



JOURNAL OF THE KENT
& EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY



Tenterden Terrier



WINTER 2014
Number 125

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

ISSN 0306-2449

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Printed by

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

FRONT COVER

Fifty years after her return to the K&ESR, Bodiam as 32670 nears the summit of Wittersham Bank, conveying a train of 'Old Uns', who were members/volunteers prior to the reopening in 1974. (Hugh Nightingale)

BACK COVER

The 'Old Uns'. Pioneer volunteers at Tenterden Town station for their reunion on 20th September 2014. (Alan Crotty)

Tenterden Terrier

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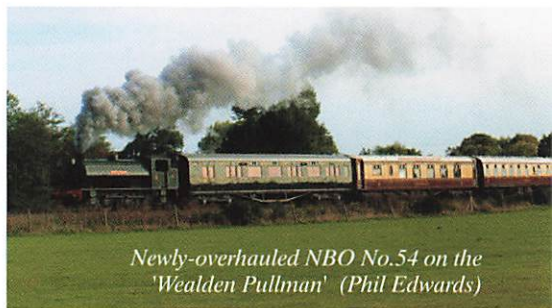
Editorial

Remembering the Past – Looking to the Future

20th October 2014 was, in its slightly understated way, one of the most notable occasions in the recent history of the Railway. It was on that day that the K&ESR welcomed as its guests around 80 people who had worked as volunteers during the 1961–74 pre-reopening period. (Your editor was among them which is why, with due regard to modesty, this editorial is being written by the Assistant Editor). Further details of this event are to be found on page 39 of this issue.

The debt we owe to these people is immense. Without their determined stand in the face of one of the hardest battles in the history of heritage railways there would be no Kent & East Sussex Railway today. Thank you, all of you, and let us not forget those ‘absent friends’ whom time has taken away from us.

The reunion of the ‘Old ‘Uns’ concluded with a trip to Robertsbridge to see what is being achieved towards the next chapter in our railway’s story. This is an appropriate lead-in to



Newly-overhauled NBO No.54 on the 'Wealden Pullman' (Phil Edwards)

mentioning the eight-page special feature to be found in this issue. This is somewhat different to the items we usually publish in the *Terrier*, but such is the importance of the company’s planning and preparations for the fulfilment of the ‘Old ‘Uns’ dream of half a century ago, that an exception from the normal format seems entirely appropriate.

It is regrettable but, due to pressures on space, a number of articles, reports and photographs have had to be held over until the next issue.

Hugh Nightingale



*6619 at Tenterden Town
(Photo courtesy and copyright Lewis Brockway)*

ROBERTSBRIDGE IN FOCUS

The Rother Valley Railway has come a long way since its formation in the early 1990s when the scheme to build the missing link of the Kent & East Sussex Railway was launched. The plan was regarded by many as highly speculative, and for that reason all funding has been carried out independently from the K&ESR.

Outline permission to construct the line has been granted, and undertaken in sections on land that we own such as Bodiam to Junction Road and Robertsbridge Junction station to Northbridge Street.

The final detailed plans for the reinstatement of the line between Northbridge Street and Junction Road were submitted to Rother District Council at the end of June, and will be considered by the council towards the end of this year.

RDC's main concerns amount to three issues:

- Firstly, that parliamentary approval is granted for the reinstatement of three level crossings at Northbridge Street, the A21 trunk road and the B2244 at Junction Road;
- Secondly, that the potential for flooding at Robertsbridge is not worsened and in fact is improved by the addition of low embankments on the route of the former railway;
- Thirdly, that the issue of the impact on wildlife is addressed.

Readers can be assured that these issues are currently being dealt with in detail and we are confident of a positive outcome in due course.

The full planning application can be viewed on line by logging on to the RDC website. Comments submitted by the general public are shown, which make very interesting reading. You will be pleased to know that the majority of letters are very supportive, and they come from all parts of the UK. Comments which have expressed concern will be addressed at a public meeting to be held in Robertsbridge during October.

Visitors to the Rother Valley Railway can also view the full planning documents on Sundays.

Construction of our new platform is nearly complete, and the bay siding at Robertsbridge main line station has been lifted, with new track to be laid imminently. As reported earlier, this will give us a Network Rail connection so that we can bring in ballast and permanent way equipment,

and Network Rail can utilise the newly laid track at Robertsbridge Junction for training their staff. Now that the heavy work has largely been completed by Andy Wood, our contractor, volunteer support is particularly welcome.

Restoration of wagons continues with a stunning rake of three banana wagons, complete with Fyffes logo, which are on display alongside the buffet car stabled in the platform.

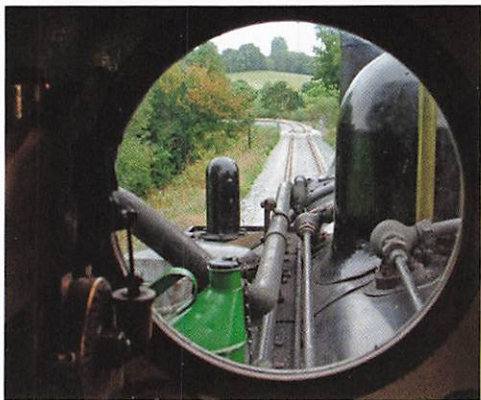
The gardening group has produced a great show of colour on the platform flower beds and will shortly be tackling the new picnic area, currently covered with building materials. The site will additionally need flowering shrubs and hedging to give our station an attractive horticultural finish, so if you have something appropriate to donate, or would like to help contribute towards making the station a visual as well as visitor asset to the community, then please in touch.

The shop is quite different from the other retail outlets on the K&ESR; it specialises in second-hand books and model railways, and is open every Sunday throughout the year.

Volunteers in any of these departments are always made welcome and should contact our site manager, Peter Brown (wizardstouch@live.co.uk) or David Felton (felton@rvr.org.uk); or, for the Gardening group, Mark Yonge (markyonge@live.co.uk) 01580 763811.

And remember, travelling to Robertsbridge is easy. Come by train – it's an hourly service. Pay us a visit on any Sunday.

Mark Yonge



From the Chairman – Geoff Crouch

As I write this, the management of the railway is in a state of transition. The General Manager resigned early in July. He had worked for us for just under ten years. His job – maximising income, controlling costs and managing staff – was always a difficult one. While he held the post, the Railway paid down over half a million pounds of debt. In doing so it was necessary to take tough decisions, some of which were unpopular. Management is not a popularity contest, but being popular is always an advantage.

So what of the immediate future? Trustees will be looking at the structure of our management from 2nd January 2015 onwards. There is no budget for a 'General Manager' for 2015; I shall be doing the job two days per week as a volunteer, and other trustees, managers and staff are chipping in to ensure that all of the work previously undertaken by the GM is covered. It is a team effort. Managers are working as a team. Every member of staff, paid or volunteer, is a member of the team. If you have stayed away from the railway for any reason, please think about coming back. All departments really need more volunteers – even just one day per month.

An important part of our work for 2015 will be a good old-fashioned clear-up. Let's get rid of the clutter! We will soon move into the new offices and this will trigger the clear-up of the station site. During the early part of the year we will clear Rolvenden too. We want our customers to

see us at our best, and we want our staff to enjoy a safe environment.

It is Sunday 12th October as I pen this. Yesterday at the AGM we tried a different format. Instead of a GM's presentation we gave a trustees' presentation, running through the position of the railway, concentrating on how we are preparing for Robertsbridge, an appeal for funds, and our timetable for 2015 which has some interesting changes to it. The trustees want to keep everyone informed of developments as Robertsbridge comes inexorably towards us. The volunteers' meeting will be the next opportunity for public discussion, but if you want to know anything before then, please ask any trustee.

Sadly I have to record the decision of Norman Brice not to stand for re-election this time. Norman has been an outstanding servant to the railway. When the chips were down in the financial crisis of 2000/01, he was part of the solution (together with a lot of others) and, under his stewardship, he moved the railway away from the brink of bankruptcy. Thanks Norman. He has offered to continue to serve on committees, and of course is a signalman.

It is important to remember that all of us, without exception, are custodians of the railway, and that we pass the baton to up-and-coming generations in the hope that they will run with it with the same passion and care that we, and previous colleagues, have done.

Changes to the Board

The result of the Board election for 2014 was as follows:

	For	Against	Abstentions
Geoff Crouch	288	19	8
Jamie Douglas	295	14	6

Both were therefore elected to serve as Directors/Trustees for a three year period.

During August the K&ESR Board appointed Brian Janes as a Director of our wholly owned trading subsidiary Colonel Stephens Railway Enterprises. CSRE directors attend all Board meetings, which are held jointly with K&ESR. Keith Jones is the other CSRE Director who is not also a K&ESR Trustee. (See page 47 for full details.)

Company Secretary – Nick Pallant

Regrettably the Company's mass mailing contractor, TNT, failed to frank a number of envelopes for the AGM Notice mailing. As a result a minority of members were required to pay a surcharge by Royal Mail, who were responsible for the 'last mile' of delivery.

Refund of the surcharge has been arranged for complainants who returned their Royal Mail endorsed envelopes. The Membership Secretaries and the office staff at Tenterden Town, none of whom were in any way to blame, bore the brunt of much of this and were, unfortunately, the subject of unjustified accusations by a few members affected by the problem.

Apologies are offered for the inconvenience caused. The matter has of course been taken up with TNT. The legality of the AGM was not compromised by our contactor's error.

The Shop Report – Martin Easdown

Since my last report, which covered up to the end of May, we have had a steady but not over-satisfactory year. Shop turnover was about 15% down on last year up to the end of September, which is roughly in line with the fall in passenger numbers. Too many days have been 'OK'; too few spectacularly good.

Regarding event days since May, the excellent Great War Weekend proved to be rather good for us with takings 34% up on last year. Wallace and Gromit followed on from Ivor the Engine, and Fifi, and the Flowertots, in leaving us with rather too much merchandise left on the shelf, but the Hop Festival saw a 6% increase in turnover from last year. September's Thomas event did not scale the heights of last year (28% down) but we still took £9,300 over the two days which, I think, was still a pretty good result.

The shop will be open every day in December until the 24th from 11am to 4pm (10am to 5.30pm on running days).

Catering – André Freeman

Although passenger numbers have not been particularly good, our pre-booked group catering business has been strong: 16% above budget to the end of July. Such traffic often declines during the school holiday period, but we have continued to welcome good numbers throughout. The buffet too is around 8% ahead of budget – a good result, especially when so many pre-booked

passengers are on inclusive refreshment packages on the train and are therefore unlikely to visit the buffet.

Catering for the Hop Festival at Bodiam is always a massive logistical exercise, but it was thankfully quite productive this year. An improved range of produce was on offer at the BBQ, and was well received. Good beer sales on Saturday resulted in the Rother Valley Brewery delivering extra firkins of beer on Sunday morning, all of which had sold out by 2pm. Many thanks to all who helped out – a great result from our all-volunteer team.

We extend a warm welcome to Debbie Kilgannon, who joins us as On-Train Catering Stewardess. Debbie has already experienced the challenges of delivering heavy bookings (during the 'Pensioners Treat') and is keen to further develop our offer. With Santas looming, there follows the usual plea for budding helpers; we struggle to cover all turns. Each December Saturday needs a minimum of 25 staff (including the evening Wealden Pullman). As our total consists of just 51 people, the scale of the challenge is all too obvious! We are particularly looking for 'trolley dollyes' onboard the A and B sets to distribute the inclusive refreshments (so no cash handling is required). However we're also in need of people to help clear tables in the buffet. All offers gratefully received – an extra pair of hands for an hour or two at lunchtime can make a world of difference! Contact me in the first instance: andre@kesr.org.uk or 01580 765155.

Wealden Pullman – André Freeman

Pullman staff were delighted when 'their' Maunsell NBO returned to the formation fresh from overhaul. The standard of restoration achieved by our C&W team is simply outstanding, and they are to be congratulated.

We are also delighted to report that long-standing stalwart Colin Duncan is making good progress, having suffered two heart attacks earlier this year. Colin has, for many years, filled the role of Pullman Conductor on about half of our services. His enforced absence has been keenly felt by all, but our team of volunteers have risen admirably to the challenge and successfully delivered services.

Many thanks to all who returned raffle tickets for the Aries fundraising. We continue to work with our 4253 friends in seeking out new

General Rolling Stock Appeal – Paul Wilson

A slightly different approach this time – rather than just a list of what we have available for service and what is going on by way of repair and restoration.

Your railway needs YOU.

The resources we have at the moment are hard pressed to maintain the critical rolling stock that we need to run services. That leaves a lot of other ‘nice things’ quietly decaying away in sidings. This is a sad loss, as well as a general eyesore. We simply don’t have enough money to pay more staff in order to restore these items, some of which have funding available for repairs. Wagons don’t carry people but they are a vital part of our heritage, and some are important tools to keep other departments running. Ask staff on the ‘big’ railway today what a brake van is and see the response! Brake van rides could become another way of generating income.

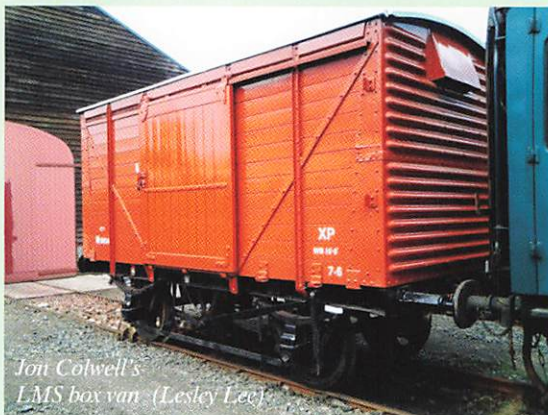
Wagons need examining for defects; they need oiling and greasing, and the bodywork and floors need repair.

Carriages need examining to make sure that not only are they safe but also they are smart and look the part for the heritage they represent. The insides need as much work as the

outsides if we are to continue charging our passengers for the privilege of riding in them. We want to change liveries more regularly to continually refresh the product – especially important to the heritage market; after all, we need all the passengers we can get!

It would be really great if we could have more volunteers coming forward to help. You need some level of skill, but you don’t have to be a rocket scientist. If we can set up small groups to look after wagons generally, or specific ones, then shed space will be made available for working parties.

If you would like to assist on specific projects or more generally then we would love to hear from you. Please contact Carriage and Wagon on 01580 765511 (often busy!) or e-mail nick@kesr.org.uk if you’d like to help. We genuinely look forward to welcoming you onboard.



Jon Colwell's
LMS box van - (Lesley Lee)

Rolling Stock – Nick Pallant

Mark I's

As anticipated in the previous issue of the Terrier, **TSO No.85** received an 18 month exam and repaint/re-varnish in K&ESR bottle green during June, re-entering traffic on 7th July. The vehicle's much-improved appearance has helped to smarten up the overall appearance of the 'A' set. Next in the queue for similar treatment was **CK No.S15927 (K&ESR No.86)**. The Southern Region green of recent years was reapplied. Sharp-eyed readers may note that the BR

number has changed from that previously used. This action was taken after a complaint from a somewhat vociferous visitor that S7927 was inappropriate for a post-1956 livery. Work was completed on 17th August. **BSO S9269 (K&ESR No.73)** has also had an 18 month check and repaint in Southern Region green, work being completed in time for the coach to form half of the two coach set used for the 'Old 'Uns' pioneer volunteers reunion and charter train on 20th September. **TSO No.64**, which had been red-carded pending a general overhaul, has received sufficient work to enable it to operate for a few

days during the Santa season. It will be withdrawn from traffic again immediately afterwards.

Vintage Coaches

Maunsell BNO Brake No.4443 (K&ESR No.54) is finally back in service having re-entered traffic in August. The coach looks magnificent and the overall appearance of the Pullman set is, as a result, quite striking. Sister vehicle **No.4432 (K&ESR No.53)** was withdrawn at the same time and stored pending overhaul.

Work is presently suspended on 'District' Coach **(K&ESR No.100)** pending funding being obtained and due to other pressures on the department.

SE&CR No.2947 (K&ESR No.88) is receiving its 18 month exam at the time of writing. Repainting was also planned, but only re-varnishing was found to be necessary.

The '**Woolwich Coach**' **(K&ESR No.67)** was given an 18 month exam during August, similar checks being made on **Pullman Car Theodora (K&ESR No.51)** during September.

Steady progress is being made on **Great Eastern Railway six-wheel brake (K&ESR No.81)**. Life-expired body panels are being removed where necessary and replacements fitted; sound areas are being rubbed down in preparation for replacement.

Goods Vehicles

Jon Colwell has completed repairs and overhaul to his **LMS box van (K&ESR No.138)**. The van looks quite splendid and is a credit to Jon, who has made a number of visits over the past few years from his home in Lancashire. Never one to remain idle, he has now commenced work on his **Midland Railway box van (K&ESR No.103)** which used to stand outside the now-demolished company offices on the opposite side of Tenterden Town station. However, because of its wooden underframe, the van will only ever be a static exhibit and its long-term location is likely to be in the front forecourt of the Carriage and Wagon Department.

A new floor has been fitted to the Robertsbridge-end verandah of **SR 'Pillbox' brake van K&ESR No.103**.



Sheep lift at Northiam (Alan Crouly)

OPERATING

S&T Engineering – Nick Wellington

The past year has been an exceptionally busy one for the small team of S&T Engineering staff, on both telecommunications and signal engineering fronts (hence my rather belated noting of some events).

We designed and installed a new data network for the temporarily relocated admin offices to

the rented premises in the High Street and, prior to the removal of the former offices, relocated the telephone exchange and IT file servers to a dedicated building in Tenterden Town station forecourt. Redundant materials were also recovered, where suitable for re-use. Ironically we are now in the planning for reversing this process as we fit out and prepare the new offices for the move back to the station. We are

exceedingly grateful to Mike Winiberg who has either undertaken, or planned, much of this work.

Exceptional weather conditions have brought considerable extra work on several occasions this year. December 2013 brought severe flooding of the line at Wittersham. Some signalling equipment was under over 2ft of water, which caused considerable damage to two of the detector boxes which check the operation of the points, and, in a lineside cabinet, wiring and fuses were seriously damaged. At the time of writing, although temporary repairs have been made, replacement is still to be addressed.

In early spring two large trees were brought down by the wind just below the Up Home signal at Tenterden; this also brought all of the overhead wire route in that area down to ground level. Either stretched, or broken and in need of replacement, all the wires then have to be 'regulated' to equalise their height and tension.

A third spell of freak winds in late spring brought down a fair number of trees on the curve between the yard end of Wittersham Road and the Newmill Straight. This also completely brought down all of the wire run in several places, necessitating further work as described above. Particular mention must be made of the herculean work carried out by Chris Lowry, both in repairing the damage and in motivating others to assist. Some of this work is still to be completed, again given the size of the task.

The first week of January saw the removal of most of the signalling equipment at Rolvenden between the stream culvert and the far end of the sewage treatment works, in preparation for the removal of all of the track and subsequent complete remodelling of the track layout for the planned new carriage shed, associated new sidings, and lengthening of the loop. As a consequence of this the Sewage Works siding, together with its associated ground-frame, has been abolished.

The need to keep clear of PWay activity on the ground while the trackwork was installed left us to focus on the mechanical locking changes to the lever frame to prepare it for its final layout control arrangements, but also to install certain temporary controls to match the temporary layout. This was the first time we have designed mechanical locking alterations in-house; this is a key skill that is in short supply, with many BR-trained designers now being long retired!

Three Metropolitan Vickers type 5E point machines were renovated in-house by K&ESR staff, and the motors rewound/refurbished by a local contractor, before they were installed to their points by a team of testers from Atkins Rail as a training project. A fourth machine is currently nearing completion; this requiring a complete strip-down to basic components, due to having been out of use for some time, and requiring slight modifications and complete rewiring for its intended application. These machines date from the 1950s and are the forerunners of the more modern machines used today, but their design has stood the test of time! They should serve us reliably for many years. All the four new points will be electrically worked, as some of the points are too far from the box for manual operation, and there is also only limited capacity for adding more signals and points to the lever frame; we also have to bear in mind that many of our signalmen are from the 'early retirement' age group and need to avoid excessively heavy mechanical work.

Turning to the signal element of the work, in a stroke of possibly good fortune the crane that was to remove the former Up Inner Home signal failed and we were unable to carry out that work. Instead we found that, using a different crane, after the first weekend of the operating season we were able to lift off and turn 180° the entire top (bracket) structure of the signal, and use it for a Down direction signal – as although not quite in the intended place, it is more than adequate for the present, until it is in need of further structural renovation.

For the present, the Up Inner Home signal has been replaced by a short single-armed post with a shunt signal at ground level below it. This now only gives a route for passenger trains via the loop, but given the fact that all steam-hauled services are booked to take water, the loss of the route via the main is not a major issue at this stage.

A major change however was the fitting of No.23 crossover outside the box with electrical detection, and provision of a route indicator on the Down Inner Home (R26) signal which enables trains to be routed either via the loop or the main line towards Wittersham. This is necessary as currently all the new points at the Wittersham end of the site are secured in one position, until renewal of the signalling cables and electrical interlocking has taken place; this is a much longer job and will be continuing over

the next couple of years. When trains are required to pass (which is only on Sundays and three train service days) a point operator is provided to work the points by hand.

Full track circuiting of the new layout area was brought into use in early August, as much of the new layout is hidden from view by the carriage shed. This in itself also created the need for wiring and configuration changes to realise the full benefits of the interlocking.

A new box diagram has been prepared by a graphic design contractor, to our specification and design. Other than those areas mentioned, by far the majority of the work is carried out by a small, dedicated team of skilled volunteers.

We are however looking for a further one or two to join our team to enable us to achieve more; if you have either previous signal engineering, mechanical or electrical engineering expertise, we may be interested in you joining our team. Please contact Nick Wellington at NSW@UAX13.org.uk with details of your experience.

Guards Report – *Bradley Bottomley*

It has been a testing summer season for the Guards and, on behalf of our roster clerk: "Thank you everyone who filled in the gaps in ensuring that all our published train services operated."

On Saturday 20th September a special train, aptly named 'Old 'Uns 40th Anniversary Celebration', operated between Tenterden Town and Bodiam with a rail replacement bus service from Bodiam to Robertsbridge. This train was in celebration of all those who were here before the railway was officially reopened to the public in June 1974. Guards Inspector Graham Williams flagged the train away from Tenterden Town, then handed over to Bradley Bottomley who guarded the train for the rest of the day.

We have had an encouraging start to the 2014 training course, which started in August and will run until November. This is the first all-in-class training course that our department has run for many years, as we always used to do on-the-job training. I would like to welcome the following trainees who are on the course: Claire Walker, Christine Dukes, Alan Crotty, Freddie Drayner, Craig Tyler, Robin Powell, Nick James, Chris Small and William Elsdon.

Course dates for 2015 are going to be arranged shortly. They will be published in the next issue

of the Tenterden Terrier for anyone who would like to consider training as a guard.

Neil Jackson passed out as shunter on 18th June, Paul Jessett passed out as guard on 4th August and Andrew Hardy as a shunter on 29th September. Three assessments and 16 observations rides have recently been carried out by the inspectors.

In addition to the trainees, we also welcome Robin Powell to the department.

Signalling Department – *Tony Ramsey*

It would have been numerically neat to report that the Signalling Department had celebrated the railway's 40th anniversary by achieving a record 40 qualified signalmen. However, we passed that milestone some years ago! Instead, 2014 has seen us achieve a new record of more than 50 qualified signalmen. We salute the latest additions to the team: Derek May, Glenn Whipps and Kieran Wildman at Tenterden Town, together with Martyn Butler and Philip Noakes at Wittersham Road. In addition we congratulate Michael Goodwin, who has passed out at Rolvenden (his second box), and we welcome back Peter Spratling, who has returned to Northiam.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who have been willing to train and undertake turns as crossing keepers. Your help is very much appreciated, by train crews, passengers and roster clerks alike! We congratulate those who have recently passed out: Rex Petty and John Slocombe (Cranbrook Road); Oli Bournes, Jasper Pryer, John Slocombe and Mike Williams (Rolvenden); and Rob Jacques-Bartlett, Derek May, Nick Moore and Michael Winiberg (Northiam).

The Rules Review Group has continued with its aim of producing a full reprint of the Rules, Regulations and Instructions ready for the 2015 season. Once complete, it will be possible to issue small updates without the need for making manuscript changes or pasting on additional paragraphs. This will make it much easier for users to keep their folders up to date.

Finally, we are sorry to have to bid farewell to long-serving volunteer Peter Parascandolo, who has served as a signalman for 25 years, six of them as an Assistant Signalling Inspector. Following retirement from full-time employment, he and his wife have moved to Dorset. Thank you, Peter, for your contribution: the K&ESR's loss will be the Swanage Railway's gain.

Bodiam Station – Robin Dye

During the good weather we have been able to carry on painting the outside of the station building, and have also repainted the roof of PMV 1808 so that it is now watertight.

Due to mid-week running it was only possible to paint the window frames and part of the underside of the platform canopy. Now that this has ceased we'll be able to get the scaffolding out again and complete the job. We also didn't manage to paint the north-facing side of PMV 1808 in the main season, so that is now being attended to.

Those familiar with Bodiam station will know that the underside of the platform canopy has, for many years, been in the K&ESR 'maroon' colour (copper beech). This made the entrances to the waiting room, ticket office and shop very dark, so we are now taking the opportunity to change it to its correct, cream, colour (peach). In particular Malcolm Burgess, Graham Holden, John Harding and Andrew Hillier have been very active with paint brushes.

We knew that rainwater had penetrated the building's roof space from the channel between the opposing pitched roofs, but because of the dry weather we couldn't find exactly where it was coming from. The first deluge provided the answer so, in common with our other station roofs that share this feature, the channel will have to be relined using Flash Band.

The hedges at the back of the platform and along the northern boundary of the site grew very fast this summer, so had to be trimmed twice by Vic Grigg.

The grass has been growing well; Chris Crouch and Bill Larke have spent many hours cutting it. Chris has also been managing the Station Master's garden, which this year has produced a good crop of spuds, tomatoes, radishes, runner beans and rhubarb.

Pam and Sheila Stevens produced more flowering plants from home to grace our planters, and also managed to keep on top of weeding and maintaining our gardens – and jolly good they look too. Our hops were not very good this year; they were all taken down and used during the Hop Festival.

Richard Brice has replaced rotten wood on the station building and has made a start on restoring one of our platform trolleys.

On 24th July we found that we had suffered a break-in to our workshop and garden tool store, sited along the remote southern boundary. Thieves had broken in through a window on the southern side of the workshop and stolen several items. From the garden tool store they took various things including a wheelbarrow to carry everything away! Sussex Police were informed and quickly attended, but no fingerprints were found. The Crime Prevention Officer also attended; as a result security for the huts has been strengthened, and the tools replaced – and security marked.

At the Robertsbridge end of the station a ditch runs down and into a culvert beneath our land, draining the adjacent farmer's fields to the south before finally discharging by pipe into the River Rother to the north. Every so often the culvert, which has a grid at its entrance, has failed to take the run-off, resulting in local flooding of the fields. Last winter the flooding was some 3m deep, which built up alongside our embankment.

As the ditch dried out we took the opportunity to clear some of the trees that grow on the boundary of the farmer's field, to facilitate access for an excavator. Thanks are due to members of the Forestry and Conservation team, who used their chainsaws and muscle power to deal with the large trees, and to Bruce Sharpe, who brought in his drain rods.

We have been able to partially rod the culvert; at the time of writing we are sure that a blockage exists, but we haven't found it yet. As the ditch has not yet been excavated, we haven't been able to carry out a full survey of the culvert; but when we do, we hope it will be intact.

We welcome back Paul Randall, who has joined the Bodiam Group. He has assisted in updating and compiling our work programme for the remainder of this year, as well as for 2015 – and we're going to need a lot of help to achieve it!

The Bodiam Group works on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the year, with a core time of 9.30 to 4.30. Experience is always useful, though training will be given as necessary.

GROUPS & ASSOCIATES

Ashford Area Group – *Ted Micklam*

The response to our indoor and outdoor meetings has been very rewarding again this year. As a result we have been able to sponsor the manufacture of a casting for the hydrostatic lubricator for the emerging locomotive 4253. We have also invested in our presentation equipment to ensure we are able to show images and video of the highest quality.

Our programme this year concludes with “TRAINS & TRAMS by SHIP” – Mike Jackson continues his illustrated account of the railways and tramways he encountered during his maritime career. This starts at 7.30pm on Wednesday 17th December.

We now have dates booked for 2015 and these begin with Wednesdays 21st January, 18th February, 18th March and 15th April. Details of the programme will be available in December. Indoor meetings are held at The Rail Staff Club, off Beaver Road, Ashford TN23 7RR. This is within walking distance of Ashford Station or bus stops. There is adequate parking and good access.

There are few groups within the K&ESR where you are not expected to do anything! Meetings are held in an informal atmosphere in one of the best venues in Ashford. There is always a break for refreshment/socialising, and we aim to finish by 10pm. It costs nothing to join; all meetings are open to everyone. All we ask is a £2 donation to ensure we cover expenses. Give us a try – there is no obligation to come again!

Please contact Ted Micklam 01233 503999 or edward.micklam@tiscali.co.uk

If you would like to be added to our Social Outing mailing list, please contact Keith Mapley at keith@mapley.fsworld.co.uk or on 01303 269138.

Gardening Report – *Veronica Hopker*

The summer has been a bit of a rollercoaster, with the temperature rising during the day and dropping quickly at night. Also it was difficult keeping the hanging baskets and gardens growing with the very dry conditions. Tenterden seems to have missed most of the rain showers which many other parts of the country had in during July and August.

This year we planted *Nicotiana Sylvestris* and

Coleus (given to us by Doug and Eve Ramsden) in the tubs in Tenterden Town Station Yard. These plants have proved to be a huge source of interest to our passengers. They grew really well and stood about 5ft (150cm) tall. Doug was amazed at the height of them as, according to the packet, he expected them to grow to six inches (16cm)! Many passengers photographed them and asked for information about them.

When the new offices have been completed the mound of earth where the old offices stood will be planted, but until all the work has been completed we will just endeavour to keep the area tidy.

The steam and diesel engines being created in box hedging by Norman Bowden of the Tuesday Group are growing very well and taking shape now. They are in the signal box garden, so can be viewed from the platform.

The red buckets and troughs on the Pullman dock have survived better this year thanks to Paul Bridger, who has kindly given them extra water during the dry weeks.

At the end of September and beginning of October all the tubs and troughs were cleared out and replanted with winter pansies to take us through until next spring.

The tubs on Rolvenden Station have struggled on quite well, but adjustments have to be made to the watering systems at both Tenterden Town and Rolvenden to ensure that the water spreads across the whole of the planters instead of just delivering it to the centre. Dave Brown of the Tuesday Group is currently looking into this for us.

Northiam gardens, being looked after by Liz Brown, have done well as the rabbits have not been so much of a problem this year. The tubs on the platform have been looking very good, and are appreciated by the passengers and staff. The Tuesday Group has kept the station looking attractive by keeping the hedges and grass areas neatly trimmed.

A big thank you must go to Doug Ramsden, Mark Taylor and Seb Dunn for all their hard work each week pushing the mower and using the strimmers. Unfortunately (for the Tuesday Group) Seb has secured a placement on the



Midsummer view south of the new carriage storage shed. Note the double-slip turnout under construction.

(Hugh Nightingale)

gardening staff of Hever Castle. Many congratulations to him; we look forward to him coming back occasionally to give us the benefit of his experience.

The Memorial Garden has done quite well despite only being watered once a week. It is maturing very nicely. There is a plan to install a few vases, as it has become apparent that with the anniversaries now coming around, friends and families are visiting the garden and bringing bunches of flowers with them. We hope we can find something suitable fairly quickly.

Museum Notes

Museum visitor numbers crashed early this year, especially in June and July, mirroring the very poor showing of early season visits to the railway, although they did pick up subsequently.

Consequently attendance this year has been well down on last year's very successful season (~20% so far), but better than the poor 2012 (+6%).

This is disappointing in the light of all the improvements that have been made. Improved performance on both railway and museum fronts is vital if we are to survive and thrive.

The problem for the museum is: how? We have produced a publicity leaflet for the museum, which is available at various locations on the K&ESR and at other local tourist attractions.

This is certainly worth a try. The Colonel Stephens Society kindly met the cost.

On brighter fronts we have had an exceptional year for donations, sales and the acquisitions mentioned in these notes in the last edition. We are still on the look-out for more exhibits from the Weston, Cleveland & Portishead Railway, the East Kent Railway and the Ashover Light Railway to add to our collection, should suitable items become available. In the main such purchases have been funded through money raised from sales of donated tickets and other items. We can improve even on this, as we have a lot of such things in store waiting for someone to help with eBay sales.

The Cavell Van has been boosted by its appearance on Michael Portillo's BBC2 programme on railways in WW1. The new paintwork has survived very well at Bodiam, and the van itself was due to be brought back to Tenterden Town on 1st November, courtesy of the Terrier Trust. With the Remembrance Special discontinued by the Board (for financial reasons), the van was due to go on static display at Tenterden Town on 8th, 9th (with a service at 12 noon on that day) and 11th November.

The van should then find a snug winter home in the new Rolvenden carriage shed ready for the 2015 season, the 100th anniversary of Edith Cavell's death.

Permanent Way – Jamie Douglas

Good progress continues to be made on the Carriage Shed project at Rolvenden. All of the crossing units are now more or less complete, with just one remaining to be craned into its final position, which should have been done by the time you read this. At the time of writing I am also undertaking detailed planning for the logistics that accompany the final stages of the track-laying for this project – this includes the need to bring back some 600 chaired wooden sleepers from Northiam, and four buffer stops.

The Matbro tele-handler alternator failed recently, requiring replacement as a matter of urgency. Not only is this piece of equipment vital to us in delivering the track-work for the project, but it is also the back-up for the Rolvenden coaling shovel – which had failed at the same time! We also had to strip out the transmission on the TRAMM; not once but twice, as the replacement components fitted the first time developed another fault of their own.

This was not an easy job as the parts were heavy, and manoeuvring them in the restricted space of the transmission bay, while trying to keep as much muck and dirt out of the gearbox as possible, was no mean feat – a great effort by those involved.

With the TRAMM now repaired, we have been able to move forward to ballasting through the pointwork at Rolvenden. This was done using the TRAMM's grab bucket, as we wanted to control the distribution of the ballast through the complex pointwork as accurately as possible to minimise the amount of manual shovelling later. This ballasting leads on to starting the tamping of the points and double slip and then of the plain line, which should be well under way by December.

Obviously we've also been continuing regular track inspections on the running line to ensure the safety of passenger trains. It's fair to say that the ride quality on a lot of the bullhead sections of line is really suffering now – particularly in terms of dropped joints. Unfortunately the solution is nothing like as straightforward as just tamping the joints; experience has proved that they simply do not hold up for more than a few days. This is because a multi-stage failure takes place at every joint.

The 'fishing surfaces' between the rail ends and the fishplates have become worn, leading to a small clearance becoming evident. When a 40 ton locomotive runs over it, this clearance allows a certain amount of movement to take place. In turn, this causes two problems; firstly the rate of wear in the fishing surfaces increases, and secondly the 'hammer' effect is transmitted through the rails, chairs and sleepers to the ballast bed, causing the ballast and the sleepers supporting the joint to break down.

The long-term fix is to either replace the material that has worn away from the fishing surface by inserting new metal (shimming) and then jack and pack or tamp the joints – applying sufficient lift to overcome the 'ballast memory' and inserting sufficient new stone into the area under the sleepers to adequately support the joint. However this is quite expensive. An alternative solution is to cut off the old rail ends, removing the worn fishing surfaces, pull the rails along and make a new joint – a process known as 'cut and shut'.

Our task for this winter, from New Year through to the beginning of the running season in March, is to carry out 'cutting and shutting' of as many joints as we can – beginning at Rolvenden and working as far as we can towards Northiam. We have been fortunate in obtaining a reasonable quantity of excellent quality second-hand bullhead rail, so we'll undertake rail replacement work in some areas too.

We believe that this will make a really tangible impact on the ride quality over these rough sections, and it would be really great if we could see some additional support in achieving this from some volunteers – either new or returning to the P.Way Department. I look forward to seeing you in the New Year?

Forestry & Conservation – David White

A hot June and July, then a cool and wet August, followed by the driest September for 100 years – this year the Forestry & Conservation Group has experienced most of the weather variance that climate change can throw at them (or the Arctic oscillation –Ed), whether huddling for shelter from the rain or picking up bottled water dropped off for them by merciful train crews.

The group has undertaken a variety of work in different locations. In June efforts were concentrated on the trackside between Northiam and Dixter, clearing the fence line and improving the view of Dixter crossing.

In July the team were engaged in tidying jobs at Rolvenden, trimming a hedge by the Rolvenden road which was obstructing views of the crossing and the coal yard, and more generally cutting back undergrowth and overhanging branches opposite Rolvenden station platform.

In August the team moved to Wittersham Road, clearing the fence line west of the crossing and pruning an oak in the car park yard – a job which could have required the services of a tree surgeon but was managed very ably by a team member with nimble feet, a chainsaw and a head for heights. Further work at Wittersham involved clearing a fallen willow.

In September the team moved on to Mill Ditch to clear the fence line towards Bodiam. Mill Ditch is a long walk, and for once the team were able to enjoy the luxury of a works train to site. Currently the priority is to clear the ditch to enable work to be done to resolve drainage problems. The team also worked with the Bodiam group to clear a ditch behind the station.

Midweek work has included pruning a tree at Tenterden Town station, following reports from the Pullman team that overhanging branches were striking the side of the carriages.

The group was also able to help with the annual weedkilling exercise, carried out by contractors in June. The contractors used a double-cabbed Land Rover, fitted with its own guide wheels for railway use, towing a trailer loaded with liquids and chemicals. This travelled to the railway under its own power and was then carefully lined up with the track in Rolvenden yard to become rail-borne. The vehicle is then driven in the traditional way using the accelerator and manual gearbox but not, of course, the steering wheel.

Two complete round trips were made; one involving an application throughout of a general weed killer and the second applying a specific bramble killer where required. A member of the forestry team travelled with Pete Salmon in the vehicle throughout for crossing, point-changing, signal box operation and other pilot duties. The operation drew some surprised looks from motorists at level crossings who were expecting a steam train, not a Land Rover and trailer.

The forestry team also tackled another weed-related problem – Oxford Ragwort. These yellow flowers are an important source of nectar and pollen for insects, but when ingested in hay can cause irreparable liver damage to horses. Railways have been blamed for the spread of ragwort, since the seed can be swept along in the air stream of passing trains. The trackside plants then spread to adjacent fields, which may be cut for hay. Team members dug up large quantities of ragwort at Rolvenden and Orpin's Crossing to be removed and burned.

The F&C Group has two new additions: David Wood, who is a re-joining member, and Keith Clifton. The group still needs more willing hands, and volunteers who are involved with running trains may like to try something different during the closed season. If you are interested in joining us, even if temporarily, please contact Martin Keable at mkeable@virginmedia.com for further information.

Tuesday Group Report – Graham Hopker

Our expert carpenter, Ron Dunn, has made two replica finials; one replaced the rotten example on the west end of the Northiam toilet building. Work has also been carried out repairing and repainting the fascia boards on the west end of this building. Extensive repair is needed to the east end fascia boards of the main station building as well, but this work has had to be held over because of difficulty in actually reaching this section. However this will be combined with other roofing work proposed for 2015.

The second finial was installed on the west end of Northiam station building when the fascia boards were repainted.

A fault in the security lighting system was traced; a new sensor was fitted. The notice board at the station entrance has been refurbished.

Ongoing fence repairs have been taking place with some new posts and rail required. Black Ronseal wood protection is also an ongoing task. There is a lot of fencing at Northiam!

Grass cutting, strimming and hedge trimming, including the Memorial Garden, is another continuous job at Northiam.

The white fence at the entrance to Tenterden Town station was also given a coat of paint, in readiness for the BBC's filming visit at the beginning of July.

TREATS – Mike Grimwood

DMMU: In service. We have been working with a manufacturer over the past six months to reproduce the original saloon light fittings to return our DMU to its original internal condition. We have placed an order with this company for a complete set of lights for both of our units.

Class 03: In service.

Class 14: In service. A defective road spring has been replaced; the frames and running gear have steam cleaned. An A service has been undertaken.

4253 Locomotive Company Notes – Bryan Atkins

Progress continues despite the challenges one might expect in restoring a 1917 engine. The right-hand side tank has now been completed and put aside; construction of the left-hand tank has almost reached the end of its trial fit, and it will be riveted together over the winter.

The boiler has also been put aside, so that work on the new smokebox can commence. Once complete the smokebox and new chimney will be fitted to the frames while the boiler work takes place.

Over the summer work has concentrated on the frames. The rear buffer beam has been reinstated, along with cab support frames. Plenty of remedial welding on the frames has taken place, along with cleaning up outstanding areas, such as underneath the cylinder block. A final riveting session around the area of the motion plate and pony truck stretcher is needed, along with the repair of an old weld above the front horns, and then the frame will be ready for truing up the horn guides prior to rewheeling.

The task of repairing and remetalling the axle boxes has started, with the pony truck boxes now completed. Only another eight axle boxes to go! At the time of writing it is anticipated that the engine should be ready for rewheeling by late spring.

Working parties continue to meet every Sunday and Tuesday; however there seems to be activity around the engine most days of the week. Please see www.4253.co.uk for weekly progress updates.

GWR Railcar – Andrew Webb

The restoration and rebuild of the Railcar continues. All the refurbished bogie hydraulic shock absorbers have been fitted and connected to their respective bogie bolster – four per bogie. All four sandboxes are ready for fitting to the bogies. Two have been rebuilt and two are new.

Two of the four overhauled vacuum exhausters are now fitted to the underframe. The timber framing for the battery compartment is complete and fitted; refurbishment and rebuilding of the Headcorn-end cab is now under way with the wooden framework, below floor height, gradually taking shape.

The refurbished and rebuilt driver's control assembly for the Robertsbridge-end cab is almost ready for installation. This is a real credit to the time spent, expertise and determination of one of the Railcar team, Neil Edwards, who has done a superb overhaul on this complex piece of equipment which gives the driver electro-mechanical control of the equipment below the underframe including engine speed, gears, clutch, high/low ratio and forward/reverse.

The replacement of the underfloor air pipework is in hand, with nearly 200ft (60m) already in place. The cooling system pipes are also now fitted.

Finally, a 'Thank You' is extended to all who have donated to the GWR Railcar Appeal over the years. The Appeal is still open, and a great deal has been achieved with the money raised to date. Please consider a donation to ensure further progress of this unique project.

Rolvenden MPD – Paul Wilson

Steam locomotives:

No.3 Bodiam (32670): Available for service. Happily No.3 was available to run the special on 20th September, conveying members and volunteers from 40 years ago.

No.8 Knowle (32678): Presently stopped for its annual boiler exam, having run well during the main season.

No.11 (753): Work on the overhaul is progressing very slowly, with mainly volunteer input. More help would always be of value, so please contact the department if you would like to assist in the overhaul of this lovely locomotive.

No.12 Marcia: No progress to report.

No.14 Charwelton: All repairs have been completed, and the locomotive is now back handling the railway experience days.

No.19 Norwegian: Available for service. Minor repairs to the cylinder lubricator drive were required recently.

No.21 Wainwright: The major development recently has been the re-fitting of the wheels under the frames. Work on the boiler is progressing and a return to service in 2015 is still planned. Two USA tanks together will be a sight to see!

No.22 Maunsell: Available for service.

No.23 Holman F. Stephens: Now stopped for ten-year overhaul. Until work can start the focus will be on making sure No.23 is stored in good condition.

No.25 Northiam: The chassis has been covered with protective tarpaulins as it is due out of the shed. This makes shed space for some final work required to the boiler before it goes into the frames. The cab and tank are away at a contractor for shot blasting and repairs, and will soon be returned fully primed and ready for undercoat.

No.30 (1638): Stopped for ten-yearly overhaul. Given that the chassis has received attention

over the past few years, the decision has been taken to proceed with the overhaul of the boiler as priority. This will be refitted in the frames and then run for another two or three years before motion overhaul. The benefit this gives, if it goes according to plan, is that the long-term and expensive hiring of a substitute loco in 2015 will be avoided. Work is very well advanced, and the boiler was out of the frames barely two weeks after its last steaming.

No.32 (6619): A new blastpipe is being cast; when fitted it will allow the engine to work the last three months of its boiler ticket before being stopped for overhaul.

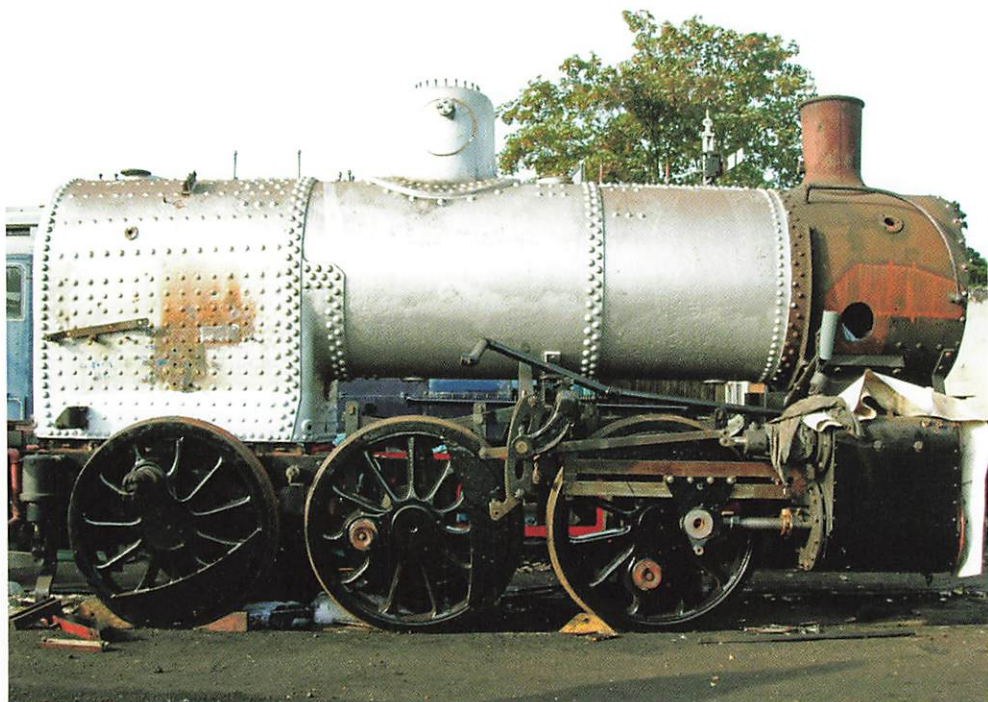
Diesels and cranes:

No.40 Ford: Available for service.

No.41 Ruston: Available for service. The engine will require some attention soon, as some minor oil and water leaks from the cylinder head have become apparent.

No.133: The 10t Taylor & Hubbard crane (pictured on page 8) is available for service.

No.151: The 36t Ransomes & Rapier crane is available for service.



No.21's boiler back in its frames at Rolvenden (Paul Wilson)

A MEMORIAL EXPERIENCE

Brian Janes reflects on his experience of being briefly involved in a TV production featuring the Cavell Van.

Filming assignments come out of the blue, and move rapidly either to fruition or failure. Fresh from a week in hospital I found myself facing enquiries which came pouring in out of the ether (some direct and some via the then GM) about a possible TV programme: Boundless Productions was pitching another railway series to the BBC, featuring Michael Portillo, and looking to do a series on World War I. They had heard of the Cavell Van: what was its story? Who did it convey? Could it be viewed? Ignorance was initially, naturally, almost total, and some of the gaps in knowledge of the events of a mere 100 years ago were surprising; but knowledge was rapidly assimilated. Assisted by a rapidly scanned copy of my 2010 booklet on the Van and its history, the company became even more interested.

When could they film the van? Well, it was due out on the (now sadly discontinued) memorial train on Remembrance Sunday, 10th November, by then about ten days away. As the BBC reputedly pays peanuts for these series there could be no question of a special train or payment (not that the GM didn't try). The next questions were would the star (Michael Portillo, not me) be available, could someone be available for interview, and was the railway or even the van itself suitable for filming. Anyway having been belatedly given the commission by the BBC, the producer, Tom Richardson, came on a flying visit on Wednesday 6th November to view the site and the van (somewhat awkwardly placed in Tenterden yard) and talk matters over with the GM and me.

At the end of the visit I was left with the distinct impression that it was me as the potential interviewee – not the railway or the van – that was being inspected. Whatever, the result was that we passed; and next day, when it was confirmed Michael Portillo was available, the production company confirmed that it would definitely like to film on the Sunday, and would like to ride in – and do the interviews in – the Cavell Van.

Now the fun really started. Everything had to be confirmed and organised. By the next day it was clear after e-mails and phone calls that they wished to focus on a chat between me and Michael Portillo about Captain Charles Fryatt, for the programme was on Railways and he was a railwayman, albeit a seagoing one. Clearly we

would need to acknowledge the significance of the van's history through its association with Edith Cavell and the Unknown Warrior, but this was scheduled as a brief introductory chat when Michael Portillo and I 'boarded' the van. I was briefed to hit certain core themes such as who Captain Fryatt was, what he did to become so well known during the war, what the reaction was at home when he was executed, and how significant were his repatriation and service at St Paul's.

It became clear that to fit in the memorial theme of the last of the scheduled programmes (much of which had to be filmed urgently because of the belated BBC approval) much of the minuscule team (including Michael Portillo) had to be at the Euston memorial service for the London & North Western Railway's fallen at 11 o'clock and then had to dash to St Pancras for the HS1 service to Ashford. As our Memorial train left Tenterden at 1pm they would necessarily have to journey up from Bodiam. Ashford to Bodiam is not the most straightforward of journeys, but the company was well organised; a van met the Ashford train while another vehicle came direct (snatching a quick shot of the Special on its way out).

We were blessed with immaculate sunny weather on the day. I was organising the Cavell Van and was present at the Memorial Service held immediately before the train's departure, and originally intended to travel on it to Bodiam. However the film crew were aiming to arrive at 1.30pm as it was timetabled to arrive at Bodiam at 1.52 and depart at 2.05. Given the need for the necessary meeting and greeting and for the rather intimate process of getting the soundman to 'mic me up' for the journey interviews, I decided almost on the spur of the moment to 'race the train' by car (courtesy of Pam and Sheila Stevens who devotedly care for the Van and for Bodiam's gardens).

It was fortunate that we did as, by mischance, Bodiam Station's staff had not been not informed of what was happening and when we arrived (despite impeding farm traffic) at 1.25 the station yard, toilets etc. were still locked. However when the crew made their timely arrival everything had been fixed and the railway appeared its usual model of efficiency. Those facilities were much needed after the rapid trip from London and



Michael Portillo and Brian Janes outside the Cavell Van (Photo courtesy and copyright Lewis Brockway)

with the prospect of 50 minutes locked in a van for what the producer called 'the wobbly journey' from Bodiam to Tenterden!

The train arrived on time and we could arrange Michael Portillo's walk to the van, with the added bonus of some of the accompanying re-enactors acting as a kind of guard of honour. This was successful after a couple of retakes. Then we set up in the van for me to do the greeting before we departed.

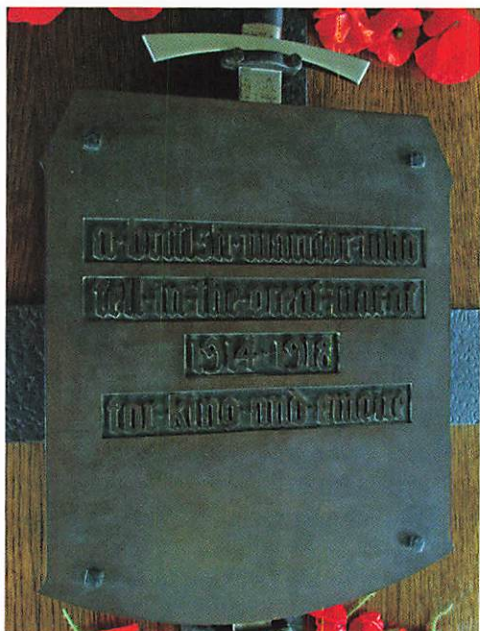
I had been briefed beforehand that conciseness was essential as we chatted when the train set off – fortunately on one of the quietest sections of track (four wheeled parcels vans being somewhat noisy). Believe you me that is not easy; knowledge is one thing, but nerves kick in when you know that millions will see this and judge the railway accordingly. Nor does it help to have a huge camera lens peering up your nose with the soundman and the producer scrutinising every sound and move in the cramped space.

Not only that but several repeats became necessary, as things inevitably go wrong and camera angles have to be changed. Still we did find time to take some nice shots of the sunny countryside from the van.

Fortunately for me the crew were totally professional and Michael Portillo was a very capable interviewer. Despite a long career in a corner of Whitehall it was still interesting for me to meet an ex-politician who had nearly reached the top of what Disraeli called the 'greasy pole' of politics. As you might expect he proved to be a skilled professional.

Meanwhile two members of the crew had shot off in their vehicles to meet the GM at Cranbrook Road level crossing, using the nearby postcode (TN30 6UJ) as a satnav guide. The train was due there at about 2.40, and ten minutes was necessary to get into position from the road, so it was all a bit tight! The camera was operated by Frances Kendall, the young research assistant who had first contacted me about the session and to my inexperienced eyes she made a very good job of it too.

We had comfortably wrapped up the filming for the on-time arrival at Tenterden and there was an all-too-short opportunity to 'relax' and have a few photographs taken. Michael Portillo was introduced to many passengers and at least two apparently star struck volunteers, and he was consummately professional. The only downside



was that time for a cup of tea, which Norman Brice was busy organising, ran out; but the day finished with apologies and copious thanks to all for the event and organisation.

With filming over, the long wait for broadcasting dates and times passed slowly. Personally I wondered how much of my mumbling would hit the cutting room floor (necessarily and deservedly some did) and how the stories and our railway would come out of it. The waiting was broken by further enquiries and requests, particularly from the compiler of an accompanying book to the series (what TV series doesn't have this these days).

In the event we only knew of the timing of the programme a few days before it went out. It was fortuitously timed for our peak season. It will no doubt be endlessly repeated, and I am not too ashamed of my limited role.

All in all it was a satisfactory investment in keeping our railway in the public eye, for what price can be put on four minutes of TV time?

KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

May 2014

1st	Mrs F J Brooker	No. 692	£70.00
2nd	B C Paul	No. 095	£50.00
3rd	Cathy Roberts	No. 020	£45.00
4th	Mrs J M Jones	No. 567	£30.00
5th	E Stockdale	No. 067	£25.00
6th	C J Alliez	No. 670	£20.00
7th	Bob Clifford	No. 015	£15.00
8th	F T Kent	No. 310	£10.00

June 2014

1st	Mr & Mrs J P Fry	No. 646	£80.00
2nd	R Aynsley Smith	No. 204	£70.00
3rd	Robert Bradford	No. 594	£60.00
4th	Mrs W J Cloke	No. 554	£40.00
5th	Peter Landon	No. 323	£35.00
6th	Peter Hubbard	No. 254	£30.00
7th	Clifford Colmer	No. 652	£25.00
8th	L R Davies	No. 506	£20.00
9th	Tony Mighell	No. 227	£15.00
10th	Ruth Gower	No. 036	£10.00

July 2014

1st	P W Gander	No. 161	£70.00
2nd	Mrs Jean Lelean	No. 643	£50.00
3rd	Dan Snowden	No. 422	£45.00
4th	P J Parascandolo	No. 179	£30.00
5th	Frank Lambert	No. 387	£25.00
6th	Boris Perkins	No. 113	£20.00
7th	Mike Dawes	No. 689	£15.00
8th	Dan Snowden	No. 153	£10.00

August 2014

1st	J M Whitcombe	No. 242	£70.00
2nd	John Collard	No. 198	£50.00
3rd	Dave Drewry	No. 588	£45.00
4th	M Keable	No. 317	£30.00
5th	Dick Dickson	No. 101	£25.00
6th	Mrs Liz Matthews	No. 277	£20.00
7th	Bob Clifford	No. 211	£15.00
8th	Nigel Thomas	No. 074	£10.00

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



READY FOR ROBERTSBRIDGE



2020 Vision for the Kent & East Sussex Railway

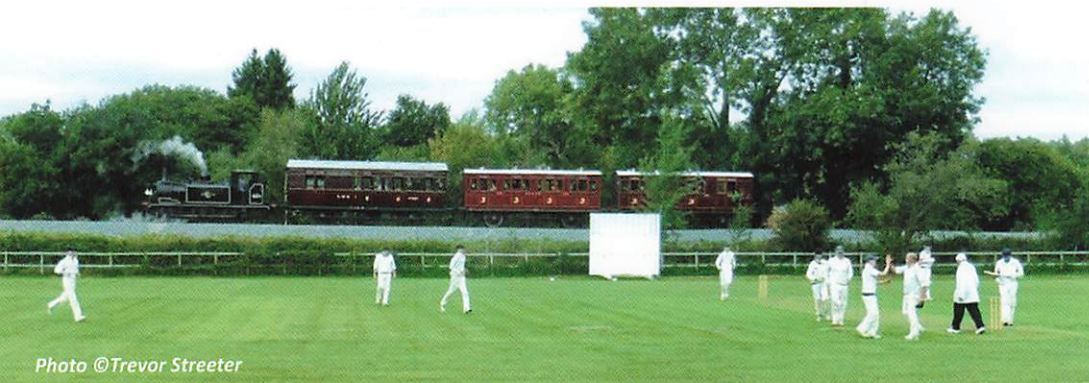
READY FOR ROBERTSBRIDGE

2020 Vision for the Kent & East Sussex Railway

The K&ESR should aim to be Britain's premier rural light railway and be running steam trains between Tenterden and Robertsbridge by 2020.

In particular activities should focus on achieving the following:

- 1 Provide a safe, entertaining, educational, informative and high quality visit experience for passengers by conjuring up something of the ambience and atmosphere of the line's independent history.
- 2 Capture the spirit of the history of both the K&ESR itself and the stations, buildings, locomotives, rolling stock and artefacts preserved on it, while restoring and maintaining these to a high standard.
- 3 Develop, lead and encourage a largely-volunteer team to staff the K&ESR by providing a rewarding, enriching and fulfilling pastime. Invest in professional staff to assist with the line's activities where necessary.
- 4 Generate sufficient surpluses from operations and commercial activities to allow existing infrastructure, restored rolling stock and historical artefacts to be maintained in good condition. Ensure that the railway and trains are at the heart of revenue-generating activities and special events.
- 5 Undertake fundraising activities to generate the cash required for capital projects needed to facilitate the successful extension of services to Robertsbridge including the provision of sufficient locomotives and carriages to operate the envisaged timetable.



CARRIAGES

Passengers spend longer in our carriages than they do viewing any other aspect of the railway. Therefore, it is essential that they are:

- Restored to a high standard (the quality achieved in Petros and RMB should become routine) and provide a comfortable ride.
- Cleaned regularly and effectively.
- Complete with working toilets where possible – which should be enhanced to meet modern customer expectations (at least one per coach in corridor stock and restore toilets where fitted on non-corridor stock).
- Part of a sufficiently large working fleet to allow for maintenance and periodic overhauls, so existing fleet must be maintained and upgraded and one additional corridor coach will be required for day-to-day services for Robertsbridge. (It is envisaged that work to upgrade/overhaul corridor coaches 64/86/56/73/53/63 will be required).

In addition, certain on-board facilities are needed to enable additional revenue earning activities to be carried out. Therefore:

- Each set in regular use should be provided with a carriage with wheelchair access from both sides.
- The two main corridor sets should have a suitable catering vehicle to allow hot and cold drinks and light refreshments to be served on both and simple hot meals to be served on the main "A" set. Tables should be provided wherever possible including in compartments to encourage passengers to purchase refreshments.
- Suitable period-looking frames should be provided to allow posters advertising forthcoming products and services to be properly displayed (notices should not be blu-tacked to windows or partitions).
- The successful Wealden Pullman train should be enhanced with Aries for which fund raising is already well advanced. (The inclusion of Aries will necessitate the provision of a suitable brake vehicle as none of our Pullman Cars have a guard's compartment).

To help meet our objectives as an educational charity we should aim to "be true" to both the history of our railway and the vehicles that we run on it and try to "educate and inform" our volunteers, staff, members and visitors. To achieve this:

- The main "A" set should continue to be inspired by 1930s/40s practice of running ex-mainline bogie coaches in K&ESR green. (The more modern K&ESR crest applied to some Mk 1s does somewhat detract from the period feel and should be removed as the coaches fall due for repaint).
- Some Mk 1s should be restored to the attractive blood & custard livery carried by that type of coach. (We have enough for two sets so that we can portray an authentic livery as well as a K&ESR one. Having the B set in a different livery to the A set also provides more interest and entertainment for visitors and would provide more variety for photographers enabling us to use contrasting images in our publicity.) (Start with TO 64 now!).
- Maintain the SECR livery on the vintage coaches from that company and apply an early K&ESR livery to selected other vintage carriages to avoid trains with multiple liveries (eg the GER coach currently under overhaul).



Photo ©Geoff Silcock



GER coach in early K&ESR livery

- Include suitable period looking notices in the vestibules of corridor stock (and in some of the carriage print frames in non-corridor carriages) with a brief history of the vehicle and an explanation of the livery. (eg A set Mark 1s might include something like "In the 1930s and 40s the K&ESR purchased second-hand carriages and painted them in a green livery with straw lining and the colours carried by this carriage today are designed to represent something of the spirit and ambience of that time. Coaches from the Southern Railway also made occasional appearances on the line and your train today may well include a SR coach in that company's livery".)

STEAM LOCOMOTIVES

While passengers spend much of their time in a carriage, it is the desire to ride behind a steam locomotive that is the key motivation for their visit so we should:

- Ensure there are sufficient, suitable locomotives to provide the envisaged service. (In the next 3 – 5 years this will mean completing 25 and DS238 in 2015, followed by a "fast-track" overhaul for 1638 and 6619 and a standard overhaul for 23).
- See that these are maintained and presented to a high standard.
- Provide easily accessible briefing notes for staff to enable them to enthuse about the locomotive(s) to our passengers.

- Restore them to a livery historically carried by the locomotive or similar locomotives with a preference for liveries carried on the K&ESR.
- Plan to change the livery of locomotives after around 5 years' service to allow different aspects of the locomotive's (and line's) history to be portrayed. (This also has benefits for volunteer and public interest as well as publicity opportunities).
- Consider incorporating an annual visiting locomotive into our plans – predominantly to add interest for volunteers but also to enhance the appeal of events and possibly to cover for planned "shortages" in the home fleet.



DIESEL LOCOMOTIVES, RAILCAR AND MULTIPLE UNIT

Appropriate heritage diesels may be required to supplement the steam service on days when demand is limited and as emergency back-up, for shunting and works trains. Most visitors would prefer to travel by steam so the use of diesels must be carefully controlled. We should:

- Ensure they are maintained and presented to a very high standard.
- Restore them to a pre-1968 livery carried by the vehicle or similar vehicles.
- Ensure that where diesel trains are planned, this is clearly communicated to passengers in advance publicity (ie BEFORE they get to the railway – leaflets, websites etc).
- See that staff have information on the vehicle's history and heritage so they can advise passengers.

- Complete the restoration of the GWR Railcar and consider using this hauling a coach to provide a service that would be unique in the UK.
- Only use diesels to cover a failure if absolutely vital, and ensure clear explanations are given and that the steam service is reinstated as soon as possible.
- Look to secure a second suitable Class 5 diesel (on a pay per use basis).
- Encourage the removal as soon as is practicable of diesel locomotives domiciled on the line for which there is little prospect of restoration.

Photo ©Don Benn



STATIONS & INFRASTRUCTURE

Our station sites have to serve the twin roles of welcoming customers and providing them with the facilities to meet their expectations plus housing the engineering and administrative infrastructure the railway now requires. We must aim to go beyond the basic requirements for any preserved railway (or indeed any heritage attraction) ie:

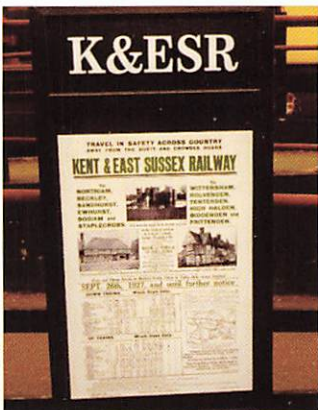
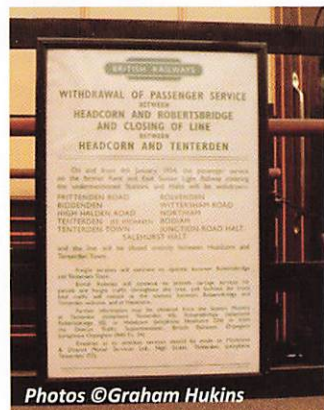
- (Re)creation of a believable period atmosphere.
- High standards of maintenance, presentation and cleanliness.
- Suitable period-looking frames should be provided to allow posters advertising forthcoming products and services to be properly displayed.
- All Stations should be tidied and rubbish/scrap removed.

The membership has supported the portrayal of the K&ESR's independent history set at an indeterminate date between 1900 and 1947. Setting every station at an unspecified time makes the recreation of authentic or believable period scenes almost impossible and can lead to some inadvertent "faux pas" where two historically accurate items from different eras are placed alongside one another, devaluing the hard work and effort that has gone to (re)create them and detracting from rather than enhancing the visitor experience (eg 1927 timetable and 1953 Notice of Closure or noticeboards from the "Big 4" that determine the period as 1923-1947).

Closure Notice 1953

Timetable 1927

Southern Railway Ad 1930s



Photos ©Graham Hukins

STATIONS

To allow some more meaningful, believable and accurate cameo scenes to be created while still portraying the K&ESR's independent history we should start working towards setting out each of our main stations in a suitable era so that collectively they convey as much of the line's heritage as practicable while enhancing the sites with facilities that will be needed for Robertsbridge.

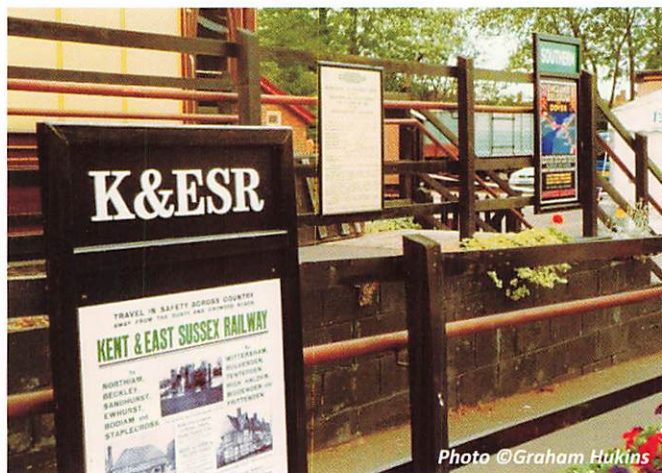
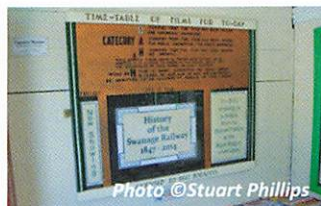


Photo ©Graham Hukins

Posters from the '20s, '30s and '50s side-by-side!



Swanage Railway "Cinema"



Photo display in grounded PMV

TENTERDEN TOWN

Commercial needs have meant additional buildings have been erected at Tenterden to provide visitor facilities and C&W workshop. Nevertheless, a number of original features including the station building and lampposts survive. The vision is to create a 1920s/30s feel at Tenterden by accentuating the features from this period that are present at the station and adding a few carefully chosen additions:

- The station building is little changed externally from the 1930's.
- The concrete lampposts were installed in the 1930s
- the Station Refreshment Rooms date from the early 1920s and the internal décor is of a style characteristic of this era.
- The prestigious Wealden Pullman set of mainly 1920s/30s coaches is on prominent display.
- The small number of signals and modest signal box all fit with this period.
- Adding a few "Big 4" posters and noticeboards would enhance the period feel.
- An additional building to house the BBQ and ice cream outlet will save the cost of hiring a marquee and of frequently resetting the equipment and will be designed to be appropriate to the era – possibly a purpose-built "grounded PMV body".
- Additional undercover shelter is also needed; a version of the Headcorn waiting shelter could be added on wide area of the platform near the Pullman siding. Internally one section could be dressed with period posters and notices while the other could include interpretation panels (possibly about the former line to Headcorn?) and/or a short video – perhaps in "Pathe news" style.
- Modern interpretation and welcome signs should be relocated to the car park and modern signage on the carriage shed should be replaced with enamel signs (reproduction if necessary).
- Big 4 liveried wagons plus occasional private owner wagon berthed here would be appropriate.
- Move the disabled car parking spaces from the station forecourt to the area formerly occupied by the top half of the admin offices so forecourt is clear of modern vehicles and they are screened by the earth bank.
- Consider cladding the end of the station building with wood to recreate 1930s appearance.
- The Company's heritage and educational aims are furthered by The Colonel Stephens' Railway Museum which has been established adjacent to the station site, and the term "National Light Railway Museum" has been copyrighted by K&ESR.

NORTHIAM

It is envisaged that Platform 2 will be used more often once services resume to Robertsbridge, as Northiam will be one of the main passing points. The signalling infrastructure suggests a slightly later time frame would be appropriate here and with a little effort a 1940 – 1945 feel could be achieved.

The following is recommended:

- “Blast tape” should be applied to the windows in the station building and signal box. The boarded up windows of the cottages already fit the bill!
- Blackout curtains could also be hung at windows in the booking hall.
- Some sandbags could be placed at a couple of the doorways.
- Appropriate wartime posters should be displayed in the booking hall, tea rooms and on notices on the platforms.
- When the buildings are next painted, white stripes first applied during the blackout should be applied to the canopy supports.
- One or two of the station running in boards should be painted grey and information displayed nearby to advise visitors that this was common practice during WWII.

- A waiting room is required on Platform 2 this could be a replica of one of the station buildings on the Headcorn section (ie wooden rather than corrugated iron) to showcase this long-closed section of the line. Opportunities to “dress” the building internally and externally with appropriate posters etc and to include information on the railway(s) at war.
- If a footbridge is added in the future it will fit with this theme.



Harman's Cross, Swanage Railway – new build in a period style appropriate for that line

BODIAM

Bodiam Station is the least changed since opening so lends itself to representing the line's earliest years (1900 – 1920).

- Private owner wagons berthed in sidings would add more atmosphere appropriate to this era.
- The Cavell Van is already a feature of the site and completely in keeping.
- Some Rother Valley Railway signage along with interpretation to explain the change of name in 1905 would be appropriate.
- The “Big 4” noticeboards should be relocated to Tenterden Town or Northiam.



SECR advert fits suggested atmosphere



Toilets CAN “look the part” too (Spa Valley Railway)

ROLVENDEN

There is a long list of desirable improvements at Rolvenden but those that have been identified as essential in the short term are:

- Siding in Field 51 – just providing a small amount of additional siding space will have a huge effect on operational efficiency by reducing shunt movements.

- Move the coal and ash piles.
- Move and improve water column in platform.

STAFF

Additional volunteers will be required to operate services to Robertsbridge. We must invest in recruitment, retention and training in order to ensure that we have an “oven ready” team when we open to Robertsbridge.

- The wearing of a simple railway uniform by customer facing and key operating staff will be encouraged and facilitated, with buffet and shop staff encouraged to wear “black and white” as a minimum.
- Annual members’ day (special trains/services/demonstrations) on AGM day will be

considered – possibly host Loco Trust, Terrier Trust and Norwegian Trust AGMs on same day – on a day the railway is not open to public.

- Acknowledge that Annual Gala has several objectives
 1. Raise profile of railway amongst potential visitors, members and volunteers and attract passengers to the event
 2. Provide an enjoyment and enrichment for volunteers (through visiting locomotives and unusual operation)
 3. Aim to be cost neutral (ie produce net revenue equivalent to a standard service for the same days)

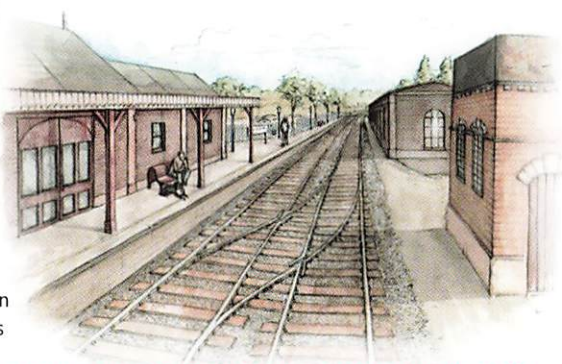
FUND-RAISING

Ensuring we’re “Ready for Robertsbridge” will require a concerted fund-raising effort and the series of projects outlined will be grouped under this title. The sums we aim to raise and the number of projects included are achievable and credible and the projects will be integrated with existing efforts and periodic maintenance that is funded from revenue.

A mix of fund-raising methods and timescales will be needed. There may be areas where grants or match funding can be leveraged; small projects could possibly attract individual sponsors while others may be best tackled with a myriad of small initiatives such as pump-trolley marathons, prize draws, on-train collections, appeals to the membership etc.

Where possible, collaboration and co-ordination with “friends” of K&ESR (Terrier Trust, Loco Trust, Vintage Carriages, 4253, 6619, Norwegian Trust, RVRHT, 300 Club, RSE etc) should be encouraged to maximise overall benefit to the railway as a whole.

The overall sum needed to fund the essential projects is in the region of £500,000. We have achieved greater amounts in the past for the Bodiam extension but the grant-awarding environment is now very different and appeals in recent years have generally managed £50 - £70k. Given that fund-raising can be spread over 4 or 5 years and that the commencement, progression and completion of some of the earlier projects, plus RVRHT progress at Robertsbridge itself, will provide a steady stream of good news this figure is both credible and achievable.



*Artist's impression of Robertsbridge Junction Station by Alex Griffin
by kind permission of Alex Griffin and the Rother Valley Railway
Heritage Trust*

NEXT STEPS

- 1 2015 plans, budget and work programmes are being drafted in line with the Vision.
- 2 “Five Year Action Plan” to be created by February 2015 with detailed plans, steps, milestones and timescales for implementation.
- 3 Progress will be reported in the Tenterden Terrier with milestones used to assist with fund-raising.

Volunteering: A Route to Employment?

David Hunter examines the benefits of volunteering in the context of 'employability', and explains how the K&ESR can assist those looking for work. The Saturday Gang's experience over the years provides a context for this discussion.

Volunteering is something that is integral to many businesses, but perhaps most notably to railway preservation. Indeed it was started more than 50 years ago by dedicated groups of people who wanted to make a difference. That concept hasn't changed much, but how we perceive volunteering and its benefits is now more marked than before.

One only has to pick up a paper or switch on the television to hear doom and gloom stories about youth unemployment – how young people are going nowhere and struggling to get jobs. This is, of course, a sad reality; but like any difficult situation there are ways it can be overcome.

One way to increase a person's chances of getting employment is to have a 'stand out' item or activity on the C.V. Qualifications/academic success are valuable, but they do not necessarily

make a candidate stand out. Volunteering demonstrates a 'get up and go' attitude and commitment, which are very important qualities for an employer.

The abilities and experience gained through volunteering vary from the very specific skills of a certain role (for example engineering skills picked up in the workshop) to more general ones such as teamwork and being in a professional environment. These too are valued by employers.

We at the K&ESR can provide references for candidates applying for jobs. Given that many of the Saturday Gang members were applying for jobs, we developed the 'Record of Achievement'. The Record of Achievement is split into sections, varying from engineering skills to more general ones. The sections are then subdivided into individual activities.



Passing on skills to a new generation (David Hunter)

For example, under section 'Workshop & depot processes' there is a task 'Joint-making'. Once a person can demonstrate he/she can do this the loco craftsmen will sign that this person has been trained, and has experience of this activity. The benefit of this document is both internal for the loco department and external for the individual.

The Record of Achievement is particularly valuable when applying for an engineering-based job, but it also shows progression and continual personal development. Sometimes it can be difficult to fully express ourselves in an interview, or give solid evidence for what we say. This Record provides solid evidence for a person's skills and experience.

When I received feedback on my successful interview I was told that volunteering on the K&ESR showed clear enthusiasm for railways and engineering. Some people believe they should avoid mentioning that they are a railway enthusiast. Certainly if all you do is take pictures of trains or go 'spotting', then indeed that may be to your detriment – but to turn an interest or passion into concrete action is impressive to any prospective employer.

Those of you who read the previous articles on the Saturday Gang back in 2008 will have noticed a list of members. Of course we have grown since then, but it is interesting to note the employment we have found. Other volunteers on the K&ESR have found work in various places, but my knowledge extends only to my particular group.

Steven Woodgate – Fleet Mechanic at Royal Mail

James Garner – Apprentice at Network Rail

Andrew Morris – Lead Driver at Stagecoach East Kent

David Pell – IT Engineer/studying for IT degree

Nathan Tutty – Engineer at CNC Gears Manufacturing

Calum Gibson – Apprentice in K&ESR's Loco Dept.

Ben Stannard – Arkwright Foundation scholar

Aaron Rosser – Agricultural study and employment

David Hunter – Engineer at Balfour Beatty Rail

At the time of writing we also have several members studying at university/college with a



Nathan Tutty explaining about gauge glasses to David Pell (David Hunter)

view to finding work in the next couple of years. They will have more to offer potential employers than just a degree.

As you can see a large number of us have found employment, in a variety of different fields and engineering disciplines. It would be fair to say that most of us are practical people who enjoy 'hands on' work (which is probably why we are attracted to the engineering side of the K&ESR). It must be said however that engineering experience can help in some more academic fields, such as maths. Given a context, knowledge of things like fractions and formulae can become really useful.

A parent of a younger member remarked to me recently: "If only teachers could make everything relate to railways, my son would be top of the class!" It goes to show that having a rounded life with a range of experiences does make a difference.

So in conclusion, if you want to make yourself a stand-out candidate, with something to distinguish yourself from the crowd, then give volunteering on the K&ESR a go!

Farewell to 'The Bumper'

60 years ago the K&ESR closed to passengers, and the Headcorn extension closed completely. Charles Judge looks back at the press coverage of the time.

As the bureaucratic decision-making process to close the K&ESR to passengers, and entirely north of Tenterden, ground on (see Terrier 109, Summer 2009) news slowly leaked out and newspapers sleepily awoke to the possibility that the line would actually close. Press coverage then divided into the 'loss of essential services' and the 'bucolic' schools of journalism.

From the *Kent Messenger*, 25th January 1952

Weald Rail Closure Arouses Storm of Protest B.R. says service is being run at a loss

People in the Wealden villages served by the Kent & East Sussex Light Railway have been anxious for some time about recurring rumours that the stretch of line between Headcorn and Tenterden is to close. Now they have learned, regretfully, that British Railways definitely intend to withdraw the passenger service unless it can be made to pay.

...Already several extensions of the closing date have been granted, and the present reprieve is effective until June, and possibly later.

...Road travel has long since drawn most of the passengers from this line, and although it serves a very useful purpose for some travellers, their numbers are limited.

Mr E. S. Brown, a Lloyds Bank premises inspector, told a reporter that he visits Tenterden and Biddenden about three times a year and said: "We may regard [the line] as something of a joke locally, but it is one we do not want to be without." He wanted to know what the railways intended to do about freight. "Some sort of goods service is essential to the scattered farming communities of the Weald," he added.

This theme was expanded at length with subheadings such as:

**Farmers perturbed
Effect on stock fair
Useful in the war
Economy issue
Opened 50 years**

Finishing with:

The Rev. Father Currie, RC priest at Tenterden for 18 years, said he used the line quite frequently to go to London. "During the war this little line had tremendous strategic value, being used to move materials to coastal areas," he added. "When Hastings was cut off from normal rail communication with London, owing to unexploded mines at Battle and Wadhurst, rail traffic came this way." Father Currie thought it a pity if the line were closed.

Many of the staff have served on the line since shortly after it opened in 1902. 54-year-old fireman Gordon Masters told a reporter he had been on the line for 33 years, but his driver, Fred Hazel, was a newcomer, having started on the line since the late War. He said two other drivers, 'Jimmy' Webb and Nelson Wood, had served



1953, and with only months to go an O1 Class heads a train at Tenterden Town. The chap on the right with a camera is Gordon Young, who who was later to serve as a volunteer on the preserved K&ESR (CSHA)

nearly 90 years between them, while another fireman, 52-year-old Robert Blair, had done nearly 38 years.

Soon the *Kentish Express* on 17th April 1953 sought out the passenger and human angle and reported in contemporary sexist terms:

Seasonable Problem of Six Smart Girls Regular Passengers with an Unsettled Future

With a grunt which could have meant anything and barely five minutes late, engine No.32659 pulled into Tenterden Town Station on Tuesday with its one-coach 'business girls' special'. Down to the platform stepped the six smart girls from Northiam. Sunny smiles and cheerful chatter gave no clue to the problem they are facing as season ticket holders on the doomed, and often less politely named, Kent & East Sussex branch line of British Railways.

At a time when many people are planning to get away from work for a holiday, the girls are having to scratch neat heads to discover a new way of getting to work.

British Railways have said they are closing the line to passengers, but neither the girls nor anyone else knows just when that will be. Whenever it is it will be too soon for this Sussex sextet.

There is no alternative transport for them. If they were to come by 'bus, they could not get to their jobs until after 10am, and that is too late.

The girls in the order they introduced themselves are: Christine Follington, a dental receptionist; Mildred Blackman, a cashier at a local solicitor's; and Joyce Davis, who works for a chemical company. Mrs Dorothy Jordan was something of a 'blackleg' passenger since she works in the group office of British Road Services. Then came the real 'veteran', Margaret Muston, a shorthand typist with the S.E. Electricity Board, who has been a regular on the line for over six years. Last was Mrs Dorothy Denny, who is on the Tenterden RDC staff.

On a line where other regular passengers are noticeably inconspicuous, the girls are looked after well. On Tuesday they travelled under the paternal eyes of Driver Fred Hazell, Fireman Bob Blair and Guard Cyril Packham. You may be sure that any one of them would have to be very late indeed to miss the train at Northiam.

How attitudes have changed, even with our current depressingly poor press standards. Nevertheless papers are a powerful medium, and the travel difficulties of at least three of the

ladies got to be considered at the highest level. The British Railways Branch Line Committee, in agreeing to the line's closure, only seem to have discussed one topic: how to provide a service for the three Northiam-Tenterden season ticket holders, presumably these ladies, to get to work on time. This was solved by laying on an extra morning bus via the semi-integrated nationalised transport system .

As the inevitable closure approached the national press latched on. The long lost *Star*, a liberal national evening newspaper (closed itself in 1960), reported:

The Tenterden Bumper – tall funnelled, high-domed and as quaint as the Titfield Thunderbolt – will chug across the Kent and Sussex border for the last time tonight.

After 53 years the 21-mile-long single-track Kent & East Sussex branch line between Headcorn and Robertsbridge is closing to passenger traffic.

For a long time now the Bumper has worn the rather faded, ramshackle air of a once-wealthy dowager, forced to spend her declining years on the dole.

But today it was due for one last glorious fling: a special return excursion laid on by British Railways as a parting gesture.

Railway spotters from all over England were expected down for the trip and the staff of 38 were prepared to see their resources taxed to the limit.

In a recent census, British Railways 'found that the Bumper had carried only 118 passengers in 90 days, mostly girls from out-lying villages working in Tenterden. I got in ahead of the main rush and accompanied the Bumper on one of its routine trips. Even so it was crowded – by Bumper standards – with 14 passengers.

The only local passenger on board whose journey was, as it were, really necessary was Mrs Ernest Harcourt Williams, wife of the actor [1880-1957 –Ed]. She lives near Tenterden, halfway down the line, and said she had been using the train for 40 years.

Her husband first used it more than 50 years ago when he used to visit Ellen Terry when she had a farm at Tenterden. [Smallhythe Place –Ed]

Hardest-hit of all will be Mrs W. Muir and her two daughters – Lorna, 16, and Frances, 26 – from a remote cottage near Wittersham Road. Mrs Muir will have to leave at lunch time to catch her bus home.

The Times, from its lofty London ivory tower, reported:

Sussex Branch Line Closing To-day 21 Miles Through Hop Country

from our Special Correspondent

Robertsbridge, Sussex

When the little tank engine that pants over the Kent & East Sussex Light Railway brought its one-coach train into the station here this evening about a dozen passengers alighted.

This was rather a surprise, for one had been led to believe that this line was hardly used by passengers at all, and that on occasions their number dwindled to one a train – four in the winter making almost a ‘rush hour’. So British Railways decided that this rural branch line must join others that are redundant. But on the whole the economics of this line seem beyond doubt. Even that redoubtable band of railway enthusiasts who cherish all branch lines seem to feel that this one was a hopeless proposition commercially. One of their number has described the line as meandering from nowhere in particular at Headcorn to what Oscar Wilde might have termed “a town of no importance” at Robertsbridge, where connexion is made with the Southern Region line to Hastings.

Then the Correspondent remembers he is writing for *The Times*, and its readers’ inclinations:

Cricket Bat Industry

In fact, this is not strictly true of Robertsbridge, for to cricketers everywhere it is a town of much importance. The Salehurst willow, which craftsmen of this parish fashioned into bats for W. G. Grace, is claimed here to be supreme still among the 30 or 40 willows which may be grown. This is the chief industry, by which the town has gained repute.

The Daily Telegraph’s Peterborough column, written by Ashford’s own knowledgeable and supportive MP, Bill Deedes, wrote with more authority:

Exit the K.&E.S.R.

To-day the shutters go up on the last of the country’s light railways. It is the Kent & East Sussex Railway, Robertsbridge to Headcorn, on which British Railways have laid a heavy hand in the interests of rationalisation, standardisation, efficiency, economy and so on. This is the last of the five small railways, owned and managed by the late Lt.-Col. H.F. Stephens, which somehow

escaped the meshes of the 1921 Amalgamation Act. The passenger railway finally came to an end on Saturday 2 January 1954.

Reporting had changed since the line opened 54 years before. Then the local press concentrated on the line’s utility; it now only reflected the sentimentality that had grown up around the line.

The *Kent & Sussex Courier* headline read:

Moving Farewell to the Old ‘Bumper’ Sadly Missed in Weald

Ceremonial final run was a grave and gay affair.

There then followed an accurate description of the day’s events including crowds everywhere, even at level crossings, and the mock funeral cortege including coffin organised at High Halden. Its reportage ended:

The Rother Valley railway, the K&ESR, the Farmers’ Line and The Bumper – one and the same affair – was dead.

The *Kent Messenger* in the same vein and again using the term ‘The Bumper’, a term now fallen out of usage, accurately opened its reportage with the lines:

After years of losses and months of fruitless attempts to prolong its life, a familiar Wealden feature, its railway link between Headcorn and Tenterden [sic], is no more.

It further acknowledged an illustrious past by noting:

Sight of [the special coaches on the final train] must have brought back to a few, at least, memories of those early days... when [the line’s] rolling stock was acknowledged to be superior to that used on the main line.

It concluded with the apparently silly, if with hindsight near prescient, comment:

Postscript: The solution, of course, seems obvious. The last train was crowded to capacity and more, so why not run a last train each week? The profit would be enormous.

So after many modestly successful years, and as many years of struggle, the closure decision brought a way of life to an end for many. It was noted at the time that Tenterden was now once again, as it had been for much of the later 19th century, the largest town in England without a passenger service.

Letters to the Editor

Pacers

Sir – I read with interest Doug Lindsay's letter and also the one from Tony Pritchett, both concerning 'Pacers', in the summer Terrier.

There is already a 'connection' between the K&ESR and Pacers, via me! I have been a non-active member of the railway since 1961, and was the first manager of the British Rail Research 'Railbus' project.

I was inspired into a railway career by the Ffestiniog Railway, and by my grandfather's memories of the K&ESR and the East Kent.

When I began work in the Light Vehicles section of BR Research in September 1977 I was given two sheets of A4 paper on which were sketched concepts for a two-axle double-ended railbus, based on the Leyland National bus. Those sketches were all that existed at the time. Just nine months later, thanks to the enthusiasm of everyone involved, we had built the unpowered prototype and very soon it was being towed along the WCML at nearly 100mph. During this time I posted a maker's photo of the K&ESR Shefflex, which had come from the Tonbridge office, on my office wall to let everyone involved know that it had been done before!

Converting the prototype into a self-propelled vehicle took longer, but this proved that there were cheaper options possible for rural railways than the 3-car DEMU then on the drawing board. The 3-car DEMU would have been cheaper per seat, but that is only appropriate if you are filling those seats with fare-paying passengers. At that time the typical average number of passengers on board a branch line train was just ten, so most would have either closed or been 'bustituted' had the DEMU option been pursued.

The railbus concept hit many barriers and development was taken forward by another department, which was not sympathetic to the idea. The ride of the research vehicle was assessed and found to be far superior to that of contemporary DMUs. The re-engineered production vehicles gave the inferior characteristics that Tony Pritchett refers to. I and my colleagues in Research have always been blamed for the poor quality of the production fleet, but the truth is otherwise!

Pacers are well past their 'sell by date' but when visitors ride a heritage train they expect to experience the past – smoke, rough riding, the lot. The objective is not to duplicate the everyday experience of riding Network Rail!

The success of the Pacers was that they proved that local services could be operated more economically. Had this not occurred we would have lost a lot more of our rural railways.

My career included consultancy at the lighter end of the railway business. I worked on the development of the new generation of light rail and tramway systems all around the world. This often went into areas that would have been appreciated by Colonel Stephens, for example converting Liskeard to Looe to tramway operation (this has not happened) and introducing Parry railcars on the Stourbridge Town branch (which has).

I feel that my personal success in the industry was inspired by the Colonel. He was ahead of his time in believing that railways have a future, despite the car, and that they can be operated very economically by transferring technology and adopting new ideas. Many thought when I began my career in the 1970s that railways were on the way out, I did not subscribe to that. Now railways have a great future ahead of them, networks have expanded and light rail and tramways have become the basis of city transport world wide. The Colonel was right!

*Trevor Griffin
by e-mail*

Eltham Well Hall waiting shelter

Sir – The letter from D. Wiffen regarding Eltham Well Hall Station is based on one of my regular local history articles which appear in the monthly SENine magazine.

The picture in Tenterden Terrier No. 124 shows the downside exit structure and not the waiting room shelter, which was by the footbridge. It was the only surviving structure from 1895 when the station was opened and a good candidate for preservation, although one survives at nearby Welling Station.

In the 1980s I attended some meetings of the K&ESR's Thameside Group at Albany Park and



Eltham Well Hall waiting shelter (John Kennett)

became aware of their interest in re-erecting the shelter at a suitable location on the Kent & East Sussex Railway. I enclose a photo of the shelter, of which on removal the parts were numbered to aid reassembly, and am grateful to Dana Wiffen who has spoken about his interest in locating this piece of railway history – and to you for printing his letter to possibly achieve these ends.

*John Kennett
Eltham, SE9*

Sir – Just a few words to point out that the photograph of Well Hall Station on page 17 of the Summer 2014 Tenterden Terrier doesn't show the platform waiting shelter; the small structure with a pitched roof is in fact a shelter for the ticket collector at the exit from the 'down' platform. The structure also covered the top of the steps leading down to Well Hall Road, and I believe this exit was only open for the evening rush.

The waiting shelter had a curved roof and was positioned opposite the station building, between the footbridge and the signal box. A nice photo of the waiting shelter etc. can be found in The Bexleyheath Railway At Eltham

1895–1995, written by Gus White and published by The Eltham Society in 1996.

*Tony Banks
by e-mail*

Sir – I refer to the letter in issue 124 of Tenterden Terrier from D. Wiffen enquiring about the fate of the Eltham Well Hall Station waiting shelter rescued and taken to Northiam by the Thameside Group. I suspect that the rotting 'flat pack' remains at the rear of Northiam Platform 2 in the late 1980s was this waiting shelter. The Tuesday Group working there at that time were told about the proposal to erect a waiting shelter half-way along Platform 2. I think that it was just before the Bodiam 2000 project that the very rotten remains were cleared from the site. A pity, but perhaps a lesson to be learnt about planning preservation projects.

*Humphrey Atkinson
by e-mail*

This correspondence (on a largely non-K&ESR subject) is now closed –Ed.

Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted

We tend to think of anti-social behaviour as a deplorable modern trend, but a number of court cases reported in the local press between 1917 and 1939 show that it was a problem for the old Kent & East Sussex Railway as well. Although in general the legal response to trespass is a civil action for damages, from the early days of railways Parliament recognised the dangers inherent in people wandering on to railway lines and, beginning with the Railways Regulation Act of 1840, trespass on railways has been a criminal act, liable to prosecution before magistrates. The same Act prohibited obstructing an officer of the railway. The provisions were modified by the Regulation of Railways Acts of 1868 and 1871, and were often added to by companies' private Acts.

In the case of the K&ESR, this was Section 8 of the Kent & East Sussex Railway (Amendment) Order, 1917. The company had begun to post notices warning against trespass in June 1917, and where these were ignored the company did not hesitate to use its legal powers to bring charges, although the local magistrates did not always share its view of the seriousness of the offence. For an action for trespass to succeed it was required that warning notices should be displayed, and so evidence to this effect generally formed part of the prosecution's case.

The first incident took place in 1917. On 18th November, Cecil and Charles Grisbrook, aged 15 and 17 (two sons of Ewhurst builder Frank Grisbrook) and their 14-year-old friend Ernest Goodsell were making their way down the road to Bodiam station when they met Albert Seymour, a platelayer on the K&ESR, who lived at Dagg Lane, Ewhurst. He told them he was going to Northiam with a trolley, and the lads asked him to give them a ride, as he had done sometimes before. He took them on his four-wheeled trolley as far as Dixter Wood, about a mile from Northiam. He left them there, telling them to get off the rails as a train would be coming soon, and carried on to Northiam with his trolley. It was now about 11.15, and a train from Robertsbridge was due at about 11.30.

Next on the scene was William H. Austen (described as "outdoor assistant to the engineer

of the railway company") who was on the line near the footpath crossing at 4¼ miles, about a mile on the Northiam side of Bodiam, at around 11.45. A pair of wheels from a 'muck trolley' (presumably this would have been a trolley with sides for carrying materials) had been left lying beside the line here, and the boys would have passed it earlier on Seymour's trolley. They had now lifted the pair of wheels on to the line and the two bigger boys were running them to and fro while the other was watching. When W.H. Austen shouted at them, the boys dropped the wheels off the rails (although not completely clear of passing trains) and ran off up the green lane towards Ewhurst. Mr Austen ran after them but couldn't catch them.

The matter was reported to the police, and Sgt. David Gander questioned Cecil Grisbrook and Ernest Goodsell. They admitted putting the pair of wheels on the line, but said they had taken them off again.

The boys appeared at Battle Petty Sessions on 24th December, when they were charged with unlawfully trespassing on the railway and Seymour, Austen and Sgt. Gander gave their evidence. In response to questions, Seymour said that taking the boys down was a help for him with the trolley, and he had thanked them and they had thanked him. There was a footpath to the road and he had not known they were going to walk back along the line. W.H. Austen explained that a number of signs warning against trespass had been put up along the line the previous June, and there was one at the crossing where the boys found the wheels. It was against the rules for platelayers to take passengers on the trolleys, and Seymour had been reprimanded for doing so.

In response, Cecil Grisbrook said that Seymour had not told them to get off the line. The fields had been under water, and he did not know anywhere they could get off the line nearer than the lane they went up. They had been taken for a ride on a trolley before. He had written to the railway company to apologise. Mr Ray, for the defendants, emphasised that the boys did not think they were doing anything wrong, as they had been taken down the line by the platelayer.

The chairman of the magistrates said that after careful consideration the Bench had decided to dismiss the charges, and were of the opinion that the railway company were very careless themselves. This experience does not seem to have led the lads into a life of crime; indeed Cecil Grisbrook became a long-serving member of Ewhurst Parish Council, and took over the management of the family building firm when his father died in 1936.

Another incident, which also resulted in a hearing at the Battle Petty Sessions, took place at Udiam siding (by Junction Road) on Sunday 27th July 1919. It involved Victor Austin, aged 18, and Jesse Milton, of Neal's Cottages, Bodiam, aged 16. According to Jack Braban, a stable boy from Udiam Cottages who was standing on the road nearby, the two lads were loading cord wood from the ground into a truck on the siding at about 3.15pm. When they had finished loading the first truck they sat down for a while, and then got up and pushed the truck along the siding towards the main line. When it reached the points it came off the line, and he heard one of the two say: "I expect we shall get into a row for this." They then made off up the road in the direction of Hawkhurst.

The following morning, Robert Price of Ewhurst, a K&ESR platelayer, was coming along the line on a trolley from Bodiam to Robertsbridge. He found a wagon off the line at Junction Road, and doubted whether a train would be able to pass it. He left his colleague Albert Seymour on guard and went to report to the ganger, Henry Saunders. Saunders got the first train from Bodiam towards Robertsbridge. He found the wagon derailed at the catch points, but they were able to get the train past by going slowly. A breakdown gang from Rolvenden came and got the wagon back on the rails, while he estimated the cost of repairing the damage to the track at £6.

On Friday 1st August Saunders went back to Junction Road with Police Constables Leney and Albert Edwards, of Robertsbridge. Victor Austin was there and Constable Edwards questioned him about the incident. Austin replied, "Yes, Milton and I loaded two trucks of wood on Sunday afternoon, and after loading the first one and part of the second we pushed the first truck up the line so that we could get the second one up, and the truck ran away and overpowered us before we could get the brake on."

As the siding was plainly uphill, Saunders and the two constables pushed the truck along the siding for about 25 yards, but it rolled back at once. Constable Edwards then asked Victor Austin, "Do you still say the truck ran away from you?" Austin hesitated, then replied: "Well, we pushed it up there for mischief, and it ran off the points."

Jesse Milton said he had been working for Victor Austin's brother on the Sunday afternoon. They had loaded the first truck and partly loaded the second, but they still had some big pieces of wood and they wanted to move the trucks up so that it would be easier to lift the wood into the second truck. They had uncoupled the trucks and pushed the first one along some yards, but it had started to run away. He had tried to put the brake on, but it was too late and the truck had come off the line. They had put a few more pieces on the second truck and then went home. He had intended to tell the platelayers about it when he passed on his way to work the next morning, but they weren't there. He admitted that they had pushed the truck further than they ought to have done.

F.W. Langham, who was prosecuting on behalf of the Kent & East Sussex Railway, said that, although it was only by providence that there had not been a serious accident on the line, because they were only boys the company was taking a lenient view and was only charging them with wilful damage, rather than bringing charges under the Railways Act, which would have resulted in their being committed for trial.

After the magistrates had considered the case in private, the Chairman of the Bench, Lt. Col. P.R. Papillon, said that although there was clear evidence of negligence, there was no evidence of wilful intention, and the case was therefore dismissed.

Six cases of trespass were heard at the Hurst Green Petty Sessions following the hop-picking season of 1920. Hop-pickers had been in the habit of using the railway as a footpath between Bodiam and Robertsbridge, especially on Saturdays and Sundays, and complaints had been received from the general manager of the K&ESR and from local farmers. One orchard opposite Salehurst Church had been entirely stripped of fruit by people who could not have got to it except by walking along the railway.

Accordingly, Constable A. Edwards of Robertsbridge stationed himself by the line on 26th September and stopped the six at various times. They had all claimed not to know they were trespassing, although notices were posted along the line, and one of the defendants, Fanny Pile, said she had walked along the railway for years when she was hop-picking.

Lt. Col. H.C. Morland, the Chairman of the magistrates, said: "The Bench has not the smallest doubt that the defendants thought they were doing no harm, but trespassing must be stopped. The Bench desires me to say that these cases must be taken as a warning for the future, and that if trespassing continues, the cases will be very seriously dealt with. It was a perfect nuisance to the farmers and others." Three of the defendants who were present in court were fined five shillings each, and the other three, who did not appear, ten shillings each.

During the next hop-picking season three youths from London, William Edward Kimber, Arthur Stanley Street and George James King, van guards by occupation, appeared before Hurst Green Petty Sessions, which was on this occasion chaired by Lt. Col. A.S. Sutherland-Harris. Constable Edwards had seen them trespassing on the railway at Salehurst on Sunday 4th September, and then found that they were in possession of apples, which were the subject of a separate case.

Major E.H. Langham, who was prosecuting on behalf of the K&ESR, said they had ignored the notices on the line prohibiting trespassing, to which the Chairman observed that for many years it had not been the practice to enforce the notices. Major Langham replied that trespassing had become a nuisance, and the railway company was now enforcing the notices.

The defendants pleaded guilty. Fining them ten shillings each, Lt. Col. Sutherland-Harris repeated the magistrates' previous warning against trespassing on the line, and said that any future cases would be dealt with more severely.

The case of the theft of apples was heard at the adjourned session just over a week later, when the three lads again pleaded guilty. They were charged with stealing apples valued at 2/6d from an orchard, the property of Henry Thomas Spanswick. Constable Edwards said that the three had at first claimed that they had bought the apples, but Street had eventually admitted

that he had got through into an orchard, picked the apples from a tree, and thrown them through the fence to the others. They were detained at Hurst Green Police Station, when it was found that Street and King had given false names and addresses and Kimber a false address. They were fined ten shillings each with a month for payment, or failing this, seven days' imprisonment.

In sentencing them, the Chairman observed that stealing apples was not a light offence in these days, when people were growing fruit for market purposes. "If other people came trespassing in their orchards, it nullified all they had done by way of cultivation during the season. People who were earning their living by fruit growing must be protected. Taking their apples was equivalent to taking money out of their pockets."

On 8th August 1931 Bert Hunnisett was driving a train from Tenterden Town to Robertsbridge. Just after leaving Salehurst Halt, at about 3.25pm, he noticed a number of stones on the rails. He stopped the train, and the guard, Edward Batehup, cleared the stones away. While he was doing so, he saw three boys hiding behind a hedge at the side of the line. Constable Simmons later interviewed three boys, two aged 11 and one nine. One of them admitted putting the stones on the rails, and when asked why he had done it, replied, "Because we like to see them smash." The other two admitted trespassing. They were summoned to a Children's Court at Hurst Green, where the magistrates decided to put them on probation for twelve months.

Finally, Ronald Alfred Jones of Sevenoaks (who did not appear in court) was summoned at Hurst Green Petty Sessions in October 1939 for trespassing on the K&ESR at Robertsbridge and for "impeding an officer of the Railway in the execution of his duty". According to Henry Penfold, gatekeeper at Robertsbridge (this would have been at Northbridge Street, where both the K&ESR line from Robertsbridge Junction and the siding to Hodson's Mill crossed the main road), on 29th August he had put the gates across the street while an engine was shunting. The defendant, who was driving a motor car, got out of the car and opened the gates.

At this point the Chairman of the Bench, Mr H.B. Willett, observed: "The gates were shut for

12 or 13 minutes." Constable Brown said the defendant had told him that he had waited at the gates for about 15 minutes when an official came along and waved his arms, and he took it as a signal to proceed. He had thought he was helping. The Chairman said the case for trespass would be dismissed, but for impeding the officer he would be fined five shillings and costs. The public had no right to interfere with

the gates, he said, and if it occurred again the fine would be much heavier.

Reports in the *Hastings and St Leonards Observer* (four), the *Kent and Sussex Courier* (one) and the *Sussex Gazette* (one) were retrieved online through the British Newspaper Archive.

Tom Burnham

THE OLD 'UNS

As members will know, 2014 sees the 40th anniversary of the re-opening of the Kent & East Sussex as a heritage railway. To mark this, Chairman Geoff Crouch asked Cathy and Alan Crotty – two of the best-known figures of the formative years – to organise an appropriate gathering on Saturday 20th September for all those who had worked as volunteers during the 1961–74 period. The above (perhaps slightly ageist) working title was initially used for the event, but by and by the time the day arrived it had become well established in company communications!

Considerable research was required, as many of those invited no longer feature in the Membership Register (although a surprising number still do) but between them the information held by the Museum and the resources of the Internet produced addresses for all but a few of those we were looking for. A small minority had to send regretful apologies, and a vanishingly small number refused due to long-term hurt feelings – not a bad result for any organisation. Our sincere apologies to anyone who was inadvertently overlooked.

About 80 guests gathered at Tenterden Town Station, where they were able to enjoy a photo display assembled by Alan Crotty before posing for a group photograph which will surely remain unique for our railway. Then it was on to the 13:45 two-coach special for Bodiam, appropriately hauled by Terrier 32670 (K&ESR No.3) with Paul Wilson, Dick Dickson and Dave Brailsford – all members of the invited party – taking turns at the regulator. By way of contrast the younger generation was represented by Jon Marsh (Fireman) and Bradley Bottomley (Guard).

At Bodiam Station an ex-London Transport Routemaster and an RF single decker took the party on to Robertsbridge for a tour of the new



Whitsun 1964 – several of the people in this view (plus the photographer) were at the Old 'Uns reunion over 50 years later! (Chris Lowry)

station, a diesel-hauled brake van ride to Northbridge Street and a talk about the project from Gardner Crawley of the Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust. Finally it was back to Tenterden where Andy Webb held a 'conducted tour' of the latest work on the GWR Railcar (another veteran of the 1960s). Every participant received a souvenir badge and a booklet about the Robertsbridge extension.

It was amazing to meet people one had not heard of for years, and to reminisce about the early days – as well as enjoy the company of still-active long-standing colleagues. A number of those who had not visited for some time commented how good our railway looked and how far its development had progressed. Numerous letters and e-mails of thanks have since been received, and everyone appears to have had a thoroughly enjoyable time. Thanks must indeed go to Cathy, Alan and the Chairman for organising this memorable day.

From the Footplate: Steam Raiser

Matthew Hyner looks at the first steps on the ladder to becoming a Steam Driver.

The steam raiser is essentially a cleaner who is qualified to light up locomotives and look after the other cleaners. It is his responsibility to ensure the locomotives for the day are presentable and prepared in good time, and that the Motive Power Depot is kept clean and tidy. The steam raiser may also be asked to complete small tasks to help maintain the site and locomotives not in service.

Life as a steam raiser starts early in the morning at Rolvenden. Weary eyes stumble to the teapot at 6.30am and muse over the notices, including the roster for the day and the locomotive log books. Having confirmed that nothing is amiss and sharpened up the senses with a good brew, it's out to the yard with the cleaners to find the locomotives.

Safety checks are completed first and the locomotives examined before the all-clear is given to go about lighting the fires. Coal is spread around the firebox with a heap of rags lit in the middle. On top of this is placed a small stack of wood and, after a few moments, a final topping of coal. Lighting fires provides a good opportunity for future firemen to get some practice with the shovel. All being well, light smoke will roll from the chimney to the sound of crackling wood, and gradually the smoke becomes darker in colour as the coal begins to

catch. Hopefully the fire will spread with little tinkering, and the floor can be swept clean as there should be little need to do any more.

The tools, oil bottles, feeder (oil can), spare shovel, coal pick and lamps are collected from the stores and placed neatly in the cabs. A good steam raiser, having provided the cleaners with a chance to practice their swing, will now share out the duties to get the locomotives clean; the yard duties can be completed after all the locomotives have left the depot. The motion and frames are given a rub down and any accumulated dust scraped free. Residual oil from the previous day's running is usually enough to lift the dirt and provide a shine. Bright work such as coupling rods and buffers can be scrubbed with emery paper, polished and coated with wax or oil to prevent rust. Couplings are cleaned and serviced, and running plates tidied.

Once steam has been raised and the chimney has stopped emitting soot the tanks are wiped clean and polished using Rolvenden's finest cleaning mixture. The smoke box and chimney can be coated with steam oil, which gives a darkened gloss effect to the paintwork. Any soft metal work such as brass and copper is polished and, if the cleaners are feeling really keen, the buffers may be 'quartered' to give a chequered effect when the sunlight reflects off them.



Cleaners at work on Terrier 32678 (Ian Scarlett)

Soon the fireman and driver book on for duty and with them a cleaner or 'third man', who will be rewarded for spending a few mornings cleaning with the opportunity to go along for the day to learn the ropes of a fireman. The driver will go about 'oiling up', while the fireman and his 'trainee fireman' go about their checks and clean the cab, all the while maintaining the fire to bring the boiler pressure up. The depot begins to get busy now, with the echoes of raising steam and light banter as everyone goes about their roles to turn out a fully prepared and cleaned locomotive for the day – the



Brendan Connell, steam raiser for the day, lighting up on 21st September (Ian Scarlett)

anticipation of breakfast (probably involving bacon) fuelling their motivation.

The pit, used to gain access to the underside of the locomotive and for end-of-day disposal, is emptied of ash from the previous day to allow the engine to blow down, releasing steam and water from the bottom of the boiler to clear any sediment that may have accumulated. The steam raiser and cleaners will normally break for tea while this is taking place. Then the locomotive will move off to take water and top up with coal before leaving the depot. The cleaners, having returned from their break, will move on to prepare the next locomotive and admire their handiwork as the first trundles by, with a sense of achievement – ‘I did that.’

With all the locomotives away from the depot for the day attention turns to tidying up. The wood stock is replenished, usually with broken pallets, and fresh cleaning rags are sorted. The stores are swept clean and the locomotive equipment organised. Fitters from the Engineering Department may ask for a ‘warming fire’ to be lit to gently warm a boiler through for the next day or for assistance with one of the many jobs in the workshop – a good opportunity to learn about how parts of locomotives work. The skills practised and knowledge learned on the depot all contribute towards learning to become a fireman.

‘On the road’ time for in-depth explanation is limited due to the job at hand, therefore cleaners looking to progress are well advised to put their time on the depot to good use when it comes to improving their understanding.

Cleaner is the first rung of the ladder for all enginemen. Despite the name, it’s not as dull a role as it sounds. These early enginemen learn the basics of locomotives by getting involved in the preparation from the start, with the opportunity to ask questions of experienced staff and practise techniques within the safe confines of the depot (there’s a lot to be said for walking before you can run). Without this vital role our locomotives would not be kept presentable and there wouldn’t be a regular opportunity to exchange knowledge. It should also be remembered that when photos of our gleaming engines appear in publications such as *Tenterden Terrier* or even *Steam Railway*, it’s the cleaners we have to thank.

If you would like to step on the first rung of the footplate ladder or perhaps arrange a day to come and see what we do, then our newly appointed Operating Assistant would be very pleased to hear from you. You can contact Andy Hardy by sending an e-mail to AndyH@kesr.org.uk – or speak to him when you are out and about at the railway.

OBITUARY

Ray Collins

I have not seen Ray Collins since May 2002, when Angela and I left Tenterden to move back to Lincolnshire and retirement; but every year we exchanged Christmas cards with notes on how the family were and what we were up to. On 21st May I telephoned Ray as I had just received a change of address, to the Royal British Legion Village in Aylesford. He sounded frail, but besides that he was still the positive and reliable Ray I had known.

I first met Ray in about 1990/91. Alan Robinson had taken over from David Felton as Finance Director, and I had 'volunteered' to be his Accounts Assistant. Alan brought in the first steps towards computerisation of the accounting system, as the Board had requested a faster and more modern system of reporting.

Ray joined us shortly afterwards as a new volunteer and, as I remember it, he brought with him 'a breath of fresh air'. A retired audit and bookkeeping clerk/manager, he had not really worked with computers, so he set about doing the 'books' on the basis he had worked with right up to his retirement. We always reconciled the computer work with the manual method but, for various reasons, the manual system still prevailed.

It was solely down to Ray and his dedication and meticulous approach that we had fully auditable accounts for that year. To use Paul Wilson's words: 'He was a grafter; he went about his work quietly, with no fuss.'

When Paul took over as Finance Director we moved onto a Sage accounting system, which solved the previous problems. Ray was still the backbone of the Finance Department, and still heavily involved with the main company accounts. About this time we were both asked by the Board, through Paul, to look at setting up what is now Colonel Stephens Railway Enterprises Ltd. This had been advised by our auditors, because of taxation changes for registered charities.

Ray was not only a shareholder in this new company when it was formed, but also its Finance Director – a job he did for many years with his normal care and diligence. We still

maintained regular contact, but as time evolved this was mainly with my late wife Angela, who had to liaise with him regarding the events that now went through Colonel Stephens. He offered tremendous support to her and other managers and volunteers in what they were doing, as their business paths now crossed almost daily.

Ray enjoyed the Railway and also spent time in the booking office, eventually taking over from John Emmott as Chief Booking Clerk. Before he joined as a volunteer he had had a heart bypass operation, so had limited his volunteering to less manual duties; but this in no way limited his commitment to any task at the railway that he was involved in. Unfortunately the efficient and quiet way he went about his work did not always highlight the attributes he brought to the company.

Ray was a member of the British Legion. I once asked him if he would represent the railway on Remembrance Day at Tenterden War Memorial. He thanked me for asking but politely declined, as he would be present at the Remembrance ceremony in London that day for his British Legion branch. In some respects, Ray was one of the silent heroes of the World War II – he flew in Dakotas on the China Run.

Ray was a Life Member of the K&ESR, together with his wife. In 1998 he was awarded a free pass by the Board in recognition of his services. A methodical, reliable and dedicated man, it should be said he was one of the original founder members of the Finance Department and Committee framework as we know it today.

While visiting the railway about 12 months ago he saw my son Adrian, who was driving that day. He looked him up and wished to be remembered to me. When I telephoned him in May he asked if Adrian had passed his regards on. Although he was getting on in his years, he was still the alert and principled Ray Collins I had known.

Our thoughts go out to his family at this sad time. Rest in peace dear friend and colleague; you deserve it.

P C-M

WATER WORKS

Infrastructure costs are largely ignored against the more obvious costs of repairing locos, vehicles and track. So, at the risk of being even more boring than usual, I decided that one of the hidden costs of the loco water supply would benefit from a little ventilation.

Every puff of steam up the chimney is 'bought-in' and processed water, and while loco water is extremely high in the 'commercial risk table' – no water, no steam trains – it is pretty well taken for granted. Behind the visible routine filling of the locos' tanks lies an extensive infrastructure to provide sufficient water of the right quality, which is absolutely critical to maintaining the revenue stream.

Plainly the supply of water and its costs can be split into various components, and here I confine myself to just one aspect: maintenance of the storage tank at Rolvenden. The highlight for the 2012 water works calendar was an internal spring clean after some 40 years of service to the preserved railway.

The tank is at least 60 years old (possibly 80 –Ed); no one seems to know when it arrived, but folklore has it that the frames of the Colonel's Pickering railmotor form part of its support structure. The railway has drawn water from different sources over the years, and in early preservation days the tank was filled from the stream at the back of the site – initially by a steam pump, I'm told, then later by electric pumps. That arrangement is long gone, and the stream would provide neither the quantity or quality to satisfy our current demand. Indeed, in summer the fish can be seen roller-skating in the shallows; plainly no place to get thousands of gallons each day.

Back to the tank, it seems it was last cleaned out and painted in the 1970s and constant service since then has certainly taken its toll. Ten years ago an inspection revealed considerable corrosion together with a huge amount of silt, the legacy from the river water era. Internal cleaning and coating was clearly needed, but what gets done is subject to cash and labour, and of course the perception of priority.

Consequently it remained on the 'must do soon' list and was deferred year by year until 2011,

when the Engineering Department picked up the budget allocation for water column maintenance. Those years of delay allowed the decay process to advance effectively by a further 30%, each passing year increasing the risk of the tank becoming corroded beyond recovery, in fact becoming a total loss.

Previous inspections had been brief and really only identified that it needed a good clean-up, some remedial work, and internal painting. It all sounded pretty straightforward; just drain it, clean it and paint it, a piece of cake really, no problem!

A loco in steam draws about around 1,700 gallons each day from Rolvenden; the tank holds 28 tons of water and supplies a vast amount of water each year. The only time in the year when there is no demand is in winter – November and January. However, there are constraints on the coating process, with regard to both minimum temperature and humidity during application, and there must be no condensation on the surfaces during the works. Thus there is no option: it has to be done in the summer, so an alternative supply of water must be provided to maintain the train service. These constraints generated a significant amount of extra work, which entailed several months of preparation.

A rail tank wagon providing roughly half the capacity of the main tank was commissioned as backup storage, and that required temporary connections into the existing supply system.

The permanent delivery pipework is four-inch diameter steel, and new connection points and isolating valves were fitted. The modifications included changes to the wagon to accept a four-inch flexible hose coupling and isolating valve. It was interesting to see Adrian positional welding, basically upside down, the underside of a pipe joint: an impressive skill to make molten metal defy gravity and stay where it was put! On the supply side, the reverse osmosis plant control

and discharge route had to be transferred to the wagon, with the added complication that it should be easily disconnected to allow locos to be shunted into the shed if needed.

These preparations took weeks to complete, and thus there had been significant costs both financial and in labour diverted from the Rolvenden workforce before we even got started.

In late June 2012, with the back-up tanker supply proved, the main tank was drained and the cleaning started. The tank panels are about two feet square cast iron with bolted flanges on the inside, giving a smooth outside to the tank – aesthetically pleasing externally, but all the fixing bolts and flanges are in the water space, where they quietly corrode away.

This was clearly not a concern for the builders, as it would outlast them; and it would look photogenic right to the end! Modern tanks are not so pretty, as the flanges are on the outside; but at least the fixings don't corrode and the inside can be cleaned easily.

The floor panels also have flanges in the water space, which effectively forms 50 individual pools when the tank is drained. Of course they were complete with debris and river silt from the good old days. I have to give Martin Butler a mention here for doing the clean-up. He spent a week in the tank; we did let him out each evening, and surprisingly he returned for more each day.

Our thanks go to Martin for a much appreciated effort, and also to the volunteers who provided the necessary support both at the tank top and at ground level.

It sounds a bit excessive, but the 36-ton breakdown crane was used to remove the timbers which form the tank roof. It had the necessary reach from No.2 road, and could lower the timbers on the other side of the site in one lift. Removing the boards took half a day and involved six people. Two were needed in the tank for slinging, another was on top to wave cheerily to the crane driver with instructions and two more were on the ground to receive the boards.

Replacing the roof boards at the end of the job took a further half day, so dealing with the roof alone absorbed six man days, which is really quite surprising.

We had planned to sheet the tank to keep rain

out, but the contractor dismissed that idea. Instead a temporary scaffold was arranged with a tin sheet roof, complete with covers to restrict the escape of dust and spray. Interestingly this necessary extra detail increased the cost by about 50% on the budgeted price. More unexpected expense was incurred for the hire of a huge fan and filter to extract dust from the tank during the grit blasting.

The day before the roof scaffold was erected the tank had dried out nicely. Plainly this was far too convenient, so by the next morning heavy overnight rain had filled all the bottom panels leaving us with two inches of trapped water again. This was the day before the grit blasting was to start, and the contractors needed it to be dry for Monday morning,

Sunday was spent with Ian Matthews and me desperately trying to clear the water against the clock. By lunchtime the prospect of drying it out was looking bleak, but then – the cavalry arrived! Well, Charlie Masterson with his pond pump actually, a last-minute rescue. Special thanks here to Ian because he really pitched in and a hectic afternoon paid off – we beat the clock. Far too much stress; why on earth do we do it?

The contractor work went well. After blasting, all the grit had to be cleaned out and the tank vacuumed before priming it. All the bolt fixings (and there are hundreds) had to be brush painted to get in the nooks and crannies behind them before spraying.

This exercise was repeated twice more, with two top coats of the two-pack paint. Once the paint has been mixed the clock is ticking, as it goes hard whether it's on the tank or still in the tin! And hot weather makes it go off even faster.

Our own 'Captain Moff' made and fitted a new internal access ladder, as the rungs on the old one were wasted away; and three new stays were made and fitted across the tank to provide extra support for the long sides. All was done at the weekend, against the clock, so the contractors were not delayed.

During the week that followed completion the contractor tested the final paint thickness was to specification, then the scaffold roof was removed and after a final clean the roof-boards were refitted and re-filling started.

I didn't go to Rolvenden the next day, and nobody rang me to let on! Apparently the leaks from the joints between the plates were like a rain storm. That was a Friday. I got in on the Monday and though most had reduced to a dribble, there were still leaks. To be fair, we had anticipated some leaks from our experience of previous short-term drain-downs; but not on that scale.

Thin wooden strips were often used between the plates as a seal, and I assumed that to be the case for our tank. As with a boat which has dried out, it leaks until the wood expands and seals it all up. To some extent it did seal up, but a couple of persistent leaks remained, one in particular being very obvious.

By then the maximum water demand was upon us, with two locos in service during August, so we had no chance of carrying out remedial work. We waited to see if it would heal up, but it didn't.

Attempts to use sealer with water still in the tank were a failure – not surprising really, but worth a try. Another drain-down was needed, but extended RXD use into November pushed the job back and back. Once again revenue generation delayed the work. When we did get it drained, no wood sealing strips were found; there was some sort of filler which after limited excavation was eventually capped with a modern acrylic sealant.

After all that effort the tank looks the just same on the outside as it did before, a rather unprepossessing piece of lineside furniture but hugely important to our operation and universally taken for granted.

The measurable direct cost was over £7,000, which is significant in itself, however compare that with the cost of a new tank at around £25,000 plus (for all the connections etc.)

Not included in the £7,000 is the labour input of both volunteers and paid staff taken from the Rolvenden workforce – six man days to deal with the roof, eight man days of cleaning, three days on internal repairs, two man days on clearing the rain water and several days fixing up temporary pipework and instrumentation.

Totalling about 25 man days, around 20 of those were diverted from the mainstream engineering and loco overhaul activity at Rolvenden. These figures give a different perspective to the

apparently simple task of 'just' painting the inside of a tank.

We had no budget for painting the outside, so it will stay looking a bit tatty until funds can be found for scaffolding, labour and of course the ridiculously small cost of the paint. Although the inside of the tank is decidedly better-looking than the outside, few people will get to appreciate that. The internal coating should last for ten years or so, by which time my involvement will have waned somewhat. I very much doubt if I will be climbing into that tank when I'm 80, but who knows.

We still have the 'parachute' tanks at Tenterden and Northiam. They have had minimal maintenance over the years and both now need repairing, cleaning and coating.

Internal coating will always be summer period maintenance, with the complexity and disruption that will cause. At Northiam alternative water supplies will be needed, and at both locations the necessary scaffolding will foul the adjacent running line. January 2014 saw leaks in the internal supply pipework yet again at Northiam; this time the pipework was replaced completely but our old friend water has started the corrosion again.

I have Northiam tank in my sights for 2015, but an adequate budget allocation is needed together with a lot of planning and preparation, by both engineering and operations departments, so that trains can continue to run. Northiam's water supply is of course essential if locos are to travel the full length of the line; only 6619 and Norwegian can pass Northiam without watering.

Water is our strange companion on this planet; we cannot live without it but its destructive properties at times seem endless. It is a solvent and collects minerals from wherever it can, and it rusts away steel while you watch – just look at how much of 4253's tanks actually arrived here with the engine.

Science and technology have provided tools to slow its aggressive progress, but the battle to protect our loco water supplies will be virtually continuous for the foreseeable future.

Next time you hear a loco storming up the bank into Tenterden, give a brief thought to the water infrastructure that allows it to happen.

Chris Greatley

The White Van Man

Some time back the Tenterden Terrier asked for genuine K&ESR ghost stories, but nothing was submitted. This account, related by Nicholas Cannon, may not be a ghost story but it is certainly a weird tale.

It was mid-winter and a cold front had scattered snow across the borderlands where Kent becomes Sussex. A weak sun shone from a cloudless wide blue sky, frost glinted on the High Weald's trees and patches of black ice reflected their sinister sheen. He turned left off the road which had brought him from home and was glad of his car's heater. The road descended towards the wide and marshy valley floor, now frozen by the same chill night which had silvered the branches of the stark Wealden trees.

He knew this road well, but it always seemed to come as a surprise how quickly the remnants of the once-great forest changed to the wide expanse around the Rother and its tributaries. There was always a stark chill in the valley on days like this, but he would soon be at the station where there would be more warmth, the companionship of other volunteers and, above all, a cup of tea.

The road seemed empty; perhaps others had chosen to stay home on this morning of treacherous surfaces. The road twisted one way, then another; and then suddenly, the black ice was there again and the steering would not respond. Opposite lock caught the slide, but it was too late.

As the car hit the ditch it was as if the world's sound had been switched off. The sky lurched sideways in a strange mix of slow motion and real time that would catch him off guard and haunt his dreams for years afterwards. There was an impression of torn hedgerow and the world revolving until the brilliant blue was once more above and the frost-bitten dark land below.

For a moment he sat motionless, realising he was alive and conscious. Slowly he tried his arms and legs and neck. Everything worked and there was no pain, just a numb, shaken disbelief.

"Thank God for seat belts," he thought. He continued sitting there; he did not know for how long. He must get to his mobile phone, he thought, but it was on the other side of the car and somehow he could not.

It was then that he saw another vehicle draw up and a figure get out. He heard a voice. "Are you all right?" The man who had asked wrenched the car door open despite the now obvious distortions in the bodywork and roof. The cold of the morning poured in.

"I must phone my wife," was all he could say in reply. The man produced a mobile from his own pocket, thrust it at him and the call was made. His wife reassured and arrangements made for the car to be collected, he started to shiver, whether from shock or the cold.

"Where were you going?" the helpful stranger asked. "To the Railway," came the reply. "I work there as a volunteer."

Again the stranger did not hesitate. "Get in the van, I'll take you to the station."

It was a white van. Its interior was warm, with comfortable seats, and as they drove towards the Railway he began to feel his resilience returning. The van turned into the station yard and stopped for him to get out. He thanked the driver and walked to where he knew the others would be. After a few steps one of the other volunteers walked towards him and stopped. "What happened to you?"

"Crashed the car. I think it's a write-off. The chap in that white van was kind enough to stop and bring me here." The other volunteer looked at him oddly.

"What white van?" he asked. "The gates are locked."

They both looked round. There was no sign of a van leaving. The entrance gates to the yard were closed, their chain and padlock where they should have been and where they had been all night. Then the other volunteer spoke again. "I reckon that was your Guardian Angel."

The above is a true story. The exact location of the incident and the individuals involved have deliberately not been identified. When the driver later checked the phone call he had made he found that it had come from his own mobile.

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 is increasingly important, so please try to follow the guidelines set out below.

Content

The *Tenterden Terrier* will continue to major on K&ESR news, features on aspects of the current K&ESR, and historical articles on Colonel Stephens' and other light railways, particularly those of the South East. There is only one criterion here, and that is pre-digital. Any written or photographic contribution must be INTERESTING to the reader, not just the writer. It should only exceed 2,500 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, if carefully packed. Floppy discs are now obsolete.

Typewritten copy can be scanned to extract the words for printing, so can be accepted; but the Editor's 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 an image selected for publication should be at the maximum most basic cameras can achieve. The image size is given in the camera's specification, and for a 5 megapixel 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 photo requires this size; a half-page photo perhaps less. Please under no circumstances compress your photo for transmission: send it as the camera took it, changing nothing except perhaps for trimming and renaming.

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Your railway needs you!

Can you spare just one Sunday next spring to help us with a major trackside clearance project?

Forestry & Conservation are making preparations to hold a Task Force day in March 2015, and we need as many extra hands as possible. There will be tree cutting, undergrowth clearance and, best of all, bonfires!

A special train will be chartered to take us to and from the work site, and drinks & refreshments will be provided during the day.

You need to be reasonably fit and should bring old clothes, working gloves and heavy-duty footwear. We can supply hand tools but any saws or loppers you might want to bring would be helpful.

Please register your interest by contacting **kesr.forestryconservation@gmail.com** and we will let you have details of the final arrangements shortly.