer cannot help wondering whether we should, in the medium term, consider being more content with what we have. It is no great secret that on occasion, during 2011, volunteer resources were stretched to the limit – resulting in last minute pleas of, "Please, consider doing just one more turn."

In our striving to be better and, it seems, bigger, this is a situation that can only get worse – placing an even greater burden on our volunteer resources. And that's when a hobby becomes a chore, because at the best of times it can be hard work - albeit hard work in a pleasant kind of way. Thus, Gricer knows of departments where volunteers are 'easing up' – making themselves available for fewer turns. The obvious answer to this is to recruit more volunteers. But we all know that, for whatever reason, the status quo in that respect is unlikely to change significantly.

The short-term fix, it seems, is more paid staff. And no, this isn't a pop against paid staff, because the simple fact is no paid staff, no Railway. But as our overheads increase, then we strive to cover them by being bigger and better; and as we strive to be bigger, that costs more – not just in wages, but in capital expenditure and infrastructure maintenance. Bigger, better and more things to do will, we hope, attract more visitors. But if it's costing us more to attract them than they spend, then we suddenly find ourselves on thin ice. It is, Gricer muses, a variant take on the economic concept of over-trading: that is, trading beyond the requirements of the market.

To put it another way, there are perfectly successful heritage railways that are smaller than us. Should we, therefore, focus more on consolidation than growth? Gricer acknowledges that there is a myriad of

considerations; no quick fix; and no perfectly right answer. It's a highly complex juggling act where a crystal ball would be mighty helpful too. Gricer is glad he isn't the juggler.

## Something for Nothing.

In view of the forgoing, Gricer considers it apt to make some observations about the flyer that was sent to all members in the home counties last autumn advertising volunteer management vacancies. There were seven all told, and upon reading it Gricer's initial thoughts were that we're asking an awful lot.

"Key responsibilities;" "budget responsibilities;" "person specifications;" reporting lines... It's a big ask for a volunteer. Gricer considers that for many of us who are still working, these are just the things we come to the railway to avoid; similarly for those who are retired and have had a lifetime of it. How fortunate the Kent & East Sussex is in that it has so many volunteers who are already doing just these things – our Board included.

Gricer understands that some of the aforementioned may reflect both the realities of running a successful commercial enterprise and legislative requirements. Usually, we seem to get by on the, "somebody will do it," principle; but on this occasion, Gricer finds it rather telling that several months after the flyer was issued, these vacancies were still unfilled. Maybe we have reached the limit. Perhaps we should ask ourselves: are we expecting too much?

## Just a Minute...

Gricer always reads the minutes of board meetings with interest, those relating to areas in which he volunteers always attracting particular attention.

Therefore, he could not fail to notice that during last summer the shop's performance was described as "disappointing." (In fairness, it was immediately pointed out that takings were nevertheless close to budget.) It reminded Gricer of one of his favourite observations on life: that there appears to be no such thing as a business where trade is good. "Okay, I suppose;" "dreadful," and all its adjectival variants; "could be better;" maybe even a strangled "not too bad." But never, ever, is business good. If you're self-employed, this may

strike a chord. As for Gricer, well, things are so-so, kind of you to ask. (*mea culpa*.)

Having said that, let's hear it for plain, honest speaking. Because that is exactly what we do on the Kent & East Sussex. You need only read *Lineside News* in this magazine to get an accurate appraisal of the state of affairs. Be it shop, catering, Pullman or visitor numbers... if takings are down we say so. Similarly, if they are good. In short, there appear to be no secrets. Long may it continue.

### Challenging Times.

In writing the following, Gricer wishes to acknowledge two points. Firstly, he declares an interest in that he is a shop volunteer. Secondly, he considers that being on the railway's board is not infrequently a thankless task. This latter point is something that is easily rectified. Thus, lady and gentlemen: thank-you.

That said, it is common knowledge that the board and management spend a considerable amount of time on the matter of budgets – both in setting them and monitoring them throughout the year. And that, Gricer observes, is only right if the railway is to be run responsibly. Arguably, budgets work well in some areas, less so in those where we have no control over income. It is also worth remembering that at its most basic, a budget is an estimate, and only that, of income and expenditure. And that in setting them, there must be a very fine dividing line between optimism and realism. (Yet another crystal ball required.)

There has indeed been talk of “challenging” budgets – although Gricer hasn't the first notion what that might mean. Call them what you will: challenging, difficult; easy-peasy; a walk in the park. It matters not because, in the cold light of

day, be you optimist or realist, if visitors are not spending money (either because they do not have it or do not wish to), then a budget – of this sort, at least – is as worthless as the piece of paper on which it is written.

Yes, in the shop we've tried locking customers in until they've spent a fiver; the staff-activated trap door in the floor through which customers are despatched should they fail to buy anything has been an enormous success (just joking, just joking...) But if people do not have the money to spend, then no amount of budgeting – difficult, easy-peasy or otherwise – is going to alter that. And in the shop, that applies whether we stock what some perceive to be “tat,” or quality merchandise – another issue altogether.

### Memories.

How many superlatives are there left to write about 2011? Not many, Gricer fancies. It was a tremendous year for the railway. A doubling in size of the Carriage & Wagon shed; a top-notch gala; 50th anniversary of the preservation society; running to Junction Road; Battle of Britain display; best passenger numbers in many years; and a bumper Santa season. (But let us also not forget that among the hubris of this success, the railway has lost some good friends.) All told, then, a most memorable year.

But how memorable? Gricer wonders: some time in the future, when a time line of significant events in the preservation society's history is drawn up, just what might be included? Its formation; the re-opening of the line; the respective extensions to Wittersham Road, Northiam and Bodiam, presumably. And then Gricer thinks of all the other events in the past (and these are just some of those he has witnessed): the Steam & Country Fairs; the first out-shopping of Norwegian; the Terrier galas; the long-awaited visit of the O1... All were momentous occasions, and there are doubtless many more. Yet, though they may have seemed remarkable – impossible, even, at the time (just ask those who were there), they now seem almost workaday in comparison with some of our more recent achievements.

So, superb though 2011 undeniably was, how will we look back on it in the future? Will it still be considered one of the preservation society's most memorable years ever? Or will it simply have disappeared in the sands of time – a faint, distant and insignificant memory subsumed by more and even better things still dreamed of, and yet to come?

## 2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Please note that the AGM this year will again be held in **at a venue in Tenterden** (details to be announced) during the **afternoon of Saturday 13th October**.

Nominations for election to the Board will close at 2.00 pm on 21st July 2012. The necessary nomination forms can be obtained from the Company Secretary.

This item is for information; a formal Notice will be issued in due course.



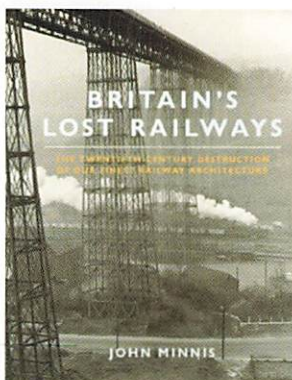
*Britain's Lost Railways*, by John Minnis, published by Aurum Press, price £25. ISBN 978 1 84513 450 1

Rarely do 'coffee table' style railway books appeal. Too often they are bought as unwanted presents by well-meaning relatives with little appreciation of the depth of the recipient's interest. They soon pass to the charity shop or the recycler. Sometimes however the format can deceive and a gem can fall into the reviewer's hands. This one definitely falls into this category.

Although indeed its title and appearance have the superficial character of the aforesaid books, its subtitle 'The Twentieth-Century Destruction of our Finest Railway Architecture' gets nearer its real purpose, for in the author's narrative it is 'a memorial to what we have lost'. The first 30 pages are a reasoned essay on the reasons 'why' (redundancy combined with a fistful of neglect) and the following 158 are pictures with intelligent and informative captions of the often heart-rending losses. The author is a senior architectural advisor with English Heritage but he never lapses into bureaucratic or architectural jargon.

There is so much truth in what he says by way of introduction to his section on Light Railway Buildings: 'Facilities for passengers on light railways were a very mixed bag indeed. At best one might find a substantial prefabricated building such as those employed on the Derwent Valley Light Railway, or less welcoming, the corrugated iron buildings favoured by Colonel Holman F Stephens..... At worst it was... an old carriage body...an old bus body, or nothing at all. Whether these offered less discomfort than the bus shelters that have sufficed for far too many stations [today]... is debatable.'

I suspect this is why the author cannot really bring himself to understand why authority did tear down so many buildings that with a bit of care might have served well. A picture on



Page 146 that opens the goods building section shows a magnificent 1846 railway hop warehouse at nearby Staplehurst station. Its custodians tore it down because the thriving feed business tenant asked for repairs to the leaking roof. He was evicted and ceased trading; the area has therefore for many years been a muddy wasteland carpark that earns no income because the railway does not have the necessary charging powers. Not that the passenger station fared better; they tore down an admittedly horrible concrete building (a temporary replacement for a traditional wooden building destroyed by a crashed Hurricane fighter in 1940) and built a smaller station building to serve the ¾ million people using the station yearly. Such is railway architecture in the 21st century.

This is a really thoughtful, excellently illustrated book that deserves its place on any bookshelf.

BMJ

*Locomotives of the K&ESR, DVD, Online Video, 72 minutes, £12.95 from Tenterden Station Shop.*

What it says on the label is only half the story for it is also much more, it is almost a history of the early preservation era. Much of the fun too in watching this video is to spot the familiar faces of those that are still around, albeit much more wrinkled and grey. And how young virtually all the volunteers were – Oh, but were this the case today!

The material narrated by our own Martin Easdown starts with some historical stills and film from the Museum and other sources that give a brief summary of most of the locos of the pre-preservation era. This includes some fascinating material of shooting the "Oh Mr Porter" crash in 1937, *Juno* and mainline trains at Headcorn Junction, the railmotors working and much else besides. However the meat is the early preservation times.

The grainy black and white of early arrivals such as *Dom* and *Gervase* (when are we to see her again?) start the procession and despite some of the poor quality (about which we are warned) this is great trip down memory lane. It is great to see all our familiars arriving by rail and road; particularly the USAs after their Tonbridge 'rescue'. Here too also can be found the many nearly forgotten locos. Who remembers *Arthur*, *Hastings*, *The King*, the

austerities *Errol Lonsdale* and *Linda*, the 'Ugly', let alone the Hunslet 0-6-0 and the Fowler 0-4-0 diesels? And to see some of these ploughing through the grass and, in one almost unbelievable sequence, willow trees shows how much has been achieved by the P/W and clearance crews, starting with the notorious Wickham and lawnmowers and the infamous Morris car on rail wheels. And if you want to really grieve over lost locos, just see U class 1618 and H 563, in steam too!

Never mind, the material brings us right up to

date with the many interesting visitors culminating in 2011's City of Truro. Not forgetting the Junction Road specials.

As already said the quality is necessarily variable and production is to the usual Online Video standards. My only real criticism is the actual 'sleeve' notes, and some of the commentary, whose accuracy leaves much to be desired. Just ignore them and enjoy the visual content. Definitely one for the collection.

BMJ

# Gala Weekend

**The K&ESR gala weekend will take place over the early May Bank holiday weekend (5-7th May 2012).**

As well as the two visiting locomotives there are a range of other activities planned around the Railway, including Permanent Way demonstrations at Wittersham Road, Pump Trolley rides at Northiam and a Beer Tent at Bodiam.

This is our opportunity to showcase all that is good about the Railway and the Gala committee, this year drawn from volunteers across the railway, have worked hard to put together an interesting programme of activities for the weekend. This would be an ideal opportunity for non-volunteer members to become involved in helping the Railway as a number of non-skilled tasks require fulfilling for the weekend, e.g. programme sales, as well as the opportunity to see all the action. We can introduce you to the department of your interest. There is a social event on Sunday evening for all staff involved at the weekend.

Anyone interested in assisting in any way should contact Neil Sime or Liz Reid at Tenterden on 01580-765155.



# FROM TICKERAGE TO TENTERDEN:

## *Richard Wyndham and the K&ESR*

"If you have the time and curiosity, continue your journey from Robertsbridge to Tenterden by rail. Time is needed when there is much shunting to be done, for it may then take you an hour and a quarter to cover the fifteen miles; curiosity because the "Kent and East Sussex" is one of the last remaining privately owned railway companies in England."

So travellers were advised by Captain Richard Wyndham in his book *South East Survey*, published in March 1940. Subtitled, "A last look round" – the introduction is dated 23 August 1939 and Wyndham was about to join his Territorial Army regiment - it appeared in Batsford's series on "The Face of Britain", and had for its dust jacket a painting of a High Weald landscape in the characteristic Batsford style of the period, now much sought after by collectors.

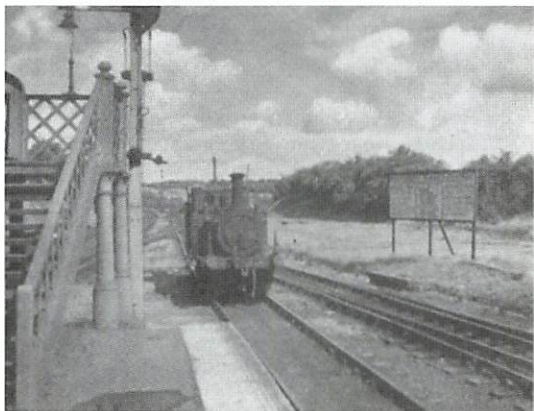
Guy Richard Charles Wyndham (Dick to his friends) was born in 1896. His father, Colonel Guy Wyndham (1865-1941), was a career Army officer who had served with distinction in the 16th Hussars during the South African War and was British military attaché in St Petersburg from 1907 to 1913. On leaving Wellington College, Richard Wyndham became a lieutenant in the King's Royal Rifle Corps, being awarded the Military Cross in 1917. He survived the Great War, unlike so many of his contemporaries, but his experiences at Ypres left him with recurrent nightmares and no doubt contributed to his heavy drinking and erratic private life, more details of which appear in his daughter Joan's frank memoir, *Dawn Chorus*, published in 2004.

Shortly after the war, Richard Wyndham went to Dublin as an aide-de-camp to Field-Marshal Sir John French, who had been appointed Viceroy of Ireland, and here he married Iris Bennett, whose mother seems to have been Sir John's long-standing mistress. He also took up painting under the influence of Wyndham Lewis and Edward Wadsworth, and was soon exhibiting in London and at the Venice Biennale of 1926. As one observer commented, "his works gave some pleasure and his company more". Sometimes labelled a "champagne bohemian", he became a familiar figure in the fashionable artistic and literary circles of the

1920s and 1930s, touring Europe with the Sitwells and being satirised as "Dick Whittingdon" in Wyndham Lewis's novel of 1930, *The Apes of God*.

Although he had inherited Clouds, a 40-bedroom Victorian mansion in Wiltshire, built for his grandfather by Philip Webb, the architect of Red House, Dick Wyndham did not want to assume the role of a country landowner – or the responsibilities that went with it. He sold the collections of paintings and furniture and eventually the house itself. He had already bought Tickerage Mill, at Blackboys, near Uckfield, a country estate centred around an old watermill with more than a hundred acres of gardens, woods and meadows, which in the 1960s became the country home of the film star Vivien Leigh. At Tickerage, Wyndham hosted house parties which were famous for the quantity and quality of the food and drink provided for his guests who included Cyril Connolly, Tom Driberg, Constant Lambert and Evelyn Waugh. From Tickerage, too, he was able to explore the surrounding countryside, finding subjects for landscape painting among its streams and woods.

Evidently, he explored the Kent & East Sussex Railway and its rolling stock too, writing that "the little black dirty engine was once the pride of the L.B. & S.C. Railway. Then it had wooden brakes and was painted gamboge. In the interim it saw war service in France." The



*Terrier at Robertsbridge during Wyndham's visit (via Tom Burnham)*

locomotive illustrated in Wyndham's photographs of the K&ESR is a "Terrier", probably Southern Railway No. 2655, which was on hire to the K&ESR in 1939. Probably Wyndham combined information he was given about the "Terrier" and about SE&CR P class No. 1556, which did serve overseas during the war and was painted black at that time; Ronald Jessup in the introduction to his 1951 revision of the book notes that Wyndham had been unable to check certain anecdotes because of the outbreak of war.

Wyndham's description continues: "The guard is at the same time porter, shunter, ticket-salesman, ticket-collector, and pointsman as well. At the only two level-crossings which are protected from motor traffic, the fireman gets down to open and shut the gates; at the others, the war veteran slows down from twenty-five to two miles an hour, and the whistle lets out an old man's throaty croak.

"Unlike the Roman roads which preferred the hilltops, this track clings to the river Rother, which is here the boundary between Sussex and Kent. There is only one perceptible slope – beyond Rolvenden – and the engine's puffed complaints reminded me of one of my grandfather's railway jokes: "Ithinkican. . . I think I can. . . I – think – I – can. . . I – think – I – can. . . I — think —. . . I – thought – I – could. . . I – thought – I – could. . . I thought I could. . . Ithoughticould. . . Ithoughticouldthoughticouldthoughticould."

Richard Wyndham's grandfather, Percy Scawen Wyndham, when not amusing his grandchildren with impressions of steam engines, was a member of "The Souls", one of the most distinguished literary and political coteries of the 1890s.

Although Wyndham owned a stable of fast cars, including at various times a Hispano-Suiza, a Rolls-Royce and a 6.5-litre Bentley, he was apparently never an enthusiastic driver and enjoyed the view of the countryside afforded by the train. During the winter of 1938-1939 he was attending Territorial Army parades in Brighton, and when the weather was bad he preferred to take the train. He usually caught the 5.14 p.m. from Uckfield, and when this was late, as sometimes happened, the station staff explained the delay by telling him that it was a through train from Chatham. A few months later, while researching for *South Eastern Survey*, he found himself in the Medway Towns late one afternoon. On the spur of the moment

he decided to return by this same train, leaving his companion to drive his car, and was captivated by the scenery – particularly once the train had passed Maidstone.

Of the K&ESR, he wrote: "The track, as green and beautiful as a chickweedy disused canal, finds its way through hedges of willows which rap and brush the carriage sides, or across Bodiam marshes where herons stand by the line – no longer perturbed. There are few roads through this stretch of country, which remains much the same as when the peasants first complained about the iron monster which had desecrated their land. The view from the carriage windows is that private view common to most railways, but in this case exclusive: I had never seen Bodiam Castle from this angle before.

"Bodiam was my one disappointment; like the Taj Mahal this castle is best seen in its most hackneyed view. When I take my guests sight-seeing, I persuade them to walk blindfolded across the meadows to be astonished by the dramatic grey fortress precisely reflected in the wide moat. This moat, together with barbican, drawbridge and portcullis, and four staunch round towers gives an impression of impregnable strength. But we can search history in vain to find any record of the castle having fired or received a single round shot. There was, originally, a private mansion here, which Sir Edward Dalyngrudge (sic) "crenellated" in 1386, but the crenellations remained ornaments until the Civil War, when the castle was ignobly dismantled by Waller's troops. Bodiam Castle, after passing through many hands – first as a mansion, then a ruin – was finally purchased by the late Lord Curzon and presented to the National Trust.

"Northiam appeared to be an important station: I was joined by a passenger with a perambulator; and some endless shunting was done. The guard-pointsman could give no fixed time of departure, but he would hold the train for me, of course, if I wished to walk up the village for a glass of beer. The village is a complete example of weather-boarded architecture – the cottages, decorated with black window-frames and broad black bands on white – presenting an entertaining magpie effect. Near the church are propped the remains of a senile oak; it will never be allowed to fall down, for Queen Elizabeth picnicked under its shade when on her way from Hemstead to Rye. The fare was cooked in the timbered house which still stands across the road; and a heavy meal it





*Above Cranbrook Road.  
This view is now obscured.  
Note Tenderden Brewery  
building on the horizon  
(via Tom Burnham)*

must have been, accompanied by some fine bottles of wine, for the Queen had to remove her high-heeled shoes (oh, blessed relief!) – and quite forgot to put them on again. They are still preserved at Northiam, in the half-timbered manor, Brickwall: green silk shoes with heels nearly three inches high. Brickwall, once the seat of the Frewen family, is now a school. Its zebra-striped front can be seen from the road – absolutely genuine and absolutely hideous.

“The little train pulled into Tenterden with pride and relief; I walked up a lane behind the church into a grass-bordered street so wide that it is almost a village green. When I looked back at the old-fashioned station with its ornamental gas lanterns, it seemed already older than the houses in the town. In fact, there are not more than half a dozen buildings in this most agreeable street later than the eighteenth century, and only one that has actually been seduced by the functional cinema palace. It belongs to the Wealden Electricity Company and, standing next door to the cinema, its temptation was, I suppose, too strong.”

Richard Wyndham does not describe the K&ESR from Tenterden on to Headcorn. Perhaps he found the scenery somewhat of an anti-climax after the winding river valley, the Rother levels and the climb towards St Mildred's church on its hill. Certainly, in what was necessarily a very selective book covering three counties, the Biddenden Maids offered less scope for historical anecdotes than Bodiam castle, an Elizabethan progress or even Tenterden church tower.

Looking back from the twenty-first century, it is interesting that to an observer who was an artist rather than an antiquarian, the K&ESR had

already acquired an air of romance and period charm less than forty years after its construction. The “peasants” had hardly regarded the K&ESR as an “iron monster” in 1900; rather some of them were sceptical of the light railway and felt that it would prevent

them ever enjoying the benefits of a “proper” railway. Although he had some sympathy with Modernism in art, Richard Wyndham was certainly no lover of most modern building: he apologised for his home town of Uckfield, deplored Heathfield's Victorian High Street and positively loathed the post-war collections of bungalows, shacks and old bus bodies on the Sussex Downs. And yet he felt that Tenterden Town station was of a piece with the predominantly eighteenth century houses in its High Street.

Wyndham served in the Second World War as a Major in the Territorial Army, commanding a Royal Artillery searchlight battery, and continuing to offer hospitality at Tickerage as far as circumstances allowed, until he resigned for reasons of ill health in 1942. After the war, he became a Middle East correspondent for the Kemsley group of newspapers, particularly the *Sunday Times*. Although he had published a book about his travels in the Egyptian Sudan in the 1930s, politics was a new departure for him, although he was said to have been “a personal friend of many of the sheikhs and tribal rulers of Arabia and Transjordan”. However, journalism may have been the only way he could continue to travel extensively in the post-war austerity world; the allowance of foreign currency that Stafford Cripps considered adequate for a private traveller would hardly have enabled Wyndham to maintain the style to which he was accustomed. While observing Arab troops moving into position on the northern outskirts of Jerusalem on 19 May 1948, Richard Wyndham stood up to take a photograph and was killed by several bullets from the direction of the Jewish positions.

Tom Burnham

# The Kent & East Sussex Railway in 1931

## – RECEIVERSHIP LOOMS

*Charles Judge examines the parlous finances of the K&ESR in one of the most critical moments in its history.*

On 30th September 1931, as Colonel Holman F Stephens lay on his invalid's bed in the Lord Warden Hotel, Dover, a report arrived on the Southern Railway General Manager's desk at Waterloo. Sir Herbert Walker, a long term and close acquaintance of Stephens, was a sharp and farseeing man and on 15th July, prompted by a conversation with the K&ESR Chairman, William Mewburn, and other K&ESR representatives, he had commissioned a full report on the condition and finances of the Kent & East Sussex Light Railway. Why such a full report should have been commissioned is unclear; there is an unspoken possibility that the Southern were considering a takeover but it was more likely to be looking to safeguard both its contributory traffic revenue and the large investment in debentures (£13,512 i.e. 32% of the total) it held. As might be expected from one of the sharpest management teams in the railway world the report proved incisive, albeit from a mainline railways perspective.

Possibly to the K&ESR's disappointment the report made it absolutely clear that there was no advantage to the Southern in a takeover, though such a course might be considered if the property was offered at a very low figure. Costs had to increase as the maintenance deficit was too high and had been for some time. The report estimated annual expenditure should be £11,300 before debenture interest against income of £7,800. Freight (sic) traffic accounted for £5,000 and parcels for £1,100 with passenger traffic bringing in £1,300. All receipts had dropped by a third since 1925 with passenger receipts halving. Through-ticketing facilities were extremely limited with two tickets (one K&ESR, one SR) having to be issued at point of departure, although a limited number of combined cheap day tickets to popular destinations were also issued, the receipts from which were acknowledged to be much to the Southern's advantage. Ticket issue on railmotors from stations west of Bodiam was, in the absence of a guard, undertaken by the Bodiam station agent travelling up and back with the train.

Two-thirds of the deficit was in direct respect of the Headcorn extension and fell to be met by the Southern under guarantees given when the extension was built. However the Southern received a lot of income from traffic via the K&ESR and benefited by some £15,730 in 1930, so the continuance of the line was of direct benefit to them.

Over and above financial matters, the picture painted of the K&ESR is fascinating. The stations, halts and their signalling, operation and staff (who were noted for their flexibility) were described. Of the facilities, only the almost phantom siding at Salehurst was described as disused and buildings were in adequate repair. As well as staff bungalows at Northiam (2), Wittersham, High Halden and Biddenden there was a house at Robertsbridge. Level crossing gates were in evidence at four locations: Northbridge Street, Wittersham, Rolvenden and Tenterden Town, the only one where the gates were normally closed against the roadway.

The track was mainly second-hand rails rolled for the South Eastern railway in 1882-86 in 24 or 30ft lengths, originally weighing 82lbs per yard, but worn down to about 72lbs, set in two hole 'Brady' chairs on 'not very good' half-round sleepers at approximately 3½ft centres. Sidings were mostly laid in original Rother Valley flat bottomed rail. Ash ballast was used but supplies were inadequate. The track was nevertheless considered adequate for existing traffic provided the axle load did not exceed 12 tons.

Interestingly in view of the recent *Terrier* articles (Road Transport of the K&ESR Parts 1 & 2, *Tenterden Terrier* Nos 114 and 116) cartage is described as only being at Tenterden with one van, one bus (both disused) and one 'trolley' with the horse being on free loan from the Chairman. Cartage was supplemented in the hopping season by hiring arranged through the Southern.

Of perhaps greatest interest to many is the description of the locomotives and rolling stock. The proposed solutions to the problems found in this department seem to have triggered the greatest changes that were to result from this report. Austen looks to have been 'over gilding the lily' here for much of the decrepitude



described was not entirely borne out by unfolding events. Ten of the 16 existing coaches were condemned out of hand as unfit for traffic by Southern standards. Of those listed, ex North London Railway 'parcels brake' No 15 had been a static store for some years but it lasted till 1948 as did LSWR 6-wheeler No 4; Nos 6 and 17 lasted until 1944 and three ex GER coaches (Nos 20-22) lasted in occasional use for a few more years. The only really terminal cases were the three bogie conversions of the original RVR coaches which had been disused for nearly 20 years, and they went quickly.

Contrary to most reportage by historians, ex LSWR coaches 2, 9 and 18 were assessed as in good condition and the Southern was to shortly take them in an exchange deal, thus strangely taking away half of the K&ESR's 'acceptable' stock. The remaining coaches were Nos 1 and 19, both 4-wheeled 3rd brakes and the royal saloon No 10. No wonder that, despite the arrival of two bogie coaches, the 'scrap' coaches continued to be used.

Wagons too were largely dismissed. The ten open wagons, four (there should have been five) cattle wagons, three brake vans (the original RVR No 8, the No 9, an ex GER Coach that lasted till 1935, and the ex GWR goods brake (described as a ballast brake) were unfit and two went rapidly, but as it happens the ballast brake lasted until 1944. One cattle wagon (probably No 13 which lasted till 1948) and five of the opens were thought worth repairing though none of these lasted past 1940. The report noted that (most irregularly) no charges were made for using SR and PO wagons for internal traffic, a convenience that permitted the neglect of the small and shrinking internal fleet. Of the two cranes, the ex Midland six-wheeler (built by Tanner Walker and Co, Leeds in 1877) was 'difficult to handle' and despite having only arrived 12 years earlier was dismissed as not worth having. By contrast the original 1900 RVR crane was 'very useful', probably for timber traffic.

Turning to the locomotives, it was recommended that Nos 1, 7, 8 and 9 (more familiarly *Tenterden*, *Rother*, *Hesperus* and *Juno*), 'should be scrapped'. The Terriers, Nos 3 and 5 (*Bodiam* and *Rolvenden*), required re-boiling and heavy overhaul, leaving only the little, No 2 (*Northiam*), and large, No 4 (*Hecate*), apparently available for traffic; but both requiring heavy overhaul. As both Ford sets were thought to be 'scrap' (despite set No 2 running regularly for another 6 years), the Shefflex set was in Southern eyes the only serviceable power

available to the railway; and they recommended against the use of the railmotors. Perhaps they were right in their assessment of the state of the engines but the railway needed two engines in steam a day, plus spares, and the ensuing arrival of the Beattie Saddle tank in July 1932 must have been a considerable relief. This must have assisted the heavy overhaul of both 3 and 8 by 1935. Quite what moved the goods and hopping traffic in late 1931 and early 1932 is a mystery known only to the K&ESR. Fortunately the two railways had different standards and no doubt some of the 'scrap' was actively employed.

Action was suggested to reduce the deficit, in particular improved timetables (with no railmotors) or abandonment of passenger services, leaving two goods trains a day. To solve the locomotive problem it was suggested that the Southern might loan three of the P class (the class was under-utilised then, as for much of its long life) and four old bogie coaches. However if passenger services were discontinued two of the slightly more powerful Beattie Saddle tanks might be loaned.

Stephens was to die three weeks later on 23rd October, and many senior Southern officers attended the funeral including Walker's representative and his deputy, Stephens' close friend, Gilbert Szlumper. Unsurprisingly Walker, perhaps with a sigh, but more likely with a view to tighter future management, had already written to Mewburn two days after he received the report that the position was hopeless and recommended receivership. Finally the Southern used their debenture interest and, together with the other major holder the Excess Insurance Co, called in a receiver on 15 March 1932. The Receiver was the familiar William H Austen. This was perhaps unusual, for he was certainly not the usual accountant appointee who might have wound up the business, but he was thus enabled to keep his master's work going for a few more years. The locomotive and rolling stock position was eased by reductions in service and the trading of *Hecate* and three carriages for the Beattie saddle tank and two bogie coaches. Things must still have been tight for a year or two till overhauls were undertaken and the until first of the Southern locomotive hirings (a P) came in 1936 as business was rebuilt following the depression.

Anyway, despite Walker's clear recommendation that it was a hopeless case, eighty years later the railway is still here, at least in spirit ....

Source : *Southern Railway Report held in the CSRM Archive*

# The Trouble with Mixed Trains

*How British Railways tried to cope with the use of mixed trains on the Kent & East Sussex line.*

From the earliest days of railways all lightly-used branch lines resorted to using mixed trains, but the introduction of continuous brakes (compulsory from 1889) brought increasing problems with the time required for shunting. Previously it was usual for the passenger carriages to be at the rear of the train, simply left in the platform whilst the engine shunted and sorted the wagons before picking up the carriages and proceeding. From 1889 carriages were necessarily placed next to the locomotive as the braked head. A more complex movement was now needed; uncoupling of the carriages leaving them somewhere and dropping off the now required goods brake at the tail of the train even before shunting could commence. When this was finished then the procedure had to be reversed. Holman Stephens fought this requirement for many years but the Board of Trade would not budge; they insisted on a braked head and a brake van for every ten wagons with a maximum load of 25 wagons. Stephens did evidently secure agreement to discontinuing the use of a pure goods brake (by counting a passenger brake carriage as a brake) and hanging an 'LV' (Last Vehicle) plate on the last wagon. The problem of dealing with the carriage remained, at least in theory if not in practice, for one can be sure that passengers often took a trip into the goods yard rather than be left in peace at the platform.

Delays were inevitable and whilst this mattered little in the slow-going rural areas of Edwardian times, the evolution by the mid-twenties of good roads and motor buses gave a faster alternative for a faster age. If you stayed with the Kent & East Sussex Railway and were in hurry you caught the railmotors, for all their relative discomfort, rather than the mixed train. Austen however discontinued many of the railmotor services in the 1930s on the grounds of worn-out railmotors and extreme economy, so the problem worsened.

By the late 1940s, certainly by 1947, the arrival of two decent goods brakes seems to have brought train operating methods more in line with safety thinking elsewhere but when British Railways took over and insisted on their use, trouble really started. 'Normal' delays became chronic and in the best bureaucratic tradition a committee was set up and investigations made into the, by now unfamiliar to mainline

personnel, problem of mixed train operation.

Perhaps it was the usual Southern keenness to gain traffic through improved passenger services that dominated the Committee's thinking. They tried to help improve the service and service enhancements were made but at a cost. These 'improvements' were very much centred on connecting services (BR now being wholly responsible for delays on and off the branch) particularly to London to compete with bus services. London traffic was down to 30 bookings a month from Tenterden, with 200 a month from London to all K&ESR stations. This was scarcely surprising as there were six buses a day between Tenterden and London taking three hours and costing 50% less. It is strange to remember that buses were also nationalised and supposedly co-ordinated with railways, but who cared about that.

It was however goods that paid the bills and the Committee analysed this in some depth. There was an average of 110 wagons a week flowing on and off the railway rising to nearly 200 in the hopping season. The Committee's analysis shows most stations on the line as quite busy with goods; as examples Tenterden averaged 43 arrivals and departures a week, Bodiam 15 (even out of the hopping season) and Wittersham Road 9. Bodiam came surprisingly close to Tenterden figures for much of the summer. Strangely the committee paid little attention to this vital aspect of the railway's business.

A daily survey of timekeeping and traffic was conducted throughout August and September 1948. This examined the service pattern, with the results shown below.

## Eastbound

**8.15 am Robertsbridge - Tenterden** normally carried parcels traffic and only carried wagons in the hopping season. Even so it was between four to 38 minutes late arriving at Tenterden during August with an average of eight. In September hopping traffic increased the average delay to 12 minutes.

**11.20 am Robertsbridge - Tenterden** shunted at every station but also carried a parcels road van that had to be dealt with before shunting as the staff had to do both jobs. It also carried at least 9 wagons a day from Robertsbridge alone. By Tenterden it was between 20 and 80 minutes late with an average of 46. Surprisingly on three occasions it was nearly on time. It must be said too that departure from Robertsbridge in



September was virtually always late averaging 18 minutes. Unsurprisingly, very few passengers travelled beyond Northiam on this train for it often spent 30 minutes shunting here.

**5.50 pm Robertsbridge - Tenterden** conveyed passenger traffic only but still managed to be between two and 24 minutes late and once 44. The average delay was 13 minutes.

**7.45 am Rolvenden - Headcorn** was passenger only.

**11.10 am Rolvenden - Headcorn** carried wagons from intermediate stations but usually ran to time.

**4.45 pm Rolvenden - Headcorn** cleared Tenterden and intermediate stations but usually ran to time.

#### Westbound

**6.55 am Tenterden - Robertsbridge** was passenger only and usually near time

**8.50 am Headcorn - Robertsbridge** was a passenger with two road vans (ex Bricklayers Arms and ex Tonbridge) dropping off at all stations and if necessary tow rope shunted wagons at Biddenden and High Halden Road. If time permitted it also cleared Junction Road (Udiam) siding (only 1-2 wagons a week out of hopping season). It was usually on time.

**12.30 pm Headcorn - Tenterden** was normally passenger and picked up only residual wagons that the 8.50 couldn't cope with.

**4.35 pm Tenterden - Robertsbridge** cleared wagons from all stations mainly perishable and London market traffic and empties for Bricklayers Arms. It ran 4-27 minutes late with an average lateness of nine minutes.

**7.15 pm Headcorn - Tenterden** was passengers only.

After this analysis, it was recognised that Robertsbridge yard in particular could not cope with the traffic offered. A largely one-way flow of Tenterden traffic from Robertsbridge to Tenterden, and onwards to Headcorn appears to have been instituted to help cope. The Committee however shied away from a separate goods service on the grounds of cost. As we have noted, in pursuit of the elusive London passenger traffic they added two passenger trains to Headcorn but these were, perhaps not surprisingly, unsuccessful. British Railways never found a solution to the mixed train delays and such delays presumably continued on many services, thus sowing the seeds for the closures of January 1954.

BMJ

Source: CSRM Archive

## The Shape of things to Come

This is a Unique Opportunity to Purchase a Limited Edition of *Locomotive Number 4253 GWR Approaching Cranbrook Road, Imagined After Restoration, at the Time of the Opening of the Missing Link of the Kent & East Sussex Railway to Robertsbridge*

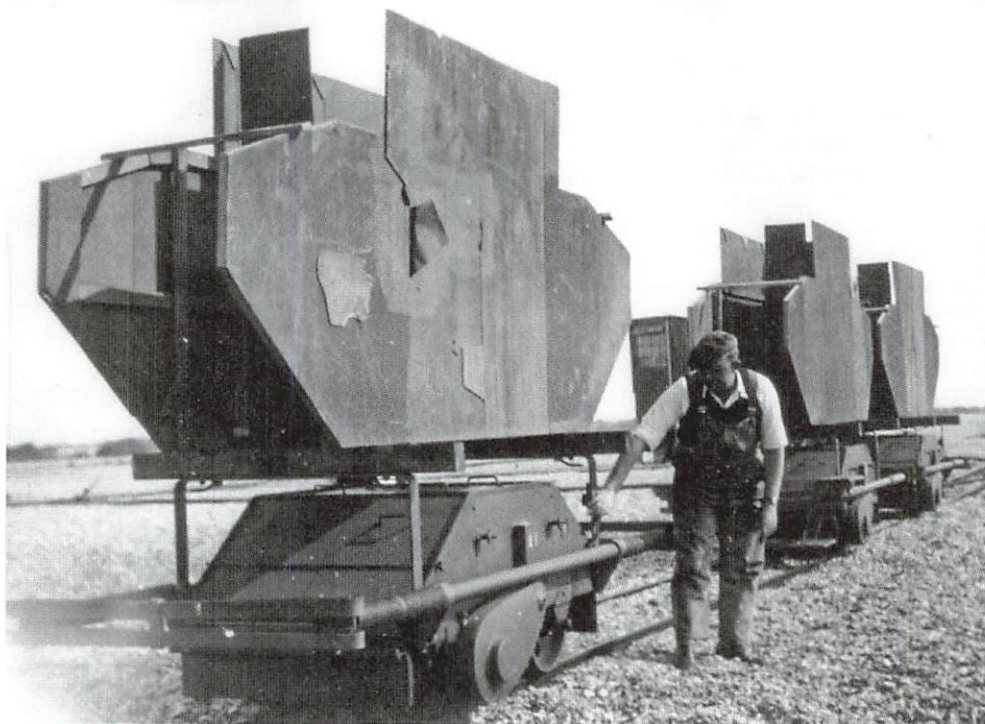


As we look towards the spring and another season of railway activity, why not purchase a copy of this stunning picture. All funds raised are for the restoration of GWR Locomotive No. 4253. As a limited edition print by well-known artist, Alison Griffin, these are restricted to only 100 copies with currently 30 sold. There is a constant demand for Alison's work and your purchase will almost certainly hold or increase in value as a collector's item. She has been painting professionally for over 25 years and regularly exhibits at various galleries. In addition she has produced a range of Christmas cards for the Kent & East Sussex Railway for the last two years.

How to Purchase  
Framed Limited Edition Print - £95.00  
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Send a cheque payable to 4253 Locomotive Company to:

Mark Yonge, Little Isemonger, Cranbrook Road, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6UJ

To arrange to view prints please contact Mark at the above address: Tel. 01580 763811 [markyonge@live.co.uk](mailto:markyonge@live.co.uk)



## Wickham Trolleys – But Not as We Know Them

*In the Winter 1990 issue the Tenterden Terrier carried an article about the narrow gauge installation at the World War Two military firing range at Lydd, Kent. K&ESR member Ken Percival recalls his personal and family connection with this installation (Illustrations © Ken Percival)*



In 1939 my father was given the job of designing and producing a training ground where artillery gunners could be instructed in defence against a modern weapon - the tank

Tanks had developed during the World War One and at that time were used as a mobile fortress on caterpillar tracks. These were first used to drive over barbed wire defences and across trenches. Twenty years later they had become more numerous and when on the move would travel in a convoy of three or four. The tactics of mobile warfare had developed and when out on flat ground – such as a desert - they would zig-zag and

keep moving thus making them a difficult target for the enemy guns. This movement was called 'jinking' as used by hares when being chased by a dog.

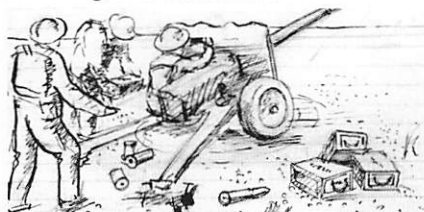
This range was to be built down on the desert-like shingle flats between Dungeness and the town of Lydd which was where we lived at the time. Previous attempts at producing a moving target involved dragging sledges across the shingle by a long tow attached to a lorry running on a temporary sleeper built road. My father's idea was to construct 2 foot gauge railways to carry moving targets in the shape of three dimensional tanks. Standard contractor's narrow gauge rail would be suitable, some of which already was laid in the camp to move ammunition to and from the magazine.

One of the first experiments was two tracks laid across and diagonally in front of the guns. Four target-carrying wagons, with long spacer bars between them were towed back and fourth on a





straight section behind a revetting wall with banked up shingle in front to hide and protect the wagons from the guns. For this operation a 90 hp Siddeley Wolsely engine from a tank was obtained together with mining gear and wire cables. This was housed well out of range in a winch house.



From the Firing Point

Firing points were set up at 200, 400 and 600yds and were set out to give a realistic feel to the whole operation. Firing at moving targets was not available like this anywhere else in the country. The next step in the experiment was to produce self-propelled rail trolleys that could follow curved and zig zag rails, carrying targets. They were named Jink Trolleys

My father, Mr. S Percival, Chief Technical Officer, designed, in conjunction with Wickhams, adapted Wickhams petrol powered trolleys which became successful machines after much experimentation. My father's notes state:

*The tests carried out at Lydd on test track of Wickhams automatic trolleys No. 3152 & 3153 were not satisfactory.*

*The operation of automatic gear was not constant.*

*A series of runs were made over the same ramps, but the action of the automatic control varied on each run.*

Dad's Office



*This was due, in my opinion, to the non positive action of the automatic control.*

*The pawl for operating the throttle has not engaged until after the lever has passed over the ramp.*

*Thus the opening of the throttle is then governed by spring (A) overcoming spring (B) as in fig (1) (Figure not in illustrations - Ed.)*

He goes on to describe a control they had made in their own workshops and concludes with these remarks and some drawings:

*The alterations of Wickhams type throttle control to Lydd type presents no great difficulty although best done in initial manufacture, as the ratchet cam, which needs to be reversed is welded in position.*

The first trolley was used for experiments. This later became the works trolley, complete with bench, and operated as a breakdown vehicle named *The Wicked Witch*. The next seven trolleys were named after the Seven Dwarfs. (*Doc, Grumpy, Happy, Sleepy, Bashful, Sneezzy, and Dopey.*)

I believe there were eventually 24 self-propelled trolleys. They were used in sets of four running at the same time behind one another. This meant that they had to be very accurately timed so as not to catch up the one in front or be in the way of the



Protection wall for Trolley

following trolley A special test circular track was used for setting this timing on each machine.

To operate any of the jink runs ramps were set between the rails a sliding ramp attached to signal lever would be pulled back under the vehicle to set it in motion. Each vehicle was released by stopwatch at set intervals. A sequence of central ramps would increase the speed as each vehicle passed over it and another ramp slowed the trolley, setting it back to zero, and then gradually notching it up again after negotiating a bend. At the end of each run, each trolley would have it's own ramp to stop and apply its brakes. There were many other railway items of rolling stock, diesel locos, wagons and carriages for construction and maintenance.

By this time I was about 11 to 12 years of age and on many weekends was smuggled into the place by my father. Eventually I became accepted and was known the by guards at the camp gates. I learned to drive the trolleys, (on their manual controls) and had wonderful adventures, sometimes in the care of the men that worked for Dad, even down in the bomb proof bunkers where the trolley were set off by railway signal leavers. But this would make another story.

There were several ranges laid out in the 4,800 acres and the area had come under attack by enemy cannon shells and bombs. By the time peace came in 1945 2,000,000 rounds of shell munitions had been fired.

*Photo 1: No. 3 at Northiam in 1936 (CRSM)*



# ONE DAY IN JUNE 1936

*John Miller wrote this short but typically styled and informative illustrated essay before his recent passing.*

This series of photographs were all taken on the same fine day, 23 June 1936, just over 75 years ago. The K&ESR appears well-kept, with freshly painted white edges to all the platforms including even the disused platform 3 at Tenterden.

The pictures were taken by a Mr W E Minnion, about whom we know nothing. They were taken on a journey from Robertsbridge to Tenterden Town and, unusually for the time, we can identify all the members of staff shown.

At Northiam [photo 1], driver Nelson Wood is caught in mid-air as he jumps from locomotive No 3 (the newly overhauled former *Bodiam*) to check something before departure. He had joined the K&ESR in 1909 from the Callington line (at Colonel Stephens' invitation) and where his brother, Frank, continued to work, retiring after 49 years service in 1947 having started on the narrow gauge East Cornwall Mineral Railway. Nelson himself did not retire

until the K&ESR closed and he was still living in Tenterden to advise the early preservationists in the early 1960s.

No. 3 leaves Northiam for Tenterden Town [photo 2] with Tony (Monty) Baker at the guard's compartment door. He was at this time employed as the Railway's clerk but he also took turns as a relief guard. He has been a regular contributor to this journal.

At Rolvenden, No. 8 (so recently *Hesperus*) has just crossed the A28 [photo 3] with the station building in the background. The lean-to building on the right is a store attached to the engine shed and on its floor is stacked all the name-plates removed from engines in the Twenties most of which survive, some in the Museum.

In picture [photo 4] No. 3 is running round and porter Harry Simmonds is probably on his way to change the points. Harry's dark skin was accounted for by being born in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). He lived in 'Tin Town' (The Bungalows) on Rolvenden Hill, following his marriage to a local girl. Shortly after this

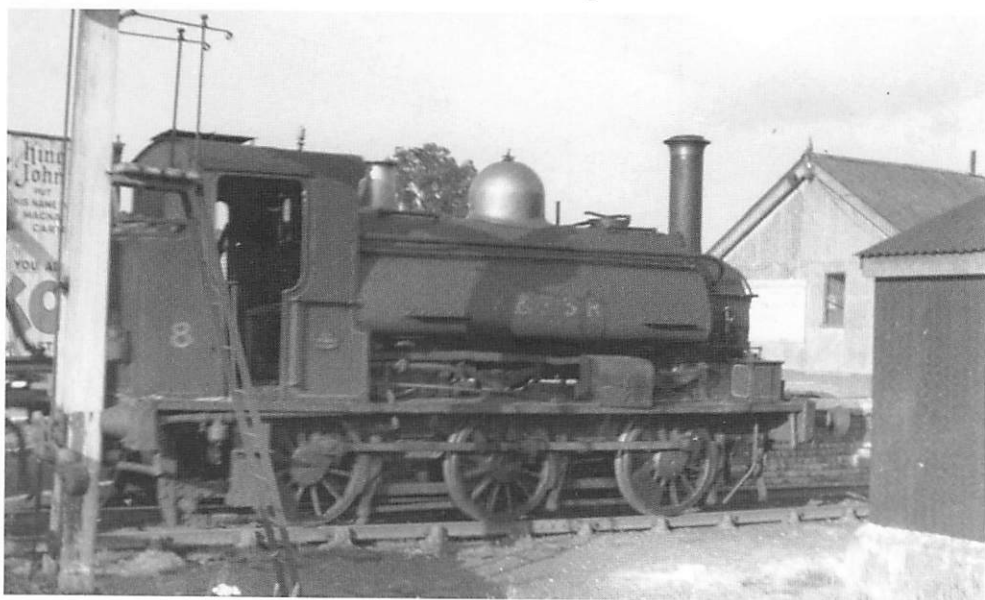




*Photo 2: No. 3 departs Northiam (CRSM)*

picture was taken he left K&ESR employ and moved to West Africa. At the outbreak of World War II he attempted to return to Britain but war transport conditions prevented this and, sadly, he contracted Blackwater Fever and died about 1940. The wind pump at the end of

the second platform pumped water from a well to the water tower seen on the left. The porter's hut on the right has a poster which reads 'Plumber and Roddis Ltd, Drapers, House Furnishers and Removal contractors, Hastings'.



*Photo 3: Hesperus at Rolvenden (CRSM)*



*Photo 4: No. 3 running round at Tenderden (CRSM)*



*Photo 5: A further view from the 1936 set showing a rare illustration of the original Northiam platform No. 2 (CSRM)*



## 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 continues to be increasingly important. So please try to follow the guidelines set out below.

### Content

The Tenterden Terrier will continue to be 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 (Word 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. Do not embed photos within text. Submit photos separately

### 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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**STOP**

OPEN CROSSING  
GATES BEFORE  
PROCEEDING

**PASSENGERS  
MUST NOT PASS  
THIS POINT**

By Order

**BEWARE OF THE  
TRAINS  
DO NOT TRESPASS  
THE RAILWAY**

**WAY OUT**