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Tenterden Terrier



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FRONT COVER

*M7 30053, on loan from the Swanage Railway, rounds the curve near Mill Ditch on a photographic charter on 5th May 2015.
(Alan Crotty)*

BACK COVER

*No.23 Holman F Stephens, now stored pending overhaul, on the reverse curves east of Cranbrook Road.
(Ian Scarlett)*

Tenterden Terrier

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Editorial

What's the Railway Ever Done for Us?

Thus might the citizens of Tenterden, past and present, ask themselves. As we all know, in the middle ages Tenterden was a town of some significance – a Cinque Port in fact. However, by the 19th century a small, landlocked, 'sequestered sort of place' surrounded by fields and with a thin population was reflecting on its past glories. What it needed was a railway connection to bring it into the Victorian age, and after a number of false starts that connection arrived in the form of the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

The town expanded, but by the 1920s progress in roads and motor vehicles was challenging the railway. The resultant struggle against adverse circumstances stimulated a heroic romanticism which ultimately brought about the establishment of a successful tourist railway. In the course of this Tenterden and the K&ESR became almost synonymous, and today no tourist information on the 'Jewel of the Weald' is complete without mention of our railway. Thus it is that this little line still brings an economic stimulus to the town – though in a form our Victorian forebears could scarcely have envisaged. Everyone who has been part of that story should take pride in what we have collectively achieved. But does Tenterden really appreciate our achievement, and how the town benefits from the railway? On page 4 readers will see details of recent contacts with the town, and hopefully these will help.

Nick Pallant



M7 30053 working the last passenger train of the day on Orpin's Curve, 23rd May, in the care of Driver Charlie Masterson (Phil Edwards)

Sales & Marketing in Focus

Following the General Manager's retirement the department acquired a number of additional responsibilities. Filming, photo-shoot and charter enquiries have been buoyant since the start of the year and, with a good conversion rate, these have proved lucrative. Most recently was the filming of a Channel 4 series 'Hidden Villages', in which Penelope Keith travelled from Bodiam to Tenterden and on to Biddenden. In the same week elements of a TV commercial were shot in the loco yard; the result (as a time-lapse movie clip) can be seen at www.kesr.org.uk/film-location. In February our staff facilitated a production company in the making of a showcase commissioned by the BBC. Many found themselves as extras in a variety of scenes. A ten-minute film was created and can be viewed as noted in our Catering report. See who you can recognise...

Our attendance at trade shows continues to be an important part of the marketing plan. Apart from the regular calendar of shows that we attend to promote the Railway, we returned to the Essex Tourism Show after an absence of seven years; this is one we'll add to the 2016 list. Again in Essex we attended the Open Day for Kirby's Coaches, an industry name that many who work at Tenterden will be familiar with. Our stand has just been in County Square Shopping Centre, Ashford for three days and is due to promote our July Thomas® event in The Mall, Maidstone, in late June. The weekend following the Kent Show we're booked for four days to attend the Wildlife Heritage Foundation Open Days in Smarden, where our staff will no doubt hand a leaflet to all of the thousands of expected visitors!

As a member of the Tenterden Chamber of Commerce we are focused on improving the Railway's relationship with the residents and businesses in the town. You'll start to see an improvement in marketing initiatives as that relationship develops. Around 30 shops and businesses now display our A4 event posters which, together with an A board poster site at the top of Station Road and regular banners being displayed on the recreation ground railings, significantly increases awareness of our activities among local people as well as visitors.

One of the Chamber's success stories is the 'Love Tenterden' loyalty card scheme. It has around 2,500 card holders and 75 participating

businesses, and we're delighted to be part of this initiative. There are offers of the day and ongoing discounts. Anyone can buy a 'Love Tenterden' card, irrespective of home address, for just £1 and start making savings straight away. The website www.ilovetenterden.co.uk carries all the information about the scheme, and cards can now be purchased from either Jemma Hosmer or me in the Commercial Office.

Earlier this year we introduced online sales for the advanced purchase of Rover Tickets. These have an incentive discount of 10% and have proved popular, with positive comments received on TripAdvisor. From inception at the beginning of May, in one month 555 advance tickets were purchased online (including four dog tickets) to a value of just over £7,500. Tactical price promotions such as Pensioners' Treat and Little Bird provide a reassuring level of business, with the latter available to implement on an ad hoc basis. During June we're trialling a 'Keep your ticket, travel again half price' promotion to encourage a second visit.

Ongoing marketing initiatives for the summer period include two radio campaigns, one with Arrow FM, covering the 1066 area, the other with KMFM which is combined with a weekly press and online presence. With the recent closure of Rye Tourist Information Centre we'll soon have our event and generic advertising on an interactive information point in the town, provided by marketing company 'Whatslocal'.

We were shortlisted as one of five finalists in the National Coach Tourism Awards. We were not the winner at the gala presentation held at the West Midlands Safari Park in May, but nonetheless we are pleased to have reached the finals.

Lastly, the Railway was selected by Ashford Borough Council and Visit Kent to host a study tour for delegates attending a Tourism Symposium at Eastwell Manor Hotel, organised by The Tourism Society. On 1st June a two-car Terrier-hauled set was used to entertain 32 delegates to a lovely afternoon tea, which was very well received. It was lovely to see the reactions from these mainly London-based operators to our station, the train and the beautiful countryside in which we work.

Graham Sivyer

Lineside News

Compiled by
Hugh Nightingale

COMMERCIAL

From the Deputy Chairman – Ian Legg

First of all, this is a new departure – the Deputy Chairman writing this piece! As many members are aware there have been some changes on the Board since the last *Terrier* went to press. Geoff Crouch has stepped down as Chairman, but remains on the Board; Graham Hukins and Stuart Philips have both resigned as Trustees. I would like to record my thanks to them for the work they have put in to what is often a thankless task. Geoff has been supporting, and indeed continues to support, the management team on a day-to-day basis. Stuart and Graham also brought a fresh look at our customer-facing operations and how we should approach getting 'Ready for Robertsbridge'. Thank you Geoff, Stuart and Graham.

As a consequence of these changes the Board agreed that it would not elect a formal Chairman until after the AGM, when new Board members will have a chance to be considered. I have agreed to act as the Chair of Board meetings,

helped by the other Board members supporting the management team. What we have learnt over the past six months or so is that the Railway needs a person to act as General Manager – not necessarily full time, though. The K&ESR is too busy nearly every day for volunteer managers to cover the job on a long-term basis, but it needs a central focus to act as 'ringmaster' and make it all happen when it should! Carol Mitchell has done sterling work, assisted by Geoff, in covering this role in the meantime. My thanks to Carol as well.

Derek Dunlavey has decided that after many years (he must hold the title as the longest-serving trustee) he will not seek re-election this year. As he has acted as our Safety Director, a critical role for a railway undertaking, the Board have agreed to co-opt Paul Jessett to one of the vacant positions, with a view that, if elected at the AGM, he can take on this role with a smooth hand-over. Paul comes to us with a wealth of experience from London Underground. Welcome Paul, and thank you Derek for your invaluable advice and counsel.



During Easter celebrations to mark 75 years since she first came to the K&ESR, Terrier 32678 works away from Northiam on the 2.43pm ex-Bodiam on 3rd April (John Wickham)

Also co-opted to the Board in the wake of the resignations is Brian Janes. Brian was of course a Trustee for some years before stepping down in November 2012. He became a Director of our trading subsidiary, Colonel Stephens Railway Enterprises, last August and rejoined the main Board in March.

The departmental reports in Lineside News will detail their achievements, but the Board has been focused on organisation structure – trying to balance the needs of the business with the resources available. We know we need to strengthen certain areas to get ourselves fit for the future. Geoff has been working with the management team to work through what we need to do for Robertsbridge running. We have also been keeping a close eye on the finances – income in less costs out equals money we can spend on development. Regular re-forecasts and tracking performance helps us plan more responsively, rather than discovering a hole too late!

With a new General Manager and adjustments to the management team the Board can move on to spending more time considering further plans to make us 'Ready for Robertsbridge'. The appeal remains open by the way!

So from departures to arrivals – I hope. There are a number of vacancies on the Board this year; some Directors will stand for re-election, but we also need new blood to keep us fresh. We really need people with legal, project management and finance skills to complement our current expertise. Being a Trustee of a charity has certain legal responsibilities – we can't just do what we want – but it can be very rewarding to actually make a difference in guiding the Railway's future. Guidance notes are available on Trustees' responsibilities and serving Trustees will be happy to discuss the role with anyone wishing to put themselves forward. Trustees need to be able to show leadership, communication and logical thinking skills, and be willing to make sometimes difficult decisions. If you can help then we will welcome you aboard!

"If I'd Only Known" – Carol Mitchell

One fateful evening in early February the Board decided that Geoff Crouch, who had been valiantly acting as both Chairman and General Manager for more than six months, should be offered some support. Ian Legg, who was chairing the meeting, looked round the table to see if there was anyone willing to step forward. It

dawned on me that, as most of the other Trustees were still gainfully employed elsewhere, I was the most likely candidate. So I rather quietly I said I would volunteer, and that I would try to do three days a week, subject to prior commitments. If I'd only known!

That was February; now it's June. What have I been up to in the meantime? My first job was to run the campaign to recruit a new General Manager. As can be imagined, I tackled this with some enthusiasm. Though these matters always take longer than you think, at the time of writing four candidates have been invited to attend for interview.

I had meetings with the Probation Service to see if the Railway can take offenders who have been ordered to undertake Community Service as part of their sentence. Having agreed the parameters for this, I am now waiting to see what transpires.

Then there are all the letters asking for a raffle prize. I was amazed at how many requests the Railway receives – anywhere between two and ten each week. It's impossible to respond to them all without incurring significant cost, so I have followed the policy adopted by the previous General Manager: that is, to provide a voucher for free travel for up to three children when accompanied by a fare paying adult, but only to those who provide a stamped addressed envelope. This may seem harsh, but the cost of postage continues to become ever greater.

Then there are all the problems that don't seem to belong to anyone else, such as requests for someone to give a talk to a group. These are easy, as we have a dedicated team, consisting of Harry Hickmott and Lyn Brocklebank, who provide this service. I have also helped to arrange the installation of the cabinets for the defibrillators at Tenterden and Northiam by the Tuesday Group. And then of course there are the e-mails. When I came back from my recent trip there were several hundred of them to wade through!

Apart from that I have spent my time renewing the various licences that are required to allow us to operate legally, and issued contracts to new members of staff. One thing I wanted to do was to audit the staff files to make sure they are in apple-pie order for the new General Manager.

Although I have started, I can't claim to be anywhere near finishing. Part of the trouble is my prior commitments. One of those was to

walk Hadrian's Wall in early May to raise funds for research into oesophageal cancer. Having survived that, and raised well over £3,000, I am now back in the office. Shortly I'm off to Edinburgh as a delegate to the Annual Conference for the Benenden Healthcare Society. As I said at the Staff Meeting in February, I do have a life outside the Railway!

Shop report – Sjors van Dongen

In this first report as the new shop manager, I ought to introduce myself. Most of you will know me as George, having worked in the shop as a volunteer for six years before taking on the management role.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Martin Easdown on behalf of all the volunteers in the shop for all the work he has done over the past ten years and wish him all the best in his new employment. The training he has given me has made it possible for me to take over the shop on such short notice. We all hope that we will see him again soon as a visitor.

I have inherited a good, well-stocked shop; but as with any change of management, there have been and will be a few changes. The most obvious of these at the moment include the clearing of the shop windows in order to bring in more natural light, and the installation of new LED lighting (a big thank you to Brian Janes and Paul Hutchinson for supplying this at no cost).

On the business side of things, the 1940s weekend saw an improvement in takings, possibly due to the difference in sales stands at Tenterden Station in comparison to previous years.

The Southern Steam Sunset, over the late May Bank Holiday weekend and featuring the visiting M7 30053, was an enormous success; takings exceeded all expectations, with a total of over £3,300 over the three days. This was helped by the publication of Brian Hart's new book on the Elham Valley Railway – copies are still available at £39.95 – which brought in over £600 on the Saturday alone!

On normal running days (especially during the week) trading has been pretty slack, but average when compared to the number of passengers who were travelling.

Having received a lot of support from paid staff and volunteers, both within and outside the shop, I feel very confident in taking on the

management. With this support I hope that the shop will see further changes, which will continue to improve it as time goes on.

Catering – André Freeman

As anticipated, the season is proving to be challenging in many ways.

For any business to work effectively, the right tools for the job are required: it is sometimes possible to undo a screw with a coin or a knife, but neither are the preferred choices (particularly if you're defusing a bomb)! For example, our new dishwasher fulfils its tasks routinely and without fuss, and the new gas fryer has improved speed of service at times of peak demand; our menu offer has made use of this new facility. These items are without doubt, therefore, the right tools.

Where we continue to struggle is with our ability to exploit the benefits promised by our computerised ticket booking system. The aspiration within Catering was that it would streamline many of the routine tasks associated with pre-booked packages, so freeing staff to concentrate on delivery and further development of our business. Sadly, 16 months after installation, we find that we are still struggling to acquire even the most basic information necessary to operate on a daily basis.

As much of the trust in the system has broken down, we are spending significant time ensuring that we are aware of all of our commitments. Given this uncertainty it has been necessary to increase our stockholding, to ensure we are able to cater for these 'unknowns'. It is hoped that the further training and input from the software supplier (which took place in June) will resolve many of these issues.

A recent report by the Office for National Statistics showed that 74% of adults regularly buy goods or services online, as the growth of and increasingly widespread access to the Internet changes our habits. Since 2006, apparently, the number of people accessing the Internet every day has doubled. Our public website is our 'shop window' and is of paramount importance. However it is run on outdated software, and is not integrated into our sales systems.

For those with Internet access, a BBC Worldwide promotional video filmed onboard the 'Wealden Pullman' may be viewed at vimeo.com/121995271

The 'Wealden Pullman' Facebook page is an increasingly popular way to keep up to date and take advantage of occasional short notice special offers.

Pullman Car *Aries* has finally arrived, from Ramparts at Barrow Hill, although it had been ready for transport for some time. A frustrating range of issues beyond the control of our contractor delayed transportation – the last being 200 barrels of beer blocking access!

Overall trading can best be described as flat – we just about met budget to the end of May, although only thanks to a great deal of hard work by our team of volunteers and paid staff. The K&ESR has always been held together by the goodwill of the men and women on the front line who make it work, often regardless of personal cost, putting in long hours just to keep up with the workload. The cost in this is that innovation and the more challenging tasks suffer.

Sadly there is a feeling that the glue holding some departments together is now our staff members' feeling of responsibility – not to the organisation but to their colleagues, who would inevitably feel the brunt of losses of experienced staff. *(We know we have problems with the out-of-date website, but action is in hand –Ed.)*

Chief Booking Clerk – Chris Baker

In the last edition of the *Tenterden Terrier* I referred to the increasing trend of passengers to book in advance, either by the phone to the Tenterden office, via the Internet, or through one of the promotions run by the Sales and Marketing team. This trend has continued in the first few months of this year, particularly for the Thomas weekends in February, Easter and the two Bank Holiday weekends in May: the 1940s event and the Southern Steam Sunset.

Passengers who turn up on the day purchase their tickets at Tenterden, Northiam or Bodiam, or on the train from our band of Travelling Ticket Inspectors (TTIs). More than 90% of these purchases are made at Tenterden, and therefore our priority is to always keep Tenterden staffed by a booking clerk (or two for special events).

Staffing at Northiam and Bodiam is important both for ticketing purposes and for 'meet and greet' reasons; but sometimes, in the absence of

booking clerks, leaving the TTIs to issue tickets on the train.

We are currently short of volunteers for the booking office jobs. Do you know of anyone who is able to help? The job is computerised and, now we are into the second year of our new Merac system, most of the early problems have been resolved and the job can be mastered in two or three learning turns. Full training will be given and there are written instructions to refer to if you get stuck. At Tenterden there is back-up from the office staff, who also act as 'queue busters' in the event of a last-minute rush before a train departs. At Northiam and Bodiam you may have help from the Station Master, and there is always the option of asking customers to pay the TTI on the train if they arrive at the last minute.

As well as the job of issuing tickets, the booking clerk is often the first point of contact for the customer and our clerks get asked all manner of questions about the Railway and anything else. Recent questions have included:

- Where is the nearest cash machine?
- Where can I get a taxi?
- Can I visit the engine shed?
- Is Charlie here today?
- And of course the most common one: Where are the toilets?

We do need new volunteers and extra help in the booking offices to cope with the summer season, so why not contact us to find out more?

Visit of M7 30053

We are sure members and readers will join us in expressing our thanks to the Swanage Railway for the loan of 0-4-4T M7 30053, and especially the role it undertook during the Southern Steam Sunset event over the Late May Bank Holiday.

Imaginative timetables were produced with plenty of variety, notwithstanding the rather small pool of locomotives available. However, the presentation of all motive power carrying the late-BR 'ferret-and-dartboard' logo created a harmonious atmosphere rarely witnessed in preservation.

The weather was not particularly kind, but at least it kept some off the beaches, and immediate reactions suggest that the event was very well received, marking, in addition, the 25th anniversary of the reopening of Northiam Station.

Editorial team

 sufficient volunteers, these stations **run without**

Rolling Stock – Nick Pallant

Mark I's

TSO No.64 has now been stripped down to a very skeletal condition. Work on rebuilding the Robertsbridge end is quite well advanced but the badly corroded Headcorn end will take much longer. The steel cladding has been removed up to about waist rail level along both sides of the coach. All this is being replaced with new material, now that the 'Z' framing repairs are nearly complete. Numerous sections of this have had to be replaced, and we are grateful to North Norfolk Railway C&W for supplying the new frame sections. The roof has suffered over the years and repairs to this are also in hand. At the time of writing thoughts are turning to assembling the materials to start reconstructing the interior, although a start to this part of the job is still some way off. The bogies remain to be overhauled and are still under the coach. This permits some degree of mobility, and allows best use to be made of shed space.

TSO No.68 had to be red-carded due to problems with the brake rigging – probably due to advancing age. Fortunately a solution had been arrived at by the May Gala weekend.

Maunsell CK No.5618 (K&ESR No.56) has received its 18-month examination, during which – in addition to the normal checks and maintenance – the step boards were partially renewed, the drop light mechanisms overhauled, and wastage to the vacuum pipe built up with weld.

Vintage Coaches

The Great Eastern Railway six-wheel brake (K&ESR No.81) continues to progress much as previously reported, with exterior painting and interior decoration well under way.

SE&CR four-wheeler No.2947 (K&ESR No.88) is presently out of service. It was known that the (Maunsell design) wheels were due for reprofiling, but it was found that taking any more steel off would reduce the tyres to scrapping size. Various solutions are being investigated at the time of writing.

Regrettably **SE&CR Family Saloon No.177 (K&ESR No.84)**, **Third Brake No.3062 (K&ESR No.98)** and the **Woolwich Coach (K&ESR No.67)** all suffered a graffiti attack on the night of 3rd/4th May 2015 (the 40s Weekend). Services

were maintained on the 4th by hauling the DMMU with a Terrier. Operating Assistant Andy Hardy rapidly sought advice from the National Railway Museum and a supply of the appropriate cleaner was found to be in stock at Rolvenden. Help arrived from all over the Railway and the damage had been removed by the end of the day. The gratitude of the Company, the C&W Department and vehicle owners the Loco Trust is extended to the following for their help in coping with this crisis: Andy Hardy, Tim Veacock, Mark Williams, Pete Salmon, Lesley Lee, Frank Kent, Richard Stone, Matt Hyner, Dan Dickson, Abby Dickson, Teri Beanny, Dan Snowden, Matt Green, Jack Ticehurst, Adam Rose, Jonathan Marsh and Stuart Philips.

Goods Vehicles

Work on **LMS Box Van M515184 (K&ESR No.128)** continues as time and volunteer labour permit. **Southern Railway CCT No.1745 (K&ESR No.76)** was repainted in carmine for the May Gala, this having been arranged by the event organisers and carried out in the carriage shed by various people who don't normally work in C&W. Richard Stone and Henry Mowforth particularly deserve recognition in this respect. Thanks are due to Andy Hardy for producing the vinyl lettering to complete the job. Mention should also be made of a recent mass **examination of wagons** at Wittersham Road for which we are grateful to Clive Lowe, Jamie Douglas, Duncan Buchanan and (once again) Richard Stone for joining C&W regulars Lesley Lee, Anthony Wilson, Paul Rand and Paul Jessett in oiling up and determining which vehicles were fit to run. The opportunity was also taken to pass out Lesley and Anthony as wagon examiners (a grade Lesley already held in respect of carriages). Both the wagon-examining exercise and the graffiti episode are examples of how you can help improve the very stretched resource position in C&W. Further volunteers, particularly those with a skills or experience to offer, are welcome and will be accommodated.

People

Craftsman **Julian Coppins**, who has been a key member of the C&W paid staff since 2002, reached a 'significant birthday' during May and accordingly reduced his hours from full time to two days a week. Thank you, Julian, for everything you have done in past years; we are glad that we still have the benefit of your considerable skills.

Signalling Department – Tony Ramsey

I must begin by expressing our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have been willing to act as point operators while the new South End points at Rolvenden were being commissioned – a task which unfortunately took longer than expected. Unseen by passengers and enduring all weathers, you have performed a vital role in keeping the train service running. Thank you!

We offer our congratulations to two newly qualified Crossing Keepers: Lesley Lee at Cranbrook Road and Craig Tyler at Rolvenden.

The month of March saw the publication of the eagerly awaited 'clean' Rules, Regulations and Instructions (RRIs): the first major update since 1989! Many volunteers have already commented on how helpful it is to have this new edition. The new RRI's are also available online, via the Operating Department website. The Railway Rules Working Group is now carefully reviewing the unrevised sections, in an agreed order and with Robertsbridge in mind.

At the beginning of the year Gerald Beck decided it was time 'to hang up his hat' as an Assistant Signalling Inspector. A full tribute appears on page 46. Sadly, Dave King has had to retire as a Crossing Keeper due to ill-health, Kent Evenden has relinquished his role as a Signaller due to the pressure of his many other commitments, and we bid farewell to Signaller Alastair Forbes who will shortly be celebrating his retirement by sailing around the world. To each of them we extend our sincere thanks for all they have contributed.

S&T Engineering – Nick Wellington

The past few months have been busy indeed for the S&T team as the stages of bringing new and revised signalling to match the layout alterations for Rolvenden Carriage Sidings come to fruition. These few words belie the immense size of the task involved.

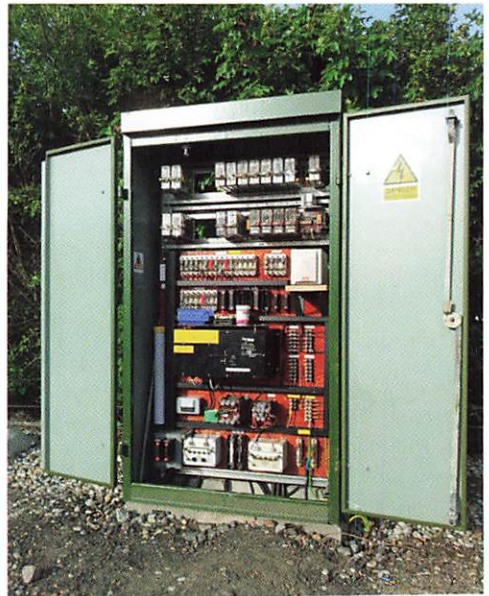
The fourth point machine has now been installed, and the Loop points brought under control from the signal box, thus avoiding the need to operate the points by hand winding. Another point machine has been acquired from the Bluebell Railway and this will be overhauled to be held as a spare.

Nick Wellington designed and Steve Woodgate

wired the control cabinet located at the points. These were then craned into place using the TRAMM before cables to the respective point machines were run out and terminated onto the machines and cabinet terminals.

The 'pole digging gang' has assisted us with the installation of cable chambers in the duct, as this work was still outstanding from last year. Although the points are now in use (as of the Friday night before Southern Steam Sunset), there are still myriad minor 'beat the detail' works before we move onto the next stage – coupled with the updating of diagrams and records to 'as built' accuracy. The next stage is likely to bring the Loop trap point into powered operation from the signal box, but the carriage sidings points are likely to have to await the new interlocking wiring as we are, simply, out of space.

By far the majority of the department's work is carried out by a small, dedicated band of skilled volunteers. We are however looking for one or two more to join our team to enable us to achieve more; if you have signal engineering, general mechanical or electrical engineering expertise we may be interested in you joining us. Please contact Nick Wellington at NSW@UAX13.org.uk with details of your experience.



S&T cabinet near Rolvenden Riverside, giving some indication of the work involved (Nick Wellington)

Bodiam Group – Robin Dyce

The group completed the work of renovating and repainting the shop. New power points have been installed and the cold water feed to the tea/coffee machine was replumbed. We then moved onto the old (station building) waiting room, which was cleared out and thoroughly scrubbed down and repainted. Both rooms are painted in the traditional K&ESR colours of cream above the dado level and dark brown below. The later took longer as the first trains of the season were running, so had to be timed to avoid periods of public use.

Many years ago several poster boards were produced to traditional K&ESR design and colours, but unlike their modern plastic equivalents were constructed in wood which needs constant maintenance. They were beginning to look somewhat shabby so they were all taken down, repaired where necessary, and then repainted in black with a blue top background panel. New 'KESR' lettering was cut from weather-proof (!) ply, painted white and fixed to the boards. They certainly add colour to the station fences, and we hope they will last for many more years.

We are also now replicating some formal operating notices such as 'Passengers must not cross this point', again in wood, but using traditional typefaces and colours so that they mimic more costly cast iron ones.

Naturally, grass and plants are now beginning to grow. The April warm spell was not accompanied by much rainfall, so plants were generally rather slow initially, but now they are catching up – fast. The grassed areas and hedges need constant attention to keep them under control, and the gardens and large flower pots have been replanted. Veronica Hopker, of the Gardening Group, put us in touch with the organisers of the 'Ewhurst Green In Bloom 2015' competition, with judging set for mid-July. We understand that a local radio celebrity is included in the judging panel, so we hope that some favourable media exposure will follow. Yes, we are in Ewhurst parish, and not Bodiam as many people think. The parish boundary runs near us, down the middle of the River Rother.

Continuing on the horticultural theme, our hops were strung during March and April and the

grassed area around the plants greatly reduced, though retaining grassed walkways between the plants so that our visitors could enjoy the heritage scene. This was followed up by intensive manuring; the combination is already showing an improvement in growth rates, keeping pace with our commercial cousins. Our ancient apple tree has been professionally pruned back to shape and is currently blossoming with, if all goes well, a good harvest to follow. Of note is that our first cuckoo of 2015 was heard on Thursday 7th May.

When the workshop and hoppers' huts were built by the Bodiam Group they were separated by a gap of about 2m which, 'at some time in the future', could be filled in to create the impression of a row of hoppers' huts that used to be common in the Rother Valley and surrounding Kent and Sussex countryside. Using offcuts the gap has now been filled using weatherboarding to front and rear, with a 'wrinkly tin' roof providing a more secure space in which to house equipment.

On Tuesday 21st April ten of the Bodiam Group took (or re-took) the Basic Railway Safety test. Everybody passed, so we are in good shape for the coming years. At the time of writing we are awaiting the resolution of Level Crossing Keeper certification issues which, when agreed, will see more members of the group passed out as and enable to help as needed with the gates to maintain the timetable at this end of the line.

We welcome back Chris, 'gardening', Crouch and Vic, 'hop stringer', and Grigg from long-term illness; and also welcome new member Chris Wady to the Group.

The Bodiam Hop Festival will take place on 12th/13th September. This will be our 16th annual event, and as always we welcome people to help get the show ready during the preceding week, from and including Tuesday 8th. We need more people to help during the weekend to help continue what is our last major volunteer-led special event. It is important that we continue to show what your Railway can achieve.

Lastly a reminder that the Bodiam Group meets every Tuesday and Thursday at Bodiam station throughout the year. If you are interested in joining the Group please contact Robin Dyce on 01732 508040 or e-mail robindyce@blueyonder.co.uk

Museum Notes

The highlight of new acquisitions is a K&ESR hand lamp; and we have been promised, and have our eye on, other nice items. With the Curator's time swept away by duties elsewhere on the Railway, progress has slowed but; by the time you read this three fixed audio points in the shape of converted vintage phones should be in place. Lift the phone and hear a commentary – old fashioned, but fun.

As reported earlier the display wall from the Edge Hill to NDCJR displays near *Gazelle* was finished in time for seasonal opening, but touches are still being added. In particular Laurie Cooksey has built an exquisite diorama of Ashover (Butts) Station to complete that display. Of course, contrary to our own guideline to only use O gauge for display models, this is in 4mm 009 to fit the available space. This guideline was again breached when we were offered a most beautiful model of K&ESR No.8 with the royal saloon and train in 4mm. If you want to see modelling at its best, come and see these.

Other new exhibits include an O gauge model of the Cavell Van, complete with removable roof and interior detailing; a pre-printed postcard for the election of Directors to the East Kent Light Railways Company (displayed on the desk in the Colonel's Office); and a Southern Railway poster header with 'sunshine' lettering, used to head a replica poster board displaying the closure notice for the Sheppey Light Railway, as used in 1950.

The archive team has continued to make good progress in cataloguing and organising the archive and photographs. In the process we have identified and sold many surplus donations. Just to demonstrate how much work is involved here, it is worth recording that last year the team catalogued some 388 new items. This work has continued this year, with numerous photographs, photocopies of minutes of Directors' meetings of both the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire and the Shropshire Railways, and a charming postcard of Callington viaduct sent to his son in 1909 by WH Austen while he was reviewing the newly opened line on behalf of Colonel Stephens. The latter is not strictly a new acquisition, for it had been misfiled years ago and has just come to light.

This workload brings us to the ever-present need for extra help, not only in the archive but also 'front of house'. We would particularly appreciate assistance from members with IT skills and social

media experience. No matter what you feel you can offer, if you can spare the odd day or half day, please help us to present our heritage and assist in giving our visitors 'a good day out'.

Gardening Group – *Veronica Hopker*

Work continued on the gardens at **Tenterden Town** all through the winter months. As we had so little heavy frost, snow or heavy rain we were able to keep the gardens tidy and start digging 'the mound' where the office block used to stand. As a result of being able to work the soil, planting started in March and we hope to have a reasonable display this summer.

Various shrubs have been planted on 'the mound' to screen the back service road, where the dustbins are stored. All the shrubs appear to have taken, so we should have a fairly good screen by the end of the year.

Clearing leaves and weeds around Tenterden's gardens continued through March, April and into May. Plants were divided and moved to other parts of the gardens. Graham Siver kindly donated various shrubs, which have been added to the new garden. We have also been given plants by Doug and Eve Ramsden, Joy Bowden and two local residents who spoke to us 'over the fence' regarding the creation of the garden and kindly dropped off their contributions.

The next project will be the planting up of the tubs, the red buckets and the Pullman dock with summer bedding.

As usual my thanks go to Jan Lelean for her work helping me at Tenterden on Tuesday mornings and for looking after the gardens when I am away.

At **Rolvenden** the conifers in tubs have not been a success, so they will be removed. Summer bedding will be put in the tubs instead over the coming weeks. The watering system at the station has been improved, so we hope the plants will survive during the summer months.

The little garden by the crossing gates (behind the fence at the entrance) has been tidied and summer bedding will be added in due course.

Unfortunately **Wittersham Road** is not currently being looked after, so we are seeking someone to take on the planters on the platform and the little garden by the station building. The Forestry and Conservation Department has kindly been strimming the bank behind the platform and,

hopefully, will continue to do this each year.

With the winter months over Liz Brown and Nell Joint have returned to the weeding and tidying of the picnic area, gardens and platform tubs at **Northiam**. They have planted the tubs for the summer and, as usual, we will have an attractive display. Members of the Tuesday Group have continued to keep the grass and hedges cut, which keeps everything looking neat and tidy.

In the Memorial Garden I thought it would be interesting to try planting a wild flower bed. This kind of project usually takes two or three years to get established, but after discussion with Doug Ramsden we decided to give it a go. Doug and Mark Taylor of the Tuesday Group kindly lifted the turf from an area of some 30ft by 6ft. This was then raked over and covered with sheets of plastic to try and warm the soil as the night-time temperatures have been so cold.

On 28th April we scattered wild flower seed; we now have to wait and see what, if anything, survives! 50g of pure wild flower seeds were bought from a specialist and to this we added extra cornflower, ragged robin and field poppy. Some plants may take a year to establish, so the next few months will be interesting!

Sadly 'the Sisters' – Pam and Sheila Stevens – who created the lovely little garden at **Bodiam** Station feel the time has come for them to hang up their gardening gloves. We are, therefore, seeking a replacement(s). If anyone would like to look after this lovely little garden, please get in

touch with me on 01303 862811 or call in at Bodiam Station and have a word with Pam or Sheila on a Tuesday or Thursday.

Ashford Area Group – Ted Micklam

By the time you read this detailed plans for our visit to 'Le P'tit train de la Haute Somme', the Froissey-Cappy-Dompierre Railway in France, on Sunday 27th September will have been made. We also plan to visit Vimy Ridge WW1 Memorial on the way. All for the unbeatable price of £38! Contact Keith Mapley on his new e-mail address of keithmapley@btinternet.com or telephone 01303 269138 to see if there are any vacancies.

Our indoor programme this year continues with:
16th September: 'Kent's Cement Industry and its Railways' – Tom Burnham
21st October: 'The London Transport Museum; Rail Projects' – LTM Friend
18th November: 'The Story of the P2 Locomotive' – Andrew Hardy
16th December: 'From The Rail Archive Stephenson' – Brian Stephenson

We are now taking suggestions for topics to cover in 2016. We plan to visit the CFBS on Sunday 17th April; reserve the date at this stage!

Indoor meetings are held at The Rail Staff Club, off Beaver Road, Ashford, Kent TN23 7RR. They start at 7.30pm and finish by 10pm. Everyone is welcome to attend indoor or outdoor meetings, subject to availability. My phone number is 01233 503999 or e-mail me at edward.micklam@tiscali.co.uk

MOTIVE POWER

Rolvenden MPD – Paul Wilson

Locomotives available for service:

32670 is running well at present.

32678 has been in regular use covering for the DMMU, and apart from a small piece of broken thread from an injector steam valve blocking the delivery cone, she has performed very well. She has just had another washout at which the need to replace the smokebox ring later in the season was identified, due to internal wastage.

14 Charwelton: As always, she is a popular stalwart of the Railway Experience Days. She has also made an appearance running passenger trains, which is something of a novelty.

376 Norwegian: With the shortage of larger

locomotives, heavy reliance is being placed on 376 this season. Popular with crews, she is giving a good account of herself. At the next washout, due in June, a new chimney – most generously paid for by the Norwegian Loco Trust – will be fitted.

65: With yet another washout cycle completed 65 – now carrying late BR livery as 30065 – continues to give sterling service. The new 'ferret-and-dartboard' transfers were privately sponsored; having had some local difficulties with the numerals, renowned writer and photographer Geoff Silcock came down from London to fit them. Indeed all four locos in action over the Southern Steam Sunset weekend have had input from Geoff over the year to convert to late BR appearance. As an aside,

well over a decade ago **Wainwright** was also doing the lion's share of running. This is an amazing performance considering the dubious reputation of these locos in their pre-K&ESR lives.

Ford diesel: Problems have arisen with the fuel pumps recently; they seem to have finally worn out after many, many years of service. The Locomotive Trust has kindly funded the £6,000 cost of repairs. Setting up the overhauled pumps and getting the engine running again is causing some challenges.

Ruston diesel: Continues to function as yard shunter; due a six-monthly exam in June.

Locomotives under overhaul:

11: Very slow progress on the P class loco, which has to take second place to the bigger ones that we are so short of...

21 Wainwright: Following considerable discussion, it has been decided to make the new cylinder cocks manually operated. It was originally thought there was no room for the required linkage given the compact nature of construction, but a way has been found. The new GWR pattern cocks have arrived and are being machined to fit. After some stays have been replaced the boiler is ready for the main steam pipe and smoke tubes to be fitted.

23 Holman F Stephens: In store pending space

becoming available in the works for overhaul.

25 Northiam: The chimney has been repaired and is back with us for fitting when needed. The foundation ring has been straightened and the new sections of plate supplied to fit. Work is now under way to fit the foundation ring back in place and weld in the new platework.

1638: Only two items are still out with contractors, so hopefully towards the end of June we will have all the bits back to enable completion. Numerous components are being overhauled to make sure they are in the best condition.

6619: In store pending space for overhaul.

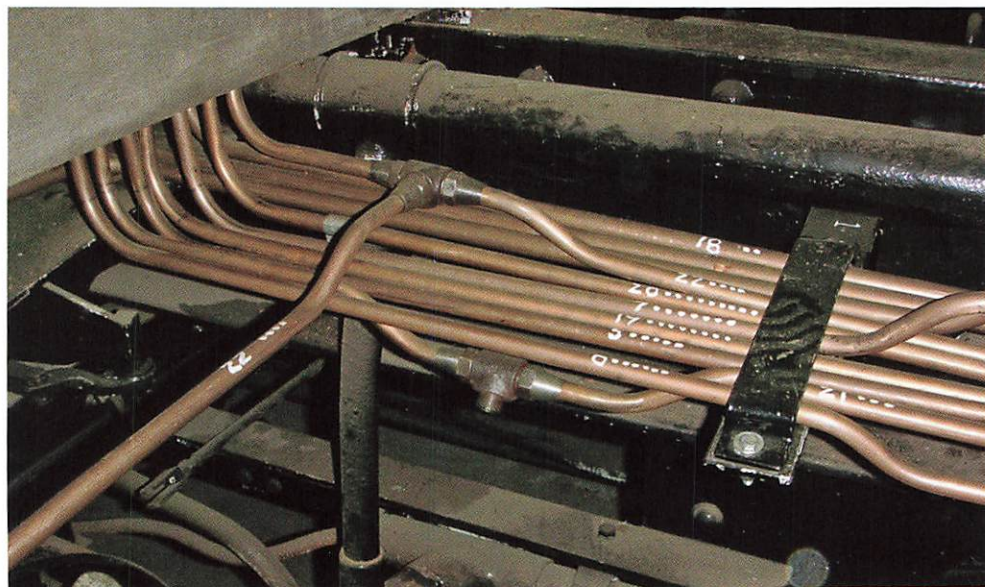
Cranes:

Both the **10t Taylor Hubbard** and the **36t Ransomes and Rapier** are available for service.

GWR Railcar W20W – Andrew Webb

Steady progress on the restoration and rebuild of the railcar continues.

We have nearly finished the replacement of the air pipework below the floor. It has been quite amazing how simple straight lengths of copper tube can be bent into complex shapes and then painstakingly placed under the frame and connected to the appropriate air-operated device. A big 'Thank You' to John Wheller, a



Some of the GWR railcar's new air piping, below floor level on the south side (Andrew Webb)



The railcar's driver's control assembly, Robertsbridge end (Andrew Webb)

member of the railcar restoration team, for his work on this vital part of the restoration.

The last order for air pipe, priced at some £1,000, has been delivered. This will be enough to finish the pipe replacement including the area below the Headcorn end cab. The order also includes 13ft of 1in copper pipe to replace missing exhaust vacuum pipe. All four overhauled exhausters are now fitted to the underframe, complete with adjusting rods for drive-belt tension.

This paragraph is an Appeal For Help. Over the years a number of items that were part of the railcar have disappeared, got lost, been stored elsewhere in wagons or containers, removed for safekeeping and/or refurbishment, etc. etc. At times we are not sure what is missing, what it looks like, how it is fitted and how it is connected. One option is to look at the Headcorn cab for some information but although the cabs are similar they are both, in fact, unique. Another option is to drive across to our friends at Didcot and their railcar No.22 or for someone to scan archive documents at The National Railway Museum if relevant. All this takes time and these problems can be very

expensive to resolve, particularly if new parts have to be made. Please get in touch if you have any information that can help us to locate any lost items. Finally any photographs of either cab in its original form, prior to or during restoration, would again be most welcome.

The agreed contact on our behalf is Engineering Manager Paul Wilson, and he can be contacted on 01580 762258. Please leave a message with Paul; he will let me know and I will give you a call.

4253 Locomotive Company – Bryan Atkins

Progress continues, with at least three working parties every week. With both side tanks now completed, attention has turned back to the bunker, which has been lifted out of the shelter in order to complete the fitting of tool boxes and edging. This could not be done under cover due to lack of space.

While in the field it is expected that final rubbing down and painting will take place, prior to the bunker being hopefully displayed at the Weald of Kent Steam Rally at Woodchurch in August.

Attention has now turned to cleaning and painting the inside motion and other items, such

as oil pots and brake rods, which can be installed once the locomotive has been re-wheeled. The sand box team are now seeing the fruits of their labour with the tricky building of the tops, complete with lid-holding flanges.

The running boards have been measured and new steel ordered, along with a new cab roof. The new smoke box is the next item to receive attention over the summer, and the new ring recently delivered will be attached.

Meanwhile work continues on dismantling the boiler, with removal of palm stays and countless rivets. The slow job of removing the foundation rivets has now commenced in preparation for the replacement of the throat plate. We expect delivery of this by the end of the year.

The sales team has been busy organising sales and tombola stalls to suit all occasions, both on and off the Railway! These efforts are now starting to make a respectable contribution to funds – and progress. Please see our Facebook page for up-to-date reports, or our website www.4253.co.uk to peruse the range of merchandise on sale.

Along with the need for copious quantities of

cash, the group can always use extra manpower. If you feel you can do a few hours on the sales stand, or you know somebody who has a machining background who could help us out with a few small jobs on the lathe or the mill, please contact the group on gwr4253@gmail.com

TREATS – Mike Grimwood

DMMU – the repainting of car 51571 is now complete. I would like to thank Peter Bolton for all his work and the very high standard of paint finish he has achieved. The refurbished seats have been returned and refitted to both vehicles.

The B examination has been completed on both vehicles, as well as repairs to the vacuum braking system on car 50971 and the toilet on car 51571.

We have taken delivery of new replica carriage lights. These have been produced by Suggs Lighting to an extremely high standard. We hope to start installation later this year.

Class 03 D2023 is in service. The locomotive has had an A exam and received replacement brake blocks.

Class 14 D9504 is also in service.

WAY AND WORKS

Permanent Way – Jamie Douglas

As of the beginning of June I am pleased to report that we are now heading towards completion of the permanent way installation in the new Rolvenden Carriage Storage Shed and Rolvenden Riverside Yard. Tamping and ballast regulating is currently under way, and we only require one or two more train-loads of ballast to enable completion of tamping.

Apart from the finishing off of the track works, only a small number of other outstanding jobs remain to be completed. These include installation of animal-proofing measures around the base of the shed walls, building of concrete bases by the emergency exits to permit step-free exit in an emergency, and then making up of walkways.

I am hopeful that by the time you read this the new shed and yard will have been brought into use, although in a limited capacity until the signalling works can be completed to permit full operation.

Once we have finished our work in the new shed and yard, we have a significant backlog of some

18 months worth of maintenance tasks to catch up on – the top two items on the list being needle-gunning and painting of much of Rother Bridge, and fishplate greasing and maintenance as we continue to be plagued by dropped joints.

We also need to undertake some repairs to the on track machinery to ensure the bodywork and roofs are waterproof, to help keep these essential pieces of equipment serviceable.

The team has been carrying out sterling work in keeping the track inspections up to date, and we are also pleased to welcome some new volunteers to the department who have offered to assist in varying ways, from mainly administrative assistance, to assisting with track inspections. Extra hands are always welcome!

Tuesday Group – Graham Hopker

The wheelset seat adjacent to the Memorial Garden at Northiam has been painted and is now finished. It adds interest to the whole area, which is now looking very good.

A large area of rotten wood has been replaced

on Wittersham Road Signal Box which, hopefully, along with the station building, will be repainted before the winter.

Repairing and repainting platform seats is always ongoing, as is grass mowing and strimming at this time of year, not to mention cutting the long privet hedge at the back of Platform 1 at Northiam.

The crossing gates have been given a tidy-up using the high-pressure washer, and it does make a difference!

We have started cleaning up and repainting all 15 of the Hastings Gas Company's lamp posts, which were installed at the same time as the Wittersham Road/Northiam extension was completed in the early 1990s.

In addition the Tuesday Group's electrician, Dave Brown, has carried out the following work at Tenterden:

In the [Museum](#) he has wired in an extra 13-amp socket outlet and repaired various light fittings in the display cabinets. In addition Dave has installed LED lighting strips in the four new display cabinets and one older one. By way of explanation: LED lights are replacing the old fluorescent tubes. This results in a considerable reduction in the electricity used, gives a better spread of light, and removes the heat which the old fittings generated.

In the [Station Building](#) Dave carried out various electrical work in the Station Master's Office, where the main power intake is. This work is continuing across the entire station site except, of course, in the new office building.

Dave has also installed three defibrillators, which were part of a Community Initiative arranged by Jon Middleton. These have been installed in the stations at [Tenterden Town](#), [Northiam](#) and [Bodiam](#).

Forestry & Conservation – Steve McMurdo

The task we face in keeping lineside vegetation under control with our limited numbers is not without its challenges. We know it is difficult for many people, particularly those with demanding work commitments and family obligations, to commit to regularly giving up a day of their weekend to volunteer at the Railway.

As an alternative to our manpower shortage problem, we thought we'd try something different and extend an open invitation to

members to join us for just one day to help tackle one of our larger outstanding projects.

Notices were placed in the Winter edition of the *Terrier* and on the Railway's social media sites, inviting members to record their potential interest so that we could gain an idea of the likely take up. Ideally we were seeking around 15 or so extra people. The response was encouraging and we commenced planning how we would safely manage, motivate and supervise the newcomers, and hopefully give them an enjoyable day helping their railway.

The plan was to tackle a significant stretch east of Bodiam station out towards Ewhurst Crossing, where the removal of undergrowth and cutting back of trees was needed to improve sighting of the line ahead for our drivers and also to enable our passengers to have a better view of the castle. There was also a request from our S&T colleagues to clear branches from the vicinity of their overhead telephone lines in the area.

When we selected Sunday 29th March as the day, we envisaged nothing other than a bright early spring day. Sadly this wasn't to be and we were greeted with high winds, rain and overcast skies as we arrived at Bodiam ready to greet our invited guests.

Would anyone really want to work in conditions which appeared more suited to an outward bound course than a pleasant day on the railway?

Happily it seemed these weren't the type of volunteers to be deterred by the weather and they turned up as promised armed with saws, cutting tools and, above all, a willingness to help. Introductions and briefings took place before we walked out along the track to the work site, where specific tasks were allocated. Soon chain saws could be heard, clearance of undergrowth took place, bonfires were started and the area became a hive of activity. The weather even improved, though arguably it couldn't have got much worse.

Work continued at pace and it was a pleasure to see how much progress had been made as the day drew to a close. The invaluable efforts of these extra people enabled us to clear a long stretch of track in one day which otherwise would have taken us several sessions to do on our own.

Our sincere thanks to all who joined us. We will be holding further similar events. Why not join us next time?

Wagons Roll!

The K&ESR has a demonstration freight train which is used from time to time as an important reminder of an era when almost all freight moved by rail. It includes brake vans that are now such a rarity that many people do not even know what one is or what it is for. We need a group of keen volunteers to help restore and maintain these fascinating vehicles, and in particular a volunteer team leader who can organise and motivate the 'Waggoners' working on this project.

Interested?

Please contact Paul Wilson, Engineering Manager,
c/o Tenterden Town Station or e-mail em@kesr.org.uk

KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

January 2015

1st	J M Whitcombe	No. 195	£70.00
2nd	Clive Norman	No. 392	£50.00
3rd	Janet Bridger	No. 262	£45.00
4th	Janet Anstiss	No. 427	£30.00
5th	Claire Stuchbury	No. 026	£25.00
6th	Mr D Cutts	No. 157	£20.00
7th	J E F Davies	No. 555	£15.00
8th	Cathy Crotty	No. 019	£10.00

February 2015

1st	L R Davies	No. 505	£70.00
2nd	J R Price	No. 490	£50.00
3rd	C Garman	No. 160	£45.00
4th	D J Strivens	No. 231	£30.00
5th	P J Pass	No. 047	£25.00
6th	Mr E Stockdale	No. 281	£20.00
7th	Michael Chalkley	No. 491	£15.00
8th	David Earl	No. 415	£10.00

March 2015

1st	Paul Bridger	No. 655	£80.00
2nd	Roger Diamond	No. 083	£70.00
3rd	Meg Gooch	No. 238	£60.00
4th	Mr E Stockdale	No. 663	£40.00
5th	Chris Kennedy	No. 694	£35.00
6th	B A Rees	No. 072	£30.00
7th	G Tubb	No. 659	£25.00
8th	M J Hoad	No. 141	£20.00
9th	Meg Gooch	No. 105	£15.00
10th	Ross Shimmer	No. 221	£10.00

April 2015

1st	Paul B Harrison	No. 654	£70.00
2nd	Mrs B A Turner	No. 066	£50.00
3rd	A Bancroft	No. 476	£45.00
4th	Kenneth Percival	No. 355	£30.00
5th	Graham Ford	No. 120	£25.00
6th	G & J Tubb	No. 658	£20.00
7th	Mike Hockley	No. 523	£15.00
8th	Graham Ford	No. 120	£10.00

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

Letters to the Editor

The bridges of the K&ESR

Sir – I read with interest Graham Bessant's article (Spring 2015 issue) and in particular his comments on the construction of the culvert with the steel pipe near Tenterden. This was carried out by the company after the original pipe was blocked and a small lake formed.

The Spring 1985 *Tenterden Terrier*, No.36, carried a cover photo of the lake and an article on the problem. Following this, the Winter 1986 issue carried an article on pages 47–48 on the solution to the problem. Perhaps Graham Bessant might be interested in the origins of the present culvert.

Peter Carey
Bexhill on Sea

Graham Bessant has also received a letter from member Mike James who managed the Job Creation Scheme which, among other things, rebuilt Wittersham Road Station and Hexden Channel Bridge during 1977–79. Mike says that the steel work for Hexden Bridge came from the Thames Barrier construction site, and had been part of the south side coffer dam. –Ed.

From a concerned volunteer

Sir – I shall be very surprised if this letter is included in the next issue of the *Terrier* as it, in my opinion, shows the Board to be out of contact with the real world. *(With all due respect to the correspondent's opinions and his right to express them, the editor cannot emphasise too strongly that the Tenterden Terrier is independent of Board control and that the Trustees have no influence over its contents –Ed.)*

I am writing on another glorious day during February half-term week. Yesterday I visited the Bluebell Railway where it was heaving with families enjoying a 'Kids for a Quid' week. Contrast this with the K&ESR where nothing moved at all. I am aware that filming was taking place on the Monday but there are four other days in the week. Many people who came to the 'Santa' days expected it to be open during half-term and were clearly disappointed that it was not. There are many people who are not fans of Thomas who would love to have a day out with us. A railway like ours must be family friendly, but sadly I believe that decisions have been made which show us not to be so.

This year there will be no 'Kids for a Quid' days, the Family Rover ticket for £49.50 is an increase of 11%, the family ticket between Northiam and Bodiam (mainly campers) is up by more than 12% and the First Class family ticket supplement by nearly 117% (from £3.00 to £6.50). Anyone looking at these figures might conclude that members of the Board are out of touch with family finances for the vast majority of the population, and have little or no wish to encourage them to visit us. There are other issues on pricing, but enough for the moment.

I also believe that the introduction of booked single train days is very short sighted when the diesel is very economical to run. One wonders how many casual visitors will turn up and be disappointed. Once again our reputation as a friendly railway will take a knock. I also wonder if volunteers will be prepared to travel long distances to sit for hours doing nothing,

I know that I am not the only one concerned about the future of our railway. We need to carry as many young passengers as possible and that means families – they are our future.

Brian Thompson
Walmer

Deputy Chairman Ian Legg was asked to comment, and replies as follows:

Thank you for the comments you raise in your letter to the Terrier. These issues were debated quite a lot by the Board, and were not dealt with lightly. A number of Board members felt that just doing more of the same was not going to deliver anything better financially, hence the slightly radical approach.

Spring half term: In previous years (not last year due to the engineering works at Rolvenden) we have run during half term and had Thomas events on the weekends either side. This has seen mixed benefits as the half term traffic detracts from the higher-yielding Thomas days. Discounting aggressively lowers our earnings overall. This year we did well with Thomas; could we have done better overall with trains in between? Possibly, but it also depends on the weather, which can be fickle.

We also have to be mindful of the resources we have available, both paid and volunteer. Running four intensive days is hard enough without filling in between as well.

That said this year was a bit of an experiment, and it will be reviewed before we agree the timetable for next year.

Pricing: *This is always an emotive subject, but our costs rise relentlessly and we have to generate more income cost-effectively. Examining our results last year it was clear that we were undercharging for some elements (short hop journeys still experience most of the benefits of a longer ride), so we needed to increase these to a more realistic level (some preserved railways don't give any reduction for singles or short return trips).*

First Class is a good example where we often have strong demand and the product was seriously undervalued. The effort that goes into making the First Class compartments look good has to be recouped.

Regarding discounting: everyone likes a bargain, but in recent years we have been doing this even for those prepared to pay full price. Our strategy is to target discounts at times of low demand and focus our marketing activity online and through advertising.

Single train days: Again this is a bit of an experiment this year, and the timetable is designed so extra trains can be slotted in if the demand is there. Looking at the timetable we have run in previous years the loadings showed a number of days with negligible use of the DMMU. Although cheaper to run than a steam train, it still does have a cost per trip that makes it uneconomic when numbers drop below about nine per trip.

We will be monitoring the service and welcome feedback. Ideally we need to do some scientifically robust customer research to better understand our visitors' needs and views, but as always time and volunteers to do this are in short supply.

Water works

Sir – I was very interested in Chris Greatley's article on the Rolvenden Water tower in the Spring 2015 edition of the *Terrier*. I am a volunteer in the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum tasked with sorting and cataloguing payment documents from the 1940s. Payments for materials for the water tower appear in the autumn of 1943, the details of which are:

Invoice dated August 1943 from Hall & Co Ltd, Maidstone West includes '9 yards ½g ballast 50% sand' to Rolvenden, cost £3.3.0. Presumably for foundations (archive no. TETCS:1978.31.1725).

The tank and accessories were purchased from Thomas W Ward Limited, Sheffield; invoice dated 9 September 1943 is for '1 new open top sectional tank 20ft × 10ft × 6ft with all accessories for £208.10.0, 5 flanges for connections £4.12.6, total £213.13.6'. A further invoice dated 29 October 1943 was for an 'iron ladder 15inch wide' at a cost of £12.15.0. (1978.31.1771).

From the Cranbrook District Water Company, who supplied water to the station area, on 18 September 1943: '188ft of 1inch heavy steam quality tubing together with 2 – 90deg bends with sockets and one tee piece with a 1inch branch' was purchased and cost £7.3.0. (1978.31.1743).

On 21 September 12yards ¾scr beach was purchased from Hall & Co as above, this time delivered to Headcorn, presumably for the K&ESR to deliver to Rolvenden. We know this is for the water tank because a thoughtful clerk wrote on the invoice 'water tank!' (1978.31.1755).

More fittings were purchased from George Cohen Sons & Co Ltd, London W6 on 25th October 1943: 'two 6inch new cast iron bodied Fulway gate valves, flanged BSTE' costing £6.18.0 and 'one 4inch ditto' for £2.6.0. (1978.31.1783).

Finally, an invoice dated 30 October 1943 from Dorman Long & Co Ltd, London SW8 was for '2no. bars 14ft 6inch long steel channels 8 × 3inch, 2 cuts for £3.19.4' (1978.31.1786). '2 cuts' presumably means that each 14ft 6inch length was cut into two pieces 7ft 3ins long. From contemporary photographs these would appear to be supports immediately under the tank.

The construction date on this evidence would appear to be from the end of September to the end of October 1943.

*Don Phillips
by e-mail*

Roman railways?

Sir – I much enjoyed Gricer's comments in the latest *Tenterden Terrier* about Roman railways. He claims they did not have them. I disagree. If you look at OS Landranger sheet 197 (Chichester & The South Downs) you will find, on the course of the old Midhurst line, at grid reference 027174, the words ROMAN STATION.

*Martin Saunders
by e-mail*

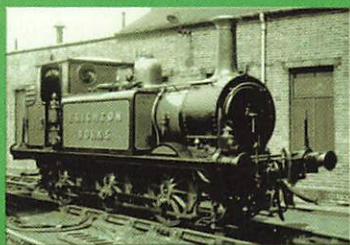
Post-War Southern Steam in East Sussex and Kent featuring the Photographs of Geoffrey Bloxam

Introduction by Ian Drummond, published by Holne Publishing, A4, paperback, price £13.95. 95 pages of monochrome photographs plus maps and introductory texts. ISBN 978-09563317-9-3

This photo album is something of a tribute to the photographer, the late Geoffrey Bloxam, who died in 1976 aged only 48. The book begins with an appropriate foreword by his brother Peter, and an introduction by the writer of the text, Ian Drummond.

The book's title appears to have been problematic. Firstly, and contrary to customary usage, East Sussex is mentioned before Kent – presumably to avoid any suggestion that the work is solely about our own Railway. Secondly the title used seems something of a misnomer – the steam featured is indeed set in the two counties mentioned, but there is nothing illustrating either the Kent Coast services or the Tonbridge–Hastings line. 'Steam on Byways in East Sussex and Kent' might have been nearer the mark. What we do have is coverage of the ex-LB&SCR byways in East Sussex plus Keymer Junction–Lewes–Newhaven together with Brighton, Tunbridge Wells and Newhaven loco sheds. In Kent we have Whitstable Harbour, New Romney, Hythe, the Sheppey Light Railway and Westerham. From both counties there are some previously unknown (at least to me) shots of the K&ESR. Incidentally the foreword states that few of the photos have been previously published.

With one exception the period covered is 1946 to 1955, with an inevitable bias toward the 'unicycling lion' BR crest – though the Southern's liveries linger on throughout the book. Thanks to the SR policy of revarnishing, most of the (Maunsell) corridor coaches appear



Post-War Southern Steam in East Sussex and Kent

Featuring the Photographs of Geoffrey Bloxam

Text by Ian Drummond

to be in green, although many of the non-corridor vehicles may well be in carmine. It's difficult to tell in monochrome, but then that medium so perfectly captures the 'austerity' nature of the period. Remember, austerity then meant a shabby world of discomfort and shortages – not a political slogan for cooling down the economy!

The introduction mentions that some of the photographs have been digitally enhanced, but this has done them no harm.

Despite what some photo

charter organisers seem to think, this early period of BR is often not that most favoured by the 'Boomer' generation (it's probably 1956–1963). This would appear to be a marketing disadvantage, as that age group still likes to spend its pension money on volumes such as this one. Nevertheless Ian Drummond has put the book together in such a way, with concise text on individual areas, maps and more-than-adequate captions, that the overall approach works and works well. The book is crammed full of locos (e.g. the 13 Class, Brighton Atlantics and the LB&SCR's pair of pacific tanks) which had disappeared before many of us first put Ian Allan's *Combined Volume* on our Christmas lists.

The choice of photographic locations is sometimes interesting. For instance the Lewes–East Grinstead selection avoids the obvious pre-heritage Bluebell clichés and concentrates on south of Sheffield Park together with north of Horsted Keynes in its original double-track form. On the Canterbury and Whitstable the harbour is featured but Tyler Hill Tunnel avoided, while anything on the Hythe branch is to say the least unusual. On the other hand the illustrations of what is now the Spa Valley Railway invite 'then and now' comparisons. Westerham is the exception to the austerity era theme, the photos of

that line having been taken in 1960. The pictures nevertheless capture the mood of melancholy which (at least in my subjective view) seemed to pervade the branch – and still does in the folk memory of its failed preservation scheme.

The 17-page K&ESR section comprises Geoffrey Bloxam's take on many of the classic views and provides a good record of the line in the early BR era. Much seems familiar but, as with the Spa Valley, one can indulge in comparisons with the present. It's also fascinating to note how much had changed by 1961 when the Preservation Society was formed.

The price of this interesting volume is relatively modest, and the contents should appeal to those with a liking for the provincial South East and its railways. You can certainly lose yourself in it for an hour or so and still find new things when you next pick it up.

NP

British Railways Pre-Grouping Atlas and Gazetteer

*Published by Ian Allan, price £20.
ISBN 978-0-7110-3817-2*

Pre-Grouping Atlas combined with the Railway Clearing House Junction Diagrams

*Published by Ian Allan, price £30.
ISBN 978-0-7110-3810-3*

The *British Railways Pre-Grouping Atlas and Gazetteer* was first published by Ian Allan Publishing in 1958 but has not been revised since the fifth edition in 1967. For this new edition the cartography has been redrawn in a larger page size and reportedly includes lines not built until after 1923, in order to complete the historic network. The atlas has a gazetteer listing abbreviations of all the railway companies and an index reportedly listing all tunnels, water troughs, principal summits, stations, goods and locomotive sheds, depots etc. and junctions named on the maps. It aspires to be a complete record of the companies that ran Britain's passenger railways before the Grouping into the Big Four companies in 1923, shown by colour coding on the maps.

The second book reviewed here is an enlarged edition of the *Pre-Grouping Atlas* combined with the *Railway Clearing House Junction Diagrams*. Each map page has added to it, on adjacent pages, appropriate detailed junction drawings originally published by the Railway Clearing House in 1914.

Maps, when prepared with an eye to clarity and beauty, are not only a science but an art. The long-defunct Railway Clearing House maps were started by a master mapmaker named John Airey who for nearly 100 years was the producer of most beautiful maps that are now prized collectors' items. With the RCH closed Ian Allan published a map book of the railways in 1949, followed in the 1950s by the first edition of the *Pre-Grouping Atlas* which has been this reviewer's constant companion ever since.

These new editions follow the RCH draftsman-ship and are very well printed, so the broad concept is admirable. However the essence of good maps is accuracy, and this is lacking when it comes to the details. In Kent, for instance, the East Kent Railway's Sandwich Road station finds itself labelled as Ebbsfleet and Cliffsend Halt, which is duplicated from its correct place on the nearby main SE&CR line to Ramsgate. Further, although the East Kent Light's Richborough Port line (not opened till 1928) gets included, its main line is truncated at Wingham Colliery (although extended to Town in 1920 and Canterbury Road in 1925). Slip over the border to Sussex and Rye Harbour is shown incorrectly as a passenger station; and the narrow gauge and detached Rye and Camber tramway appears to be shown as a standard gauge branch with only one station. Engine sheds and works have been added to the maps. This might be useful if were not so serendipitous; some sheds appear, some do not. Rolvenden, Maidstone (two sheds), Dover, Deal, Ramsgate, Margate, Shepherdswell, Sheerness and Strood are notable omissions in Kent (map six, page 11) alone. Better, surely, to have left all sheds out. Page numbering too is eccentric for, unlike earlier editions, maps have numbers and pages have different numbers.

For the 50% increase in price in the second book reviewed you get the benefit of nicely produced junction diagrams. However they are presented in such a fashion that you must leaf through them to find the one you want. Page and map numbers are even more out of line than in the basic edition; the junction diagrams have no discernible numbers or order, so the system of matching one with another fails. This is poor publishing practice, spoiling what would be an otherwise admirable publication.

In short, enjoy the art but do not expect ease of use – and treat accuracy with caution.

BMJ



*Two thorns – Bradley Bottomley and Elliott Waters – flanked by the three roses of My Favourite Things
(via Elliott Waters)*

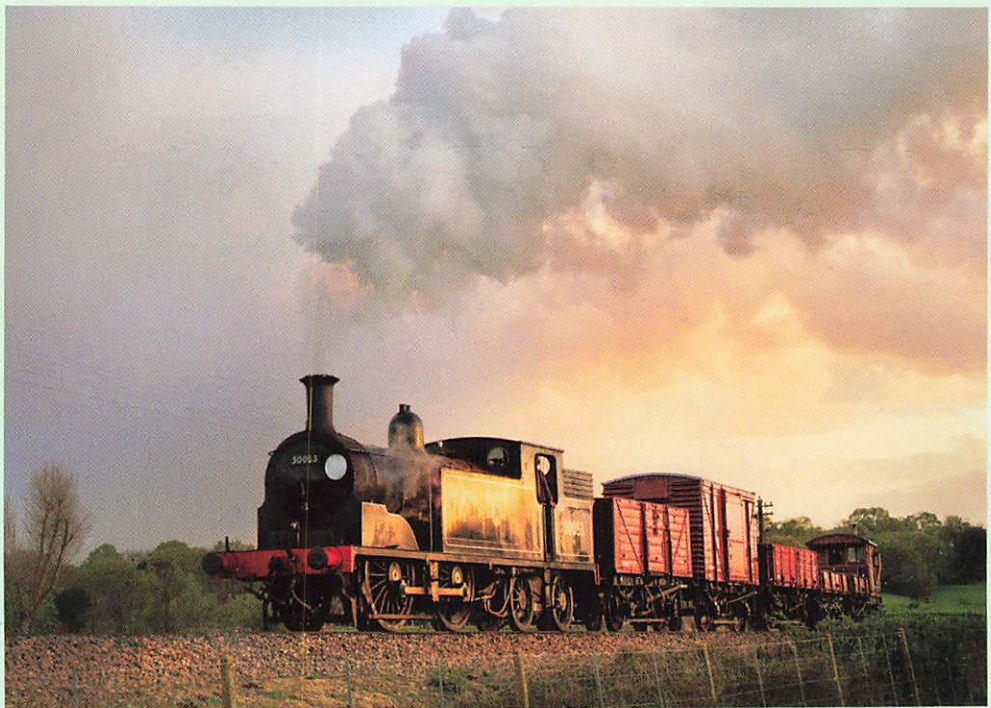
My Favourite Things performing during the 1940s Weekend (John Wickham)





M7 30053 working the Rother Valley Railway section between Junction Road and Bodiam on 5th May. This was taken from private property with the landowner's consent; please do not trespass. (Alan Crotty)

Also on 5th May, M7 30053 finds a cache of gold while working a short freight train (Alan Crotty)





Removed cousins (Dugald Drummond worked for several years under William Stroudley) renew acquaintances at Northiam on 23rd May (Ian Scarlett)

An unusual and perhaps neglected viewpoint sees M7 30053 work into Tenterden Town on 23rd May, with the DMMU berthed in No.1 Carriage Siding (Phil Edwards)





Clearance work in Morph's Field is already bearing fruit. Marking 75 years since Knowle first arrived on the Railway, she works the freight train the final few yards on the approach to Tenterden Town on 23rd May. (Phil Edwards)

Sporting her newly acquired late-BR embellishments, including the 'ferret-and-dartboard', the USA creates an 'Emettesque' image at Wittersham Road on 23rd May (Hugh Nightingale)



MORPH'S FIELD

"The atmosphere beneath is languorous... the prospect is a broad rich mass of grass and trees, mantling minor hills and dales..."

Thus *Holding the Line – Preserving the Kent and East Sussex Railway* describes the view southwest from Tenterden Town Station. These are not however my words – having failed to find adequate inspiration I instead quoted from Thomas Hardy's description of Blackmore Vale in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. Regrettably, not long after my book was published in 1993, this lovely scene was utterly changed.

The field opposite the entrance to Carriage & Wagon, which in the early 1980s had been the site of the K&ESR's Steam & Country Fairs, changed hands. A planning wrangle developed over a proposed hotel – thankfully refused, the site being within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The years went by and what had been a meadow became overgrown with scrub, brambles and ragwort and was even used for landfill. I wasn't the only person who looked at the resulting mess with regret.

The field came up for sale a few years ago but, much as the K&ESR would have liked to buy it,

there were more pressing priorities. However in February 2015 Felicity Edwards of Eastwell Manor Farm came to the rescue and bought this much-neglected piece of land. It has now been cleared by her husband Henry, a K&ESR member well known to volunteers and staff, who set about restoring the field as a hay meadow. It will nonetheless be available to the Railway for use at special events and, progress having been swift, the area nearest the station served as a staff car park during both the 40s weekend and the May Gala.

Best of all, that wonderful view so typical of southern England is now there for all to admire once again. Thank you Felicity and Henry – words cannot begin to express our gratitude.

Morph's Field is a new name, chosen by Felicity Edwards. It derives from the Christian name Morphew, used for generations of the Parsons family of Pittlesden Farm, who owned the land until 1963.

Nick Pallant



Henry Edwards (nearest camera) celebrates the purchase of Morph's Field with family and K&ESR members on 21st March 2015. Note the amount of clearance work that was needed. (Nick Pallant)

OUR BALCONY SALOON

For those of us who miss the delights of sitting on an open balcony behind steam, the knowledge that the LNWR Inspection Saloon has languished at the end of a line of carriages awaiting repairs has been distressing – but it has now been promised workshop space this year. Brian Janes outlines its distinguished and varied history.

Back in the golden days of the steam railways of late Victorian England, senior railway officers – not yet introduced to the joys of the company motor car – did tours of inspection from dedicated ‘inspection saloons’. The London & North Western Railway (L&NWR) seemed to regard such saloons almost as the private property of the individual officers to whom they were assigned, and had a locomotive permanently assigned to them.

Certainly the more senior officers had quite a big say in the furnishings and other details of their saloons which, to judge by our vehicle, were fitted out to a high standard.

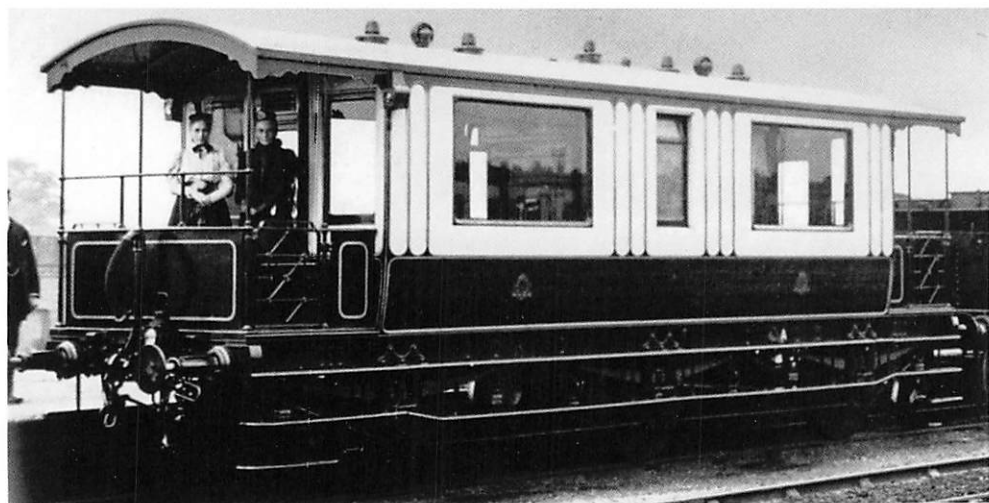
In July 1889 the L&NWR Locomotive Committee ordered that four engines (Crewe-type 2-2-2 locomotives) and carriages be supplied for District Engineers’ use. It is not entirely clear whether three or four saloons were built at this time, as one may have been an existing vehicle and all were unnumbered. However it is believed that the new saloons were all similar to our vehicle.

They were built to a Wolverton works drawing of July 1889 covering ‘30ft 1in inspection carriages with two saloon compartments, lavatory, and balcony at each end for District Engineers’.

Although the chassis was of the length specified the main body was 22ft 1in long, with a 4ft long balcony at each end and side access gates. The body was divided into two compartments by a compartment with a WC and a folding washbasin.

Some of these saloons had a gas ring installed in the toilet in about 1920 for the preparation of refreshments (what would today’s food hygienists would say about that?) but our saloon never seems to have had this fitting. The two outer compartments had longitudinal sofas and one also had a folding writing desk, a key rack and a drinks cupboard.

The finish was of a high but not luxurious standard, with much polished wood panelling. The saloons were, when finished in 1890, allocated initially to a Mr Williams, a Mr Crighton, and Mr Killett of Northampton. Our saloon is thought to be Mr Killett’s.



A fine photograph of the ‘Engineer Northampton’ saloon in the 1890s. Note the white roof with black lamp tops and torpedo ventilators fitted in late 1892. Another photograph of the saloon, in K&ESR service, appears on page 33. (CSHA)

The locomotive in the photograph may be either one of the two Crewe-type long-firebox 2-2-2s which served as 'Engineer Northampton' successively in the 1890s. The first possibility is No.3045, originally No.366 *Nestor*, built in May 1855 and rebuilt in 1866 and 1877. It became 'Engineer Northampton' in February 1891 and was scrapped in April 1895. It was succeeded by another engine of the same type, No.3077 which was originally No 42 *Sunbeam*, built in November 1857 and rebuilt in 1867. Transferred to the Engineers' Department in February 1883 as a spare engine, it was promoted when the previous incumbent was withdrawn. This loco was in turn withdrawn in May 1901.

Following the grouping in 1923 the saloon received a number for the first time, becoming London, Midland & Scottish Railway (LMS) No.ED33 in the service stock series. It was renumbered 45021 in 1933, and about this time was also painted in LMS crimson livery – losing its lustrous two-tone livery, colloquially known as 'plum and spilt milk'.

The march of progress reduced the status of the engineers (who were no doubt anyway issued with company motor cars) and by March 1940 the saloon was out of use. After some string-pulling by the commanding officer of the newly established Melbourne Military Railway (MMR) in May 1940 it was sold to the War Office for £40, plus £4 7s 7d for delivery. The saloon was still in LMS livery until the end of 1943, though probably repainted olive drab (green) at some stage.

The MMR was the former Midland Railway branch from Chellaston East Junction south to Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and offered a passenger service for troops in 1940/41; but it is doubtful if the saloon was used on this. It seems to have been used as the commanding officer's personal saloon, though by 1942 it was seeing little use.

According to author and historian Peter Kalla-Bishop it usually kicked around 'Quarry sidings' and 'was rather a nuisance if anything; certainly on one occasion it fell into a hole dug for the foundations of a buffer stop'. During its wartime service it strayed as far as Colonel Stephens' Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway, where its presence was recorded in September 1943.

Incidentally the MMR was also used as a reception centre for 0-6-0T shunting engines from America and one of these, which passed

through in 1943, was WD No.1968, now our No. 22 *Maunsell*. One day perhaps a running reunion can be arranged for the two MMR veterans.

At the end of 1944 the MMR was returned to the LMS and the saloon was sent to Longmoor Military Railway (LMR) in Hampshire. It was to spend the next 26 years there, eventually becoming Army No.3005 in the LMR numbering system.

Here it was once again used regularly as an inspection saloon, incidentally supplanting the former K&ESR carriage which had moved to the Bicester Military Railway a little earlier. Latterly it was propelled around the system every Thursday afternoon, with the commanding officer and his staff crammed on to the leading balcony, for the ganger in charge of each length to make his report.

Additional lower steps were added in about 1952, together with small glass side screens (lost in preservation) to alleviate side draughts. It was painted blue after this became the fashionable LMR livery in the late 1940s and, in addition to its inspection duties, could often be found as one of the 'blue saloons' set (the other two in the set being the K&ESR Family Saloon and the now-derelict K&ESR No 83) for VIPs and special occasions. It received its last army general overhaul at BR's Lancing carriage works in November 1960.

When the LMR closed in 1969 our saloon was given another reprieve and, together with its ex-SE&CR and ex-L&SWR companions, was presented to the Transport Trust. Following the failure of the Longmoor preservation scheme the 'blue saloons' were transferred in September 1971 to the Severn Valley Railway, where they were somewhat neglected because of supposedly limited utility.

In 1985 all three arrived at the K&ESR. The balcony saloon, after restoration to L&NWR livery, soon entered service on the Vintage Train and became something of a signature coach for our Railway. Repainted LMS maroon livery after overhaul in 1994/5, it was bought for the K&ESR from its previous private owner with the aid of generous donations from a few volunteers in about 2002.

Withdrawn for a further overhaul a few years ago it has suffered deterioration due to outside storage, but has now finally found a place in the overhaul queue.

A Day in the Life of a TTI

How many readers travelling on our trains give ticket inspectors more than a casual glance? They are, however, a vital component in the smooth running of the company. Chief Ticket Inspector Brian Thompson tells us something of what they are expected to do.

If asked to describe the job, I suspect that the most common reply from passengers would be that TTIs (Travelling Ticket Inspectors) have a free ride on the train all day in return for clipping a few tickets. This is not an entirely accurate perception, so perhaps I might give readers some idea of the work involved by referring to my typical day out of the Railway.

I leave home at 8.15am, travelling through Dover and up the M20. This part of the journey is not very pleasant, and it is not unusual for me to be hassled by lorries all the way to Ashford. It is not until I am on the A28 approaching Tenterden that to the atmosphere changes and I begin to relax and look forward to the day ahead.

Tenterden is still asleep as I drive through, and on arrival at the station there are few signs of life; all is eerily quiet. There are no indications of the general bustle that will ensue later on.

It is now 9.30 and I sign on. The Station Master and booking clerks are often there a few minutes before me. We discuss the day ahead and any special factors which might, and often do, affect the smooth running of the timetable. I collect my waybill, party booking sheet, float and the bag containing my 'equipment'. The shop staff give me some guide books to sell and other things for the shops at Northiam and Bodiam. Sometimes I will be given toilet rolls, water and even sandwiches for workers down the line.

Suitably prepared, once the first train is at the platform, I can now carry out the required checks before departure. First, and most important job, is to check the toilets for cleanliness, soap and towels. If things are missing a rapid visit to the stores is necessary. After a chat with the 'on train caterer', any pre-booked seats are then reserved. One thing that must not be overlooked is the displaying of the First Class board (more of that later). Finally a check has to be made that all the doors are unlocked, the steps are up and the ramp is down.

It is now past 10.00am so passengers are starting to arrive and walk down the platform to the train. I stand and greet as many as I can and

hope that they feel welcome. This is the time for questions and when you need to know your stuff. The most often asked questions are "Where are the toilets?", "Which way does the train go?", "How long is the journey?" and "What can I do at Bodiam?". My least favourite is being asked by a child "Are you the Fat Controller?" Needless to say I always give a polite reply! By now it is busy and I need to help those in wheelchairs into *Petros*, and others to find spare seats.

Departure time, 10.45, arrives, and all the steps must be removed, the ramp raised and all doors shut and checked. We are off on our first trip.

Immediately on leaving Tenterden I start working through the train, checking and selling tickets. Some of the passengers are very happy to have a short chat and this gives me an opportunity to sell the guidebooks. Some visitors have no idea where they are going, and this brings out the tour guide in me. The uniform is always a source of interest, and many a time I have had to pose – for groups of senior ladies, for youngsters, and people of various nationalities. Most visitors from Europe can speak English, but recently a German asked if I had a guide book in his language. I apologised for not having any, but added that the pictures were in German. The look on his face when he had worked out what I said still makes me chuckle.

Collecting the First Class supplement is not always straightforward. Although most pay up with a friendly smile, every day there will be an individual or a family who are reluctant to do so. The most common excuses are "I didn't know it was First Class," "We were told to sit anywhere" or "I'm not going to pay any more." These situations demand both tact and perseverance. The conversation ends either with payment being made or the aggrieved party moving, very reluctantly, to a different part of the train.

The remainder of the journey is spent keeping a high profile by walking through the train talking to passengers and helping the catering staff. Sometimes deliveries are made to the station shops and staff along the line.

On arrival at Bodiam it is my job to check that all the passengers have disembarked safely, and that the train is as clean as possible.

Ten minutes or so later the return journey begins and the whole set of onboard duties is repeated. The train is due back in Tenterden at 12.40 and, if it has kept to time, there is now the opportunity to have a sandwich and a cup of coffee.

By 1.00pm the passengers for the next train are waiting and once again duty calls. The next two journeys follow the same pattern and by the time the final train arrives back in Tenterden, hopefully at 5.35, I have to make sure that all the toilets have been flushed and the dispatch bags collected from the other stations. The most important job of all, however, is to balance the waybill and the money from the sale of guides. Once the passengers have departed I can complete my day by handing in the takings and signing off.

It can be a very tiring and stressful day, but usually as I walk down to the car park I receive friendly waves and smiles from visitors as they leave in their cars. This is when I feel that the day's work has been worthwhile.

The drive home soon brings modern times back into focus, but just for those few hours I have lived in a different world.

In my opinion the K & ESR is very lucky to have such a committed team of TTIs, many of whom



Brian Thompson (Nick Pallant)

travel long distances in order to fulfil their duties, which they carry out in an efficient and professional manner. To many they are the public face of the Railway and any reputation it has gained over the years is in no small measure due to their efforts. It is worth noting that in the past year the TTIs collected nearly £20,000 in fares.

I would like to record my thanks to the TTI team for all their efforts – they are much appreciated.

THE INTER-RAIL CARD

Trustee Paul Hutchinson explains a scheme that is available to working members of the K&ESR.

Those of you who attended the staff meeting in March will recall that I agreed to investigate the Heritage Railway Association's Inter-Rail Card scheme. I now have details of these and am in a position to order them on behalf of staff, both paid and voluntary.

The scheme allows for free or reduced-rate travel on around 100 UK heritage railways. Please note that it is *not* available to 'armchair' members.

The cost of a card is £25 for a member and one other named person. The card's validity differs from railway to railway but generally excludes wine and dine trains, Santa Specials, Thomas events and most galas. Space considerations do not allow details to be included here of all the

railways involved and the fare reductions they offer, but these can be obtained on request to either me or the Company Secretary.

This is a separate scheme to the reciprocal arrangements that the K&ESR enjoys with many other heritage railways.

Payment is required in advance with your order. If interested please e-mail me on kessrutilities@gmail.com or write to me at Tenterden Town Station.

The cards are valid from March to the end of February. This information is unfortunately having to appear rather late for this season, but the scheme will no doubt continue in 2016 and subsequent years.

Halcyon Days at Northiam

Chris Fautley (otherwise our regular columnist 'Gricer') reminisces.

In 1990 I was part of the crew on the very first public train to Northiam. As a ticket inspector I had become used to working the line to Wittersham Road, and occasionally Hexden Bridge. Now, with the extra miles to Northiam, it seemed like a brand new Railway.

During its years of slumber Northiam had been cared for by the Sussex Area Group; and now, at long last, the station was performing the role for which it was intended. As the season progressed it became increasingly apparent to me that Northiam was also an extremely pleasant place to work – fine views, plenty happening and a tremendous group of volunteers.

It was invariably staffed, not surprisingly, by volunteers from East Sussex; being a Martlet man myself the appeal became increasingly great. (Six martlets on a blue background form the heraldic devices of both East and West Sussex, this possibly having its origins in the banner of the ancient kingdom –Ed.)

By the middle of the summer I fancied a touch of variety in my railway life, and therefore offered my services in the station tearoom. This is a good stage to point out that at Northiam it was always a 'tearoom', except at Christmas when for reasons unknown it reverted to a 'buffet'. Regardless, the years spent there were to be among my happiest at the Railway.

Being at the end of the line, the tearoom could be quite a lucrative little earner. Business would vary from terribly quiet to rushed off our feet when a train arrived, with crowds descending to purchase confectionery, biscuits, ice cream and the usual range of hot and cold beverages.

There was an 'Arkwright' style till on the counter which must have been very old. If I recall correctly the most it could ring up was £1.99, so larger purchases resulted in a frantic series of 'ker-chings' while the correct amount was registered. Not that it did register: it never did record what you rang up, but our visitors seemed to love it. Pure theatre.

The tearoom was effectively run on behalf of the Catering Department with which the Friends of Northiam – who now ran the station – had a most businesslike arrangement. The Friends

retained 10% of each day's takings, subject to a maximum of £20 a day. In the summer it was surprising how frequently £20 was banked – the end result being the accumulation of a tidy sum, which was used for tearoom and general station maintenance. Northiam effectively became financially independent of the rest of the Railway, except for very large items of capital expenditure. It was a state of affairs that seemed to suit all concerned.

Hot drinks were dispensed from a beverage machine plumbed into the mains water supply. The trouble was that at peak times it could barely heat the water quickly enough to cope with demand. That said, it dispensed really good quality drinks: the hot chocolate was legendary.

During one Santa Special season we thought that hot soup might be a good money-spinner. Accordingly one morning a large box of one-mug sachets of instant chicken soup arrived on the train from Tenterden. The machine, however, could not cope with this, so soup-making entailed much kettle-boiling.

As with other beverages, our soup was served in a polystyrene cup; but we found that the contents of one sachet was far too much – the finished product resembled wallpaper paste. Wallpaper paste in a polystyrene cup: it looked awful. A little experimentation revealed that half a sachet was adequate.

However, I recall one gentleman thinking he was being short-changed and insisting on the entire sachet being used. Sadly I did not have a knife and fork to offer him. (Curiously, much later, I discovered that a polystyrene cup held pretty much the same as a mug.)

We always took great pride in keeping everything spotlessly clean – the tearoom, naturally, being no exception. I remember on one particularly quiet day a colleague and I decided we would dismantle the vending machine in its entirety and give it a thoroughly deep clean. As is so often the case, the instructions for this operation had long since vanished, but dismantling was fairly straightforward.

We put a clean tea towel on the counter, and

having washed every nut, bolt and screw that we could remove, meticulously laid all the parts out. We were more than mindful that a lost screw could have signalled the machine's demise.

One successful dismantling later, with no parts lost and feeling extremely pleased with ourselves, we set about reassembly. Which is when we hit a snag. Before us, in neat rows on the tea towel, was a full complement of vending machine parts. Sadly, however, we hadn't actually laid them out in any kind of order. It was rather like being presented with a box of Meccano parts and being asked to assemble a nuclear reactor. Somehow, after much trial and error, we succeeded and the machine once again sprang back into life. There may have been a brief period during which it dispensed a coffee every time somebody flushed in the gents, but other than that all was well.

With supplies being delivered by train from Tenterden, one of the first tasks of the day was to phone the buffet with our catering order. Mindful of watching the pennies, I always used the internal telephone system; but this, on occasion, could be fraught with difficulty.

For example, you invariably had to shout extremely loud to be heard; in fact they probably could have heard me at Tenterden without the

telephone. Secondly, I had an unfortunate habit of dialling the wrong number. On one memorable occasion I reeled off a long order of chocolate bars, crisps, biscuits, tea and soft drinks, at the conclusion of which the Rolvenden signalman said it had been very nice talking to me but I might now like to try Tenterden buffet.

One of the most important factors in keeping the trains running punctually was operating the level crossing gates. Unlike now there was no interlocking with the signalling (there were no signals!) and it was just a straightforward question of opening and closing. I don't know if it is still the case, but they used to say the gates were so precisely hung that you could open them while balancing a cup of tea on top and not spill a drop.

Being a very busy road, it was essential to have them opened in good time for the arriving train. There was a treadle that rang a bell to warn when one was approaching, but it wasn't far enough along the line. In effect, if you waited until you heard the bell, it was too late. We all soon became adept at knowing precisely when to open the gates: you could invariably see the smoke from the train approaching along the line. In fact, on a good day before the trees came into full leaf, you could see the smoke at Wittersham Road.



Halcyon Days at Northiam during the early 1990s (CSHA)

Everybody used to muck in with gate duties, tearoom staff included. I remember an occasion when one of our older volunteers solemnly announced that, as he was now having to use a walking stick, he thought he would have to give up this particular task. We agreed that this was probably a good idea.

Christmas at Northiam was always a busy affair, as the Santa Specials used to terminate there. As mentioned earlier, for some reason the tearoom became a buffet at Christmas. I remember on one occasion boarding the train to drum up trade, announcing that there was time to alight and have a look around: there was a buffet and a lucky dip for the children. I returned to the tearoom, sorry buffet, and did some brisk business. Shortly before the train was due to depart, a rather agitated-looking lady came in. Where, she asked, was the buffet? "You're standing in it," I replied. "Oh," she said, looking down at me somewhat. "I thought you meant a free stand-up buffet." With nibbles and cheese and pineapple on sticks, presumably. Exit one

disappointed customer. Anyway, we were fresh out of canapés.

The lucky dip was always very popular. Run by the Friends, it was 50p a pop, and we used to scout the shops looking for appropriate items on which we could turn a profit. We aimed to spend about 20p on each prize, so a good return was generated.

Photographs were another good revenue earner. There was neither the money nor the demand to have postcards printed, so station staff used to make their own snaps available to have reproduced as reprints. We could invariably produce better photographs than our visitors, not least because we could access different vantage points. If a picture was not up to scratch, we had plenty of opportunity to get it right later. A particularly enterprising volunteer found a company that would produce reprints in quantity at a bargain price; I think we sold them at six for a pound.

(To be continued)

WHAT SORT OF TERRIER?

The Editor writes about the issue of page size.

Since the *Tenterden Terrier* first appeared in the spring of 1973 our house journal has gradually evolved. The first major change came with issue No.4 when a recognisable predecessor of today's Terrier was distributed to members. Over the years improvements in printing technology have allowed colour photographs to be the norm rather than the exception and the overall appearance of the product to become altogether more professional. The present general style was established by the then Editor, Brian Janes, with issue No.101 in 2006.

One thing that has not changed is the A5 size of the journal. Here, and judging by what we receive from other heritage railways, the *Terrier* may be going against a growing trend to use the larger A4 size. This has sometimes been the subject of comment – predictably often from the more vociferous working members. The idea has nonetheless been considered by the editorial staff and their predecessors.

It's not a straightforward issue. On the one hand, A4 might allow greater creativity in the use of photographs; on the other hand this could

be at the expense of written content and produce 'Disgusted of Wherever' letters blustering on about bookshelf sizes. We appreciate that members like the photographic side but the *Tenterden Terrier* is, and always has been, a journal of record – and that implies a significant written element.

Earlier in the year it was decided to raise the matter at the Volunteers and Paid Staff meeting in March. I introduced the subject and took a few questions – predictably about increasing the use of photos. We then put the matter to a show of hands and I fully expected to be discussing a major change with Jon Elphick, our graphic designer. Much to my surprise (and the Assistant Editor's) there was an overwhelming majority for leaving things as they are!

As a result we will therefore not be changing to A4 in the foreseeable future. That doesn't close the subject forever of course, and future members, an all-membership referendum or a future Editor could arrive at a different outcome. No doubt I shall receive e-mails and letters on this subject – but that, as they say, goes with the territory...

One Man and his Wagon

Carriage & Wagon Volunteer Jon Colwell writes about the history and restoration of box van No.501346.



Paint Your Wagon... (Jon Colwell)

Look closely at pictures of goods yards from the 1920s to the 1960s and you are as likely as not to see at least one 12 ton covered box van. From main line express goods to local pick-up trains, these wagons were used whenever merchandise had to be protected from the weather. With full loads of individual consignments, they trundled around the railways until the decline of rail-borne freight saw the mass withdrawal and elimination of such vehicles from Britain's railways.

No.501346 was built by the LMS at Wolverton in 1934. This was the same year that RMS *Queen Mary* was launched. *Flying Scotsman* recorded the first authenticated 100 mph by a steam locomotive, and Shirley Temple starred in her first film.

The wagon is an early example of the use of pressed corrugated steel ends, at a time when wooden ends were still the norm. British Railways built many more examples. The LMS may have adopted steel ends to assist a struggling steel industry during the Depression of the 1930s. The steel ends are stamped with name "METRO" along with the date of manufacture, which tends to suggest that the LMS bought these in from a supplier.

Originally 501346 was unfitted. However British Railways' modernisation plan saw widespread conversions of wagons to become vacuum brake fitted during the 1950s. On 501346, in addition to the vacuum brake, diagonal straps were welded to the sides to help support the ends and a long tie-bar added between the W-irons to resist the stronger forces exerted by the vacuum brake.

Somehow 501346 found its way into Chatham

Dockyard and was appropriated by the Navy. Along with many others from the pre-grouping and grouping eras it was bought by a scrap merchant when the dockyard was closing in the 1980s. With some similarities to the Barry scrap yard, a number of these wagons were acquired for preservation and use on the K&ESR.

501346 ran for many years with little more than a repaint. Eventually however the wood and steel ends deteriorated to a point where a comprehensive restoration was required. Over several years the wooden sides and floor were renewed. Alan Brice expertly welded in replacement steel to replace the corrosion in the ends. Julian Coppins worked marvels in steel to sculpture the corrugated parts that had disappeared in rust. 501346 is now painted in early BR bauxite and lettered in a style appropriate to the mid to late 1950s.

An interesting illustration of the effect of inflation was provided during the restoration. The late David Sinclair told the author that when he was a foreman in the wagon repair works in the 1960s, there was a limit of £5 for repairs on each wagon (*about £89 today -Ed.*) Anything over this and the wagon went for scrap. Today, a single tin of gloss paint costs in the region of £50 and three tins were used to repaint 501346.

Thanks are extended to Alan, Julian and Nick Pallant for their assistance in the restoration. Now in its 80th year, No.501346 should grace the occasional freight train and serve as useful storage for many more years to come.



Jon's van, fully restored, second from loco during Gala Weekend, May 2015 (Alan Crotty)

From the Footplate: Driver

After years of working your way up the ladder you finally get to the very top. Matthew Hyner now looks at the role of the steam driver.

This latest article in this series sets out to describe the duties of a steam driver on our Railway. Rather than describe this in the context of a journey along the line, I have chosen to concentrate on the responsibilities of the role in the context of a typical day. In some ways, learning to drive a locomotive is much like learning to drive a car, although rather more complicated. There are many skills involved, most of which become second nature and often go unseen. I aim to capture some of those skills here.

Once enginemmen have mastered the role of fireman, they will be given the opportunity to develop their skills as a driver. First and foremost, the core responsibilities of a driver are to drive safely and economically. They are also expected to keep to the timetable as best they can, while obeying all the rules and without working the fireman too hard. Above all else, the driver's primary concern is always the safety of the locomotive, the train and its passengers.

A driver's day typically starts with preparation. As with any footplate duty, the driver will read

all the relevant notices and satisfy himself (or herself) that the locomotive has been appropriately secured before reaching for the oil cans. Due to the mechanical design of locomotives, anything that moves will normally involve some sort of movement in combination with its counterparts. All of the various joints and linkages will be composed of metal and the movement of metal on metal causes friction, which in turn causes wear or heat. For this reason the driver is required to have a thorough knowledge of the layout of the mechanics of each locomotive. The general rule of thumb is that if it moves, it's probably got an oil point on it or attached to it.

Two types of oil are employed; thicker steam oil for anything that comes into contact with steam, and thinner lubrication oil for everything else. It is usually best to attend to anything that comes into contact with steam first, as any associated apparatus will be cooler to handle before the boiler raises steam. The oil will have longer to warm through, which allows it to thin out a little and enables it to flow freely, which in turn helps



Early morning at Rolvenden: Driver Adrian Landi prepares Norwegian on 11th June, while Third Man Tom White puts a shine on the pipework (Jon Elphick)

to prevent blockages. Using an oil feeder the driver will then carefully work around the locomotive, searching out and filling the various oil points. Reaching some of these oil points can be tricky given the tight spaces on some of our locomotives, with very little room to manoeuvre. Any water that has found its way in will have to be removed, as oil floats on water, preventing it from providing lubrication. While working round the locomotive the driver will also look for any faults and report these to the workshop staff so that they can assess whether a repair is required.

Once steam has been raised the driver will carry out tests on the brake apparatus and the sanding gear to see that they function correctly. The driver will also confer with the fireman to ensure that the preparation and checks have been completed thoroughly and, if required, the boiler is blown down to clear any build-up of sediment. All that remains is to prime or set up any lubricators, and fill the tanks with water and the bunker with coal.

In my previous article in *Terrier* 126 'From the Footplate: Fireman', I explained that there are different firing techniques to suit various types of boiler. This is also true for driving, as there are several different driving styles for the various types of locomotive. The driver will need to know and understand the differences in order to be able to drive appropriately for the locomotive that he is working. The main differences are whether or not the boiler is superheated, the type of valve gear (Walschaerts or Stephenson) and type of valves employed to control the admission of steam to the cylinders (slide or piston valve). All these factors will have an influence on the driving style required for a particular locomotive.

While out 'on the road' there are many skills that come into play. Often the driver will be taking several considerations into account all at once, more so than the fireman who is concerned principally with coal, water and steam generation. While I was learning to drive steam locomotives I was once asked by an inspector to speak out loud everything that was going through my mind. To this I responded that I couldn't as having thought about it there were several considerations going through my mind all at once and I could only speak one at a time. This was the answer the inspector wanted, as it proved that I was balancing these considerations while thinking ahead to the next ones. Then he asked me to explain each one in turn, which set the tone for the rest of our journey!

Trainee drivers will learn how to use the regulator and valve gear to control the admission of steam to the cylinders in an efficient manner. This helps to manage the consumption of coal and water required to generate the steam, and makes the fireman's job easier. There are also several different types of brakes to learn, each of which operate in different ways: steam, vacuum, air and combinations of each. As well as making use of the regulator, valve gear and brakes to drive efficiently, the driver will need to weigh up other considerations in order to drive smoothly.

He will use his senses of sight, hearing and feeling to tell when the locomotive and train are running comfortably and when they are not. If the brakes are dragging, for example, it is possible to smell the rubbing brake blocks and even to feel the loss of momentum through his feet. Learning the route will tell him where power will be required and where it will not. Our Railway undulates so much that employing a thorough knowledge of the route can greatly improve efficiency by taking advantage of the changing gradients and sweeping curves to build up and slow down the speed of the train without expending any extra power through use of steam or brakes.

In addition to the driver's responsibilities, he is also responsible for guiding the fireman and helping him to be efficient in his firing. This is especially important when looking after a fireman who is relatively new to the role. It is the driver's responsibility to set up and nurture a working relationship between himself, the fireman and any training crew member. In doing so the good teamwork required for efficient locomotive working can be developed.

Included in this teamwork will be good communication, informing the fireman ahead of planned actions to assist him in his management of the boiler – keeping an adequate level of water, maintaining the appropriate pressure of steam, and avoiding waste. In an emergency situation the driver is in charge: it is for him to confer with the train crew and decide on any action to be taken.

Reaching the grade of driver, or any grade for that matter, doesn't mean that you stop learning. Drivers, like all other footplate crew, aim to improve their knowledge of locomotives and the Railway in general whenever they can. Furthermore they will make an effort to pass this knowledge on to others, perhaps by encouraging

them to have a go or by taking part in mutual improvement sessions. Without this crucial aspect of the footplate roles there would be no training.

Over the recent winter several members of the footplate team have worked to gather and develop material for our very own knowledge base in the form of a mutual improvement website. Having originally intended to keep this internal, it quickly became apparent that we are the only heritage railway with such an example. Therefore, although the website is still in development and all of the contributors are now

busy operating our Railway for the season, the decision was made to make this resource publicly available.

We are receiving some very positive feedback from other heritage railways and will continue to expand the resource in order to improve it while also maintaining our frontier position. You can find the website at www.kesr-mic.org.uk. If you would like to come and see what we do, you can contact operating assistant Andy Hardy by e-mail to andyh@kesr.org.uk or by speaking to him at the Railway.

25 Years Ago...

The Summer 1990 issue of the *Tenterden Terrier* rightly focused on the reopening to Northiam. The first day of public services, on 19th May, saw No. 10 *Sutton*, No. 25 *Northiam* and No.24 *William H Austen* all recorded for posterity in monochrome by Brian Stephenson, along with feature articles by Mark Toynbee and Duncan Buchanan.

Philip Shaw's editorial resonates almost as true today as it did back in 1990 and we quote the second half in full:

"The initial indications are that the line into Sussex has been enthusiastically received by the

public. Now we have to focus on what we wish to achieve with our newly extended Railway. After all, there is no purpose in carrying more passengers merely for the sake of it – a quality product for the discriminating is much more satisfying within a voluntary organisation."

It would take a brave individual to predict the state of the K&ESR in yet another 25 years' time, but one has to wonder how, if indeed at all, the Railway will truly ever determine what it really wants to achieve. We have lots of 'good bits', but no-one has ever succeeded in finding the formula to join them all up...

Hugh Nightingale



The Northiam reopening train preparing to return to Tenterden on 19th May 1990 (Brian Stephenson)

THE NEXT GENERATION: Tara Millen

Anthony Ramsey continues our series looking at the Railway's younger members of paid and volunteer staff.

The vast majority of those who work on our Railway are volunteers. However, although idealists might wish it otherwise, the reality is that an organisation as complex as ours simply would not function without any paid staff, especially in the areas of engineering and catering. But what sort of people apply to work for a heritage railway? To find out more, I went along to the Buffet to meet a relatively new member of staff, Catering Assistant Tara Millen.



I asked Tara how she came to join the Railway. Being a local girl, she said, she was aware of it and had visited it both with her family and on a school trip. Then, in the summer of 2013, she saw an advertisement and thought the job looked interesting. "Was that because of the trains?" I enquired. Tara hesitated, not wanting to appear heretical; but, when pressed, admitted it was because she "needed the money". In other words, just like virtually every other job applicant! Notwithstanding that, she regards it as "an ideal job: it's local, enjoyable, and fits in with college".

What does the role entail? "I am part-time, working on average one day per week in term time and three to four days per week during holidays. I serve at the till, prepare food, do the washing-up and help to keep everything safe and tidy. Occasionally I also help with the trolley or buffet on the A set."

Tara has lived all her life on a farm. She is a full-time student, pursuing an Extended Diploma in Animal Management on the Canterbury campus of Hadlow College, which she thoroughly enjoys. This September she will be going to Nottingham University to study Animal Science. Subsequently she hopes to work with animals, whether in something science-based or on a farm. A keen swimmer and horse rider, she has also worked with horses, done waitressing and

lifeguarding, and acts as a course representative and peer mentor at college.

I asked Tara to sum up her experience of working in the Buffet, and her comments fell into three groups. First, it's worthwhile: large numbers of customers, ranging from young families to groups of pensioners are served and – presumably – kept happy (hardly any of them complain). Secondly, it's useful: she has developed her skills in customer service, handling

money, and meeting and working with a wide range of people, learned about food safety and had the opportunity to gain qualifications (e.g. she now has the Food Safety and Hygiene Certificate, Level 2). Thirdly, it's enjoyable: "Every day is busy but full of interesting activities. Everyone is very friendly and helpful, and you are not forced to do anything you are not capable of." She is particularly complimentary about the helpful leadership of Andre and Meg in encouraging the whole team to work well together.

Inevitably I asked her if she had suffered any disasters. I suppose I was hoping for a story about trays of food dropped on the floor, or drinks spilled onto customers' laps. But it seems Tara is not accident-prone: the worst to have happened is that she dropped and smashed three cups!

Finally I pleaded with her to tell me a few stories about Colin Duncan. She insisted she couldn't. I can only assume he must have bribed her!

So, what does the future hold? While Tara sees the Railway as a good tourist attraction, she herself has not acquired any particular interest in trains. Nevertheless she plans to stay with us (although once she starts at university she will only be available to work during vacations). We can only hope her employment with us continues for many years!



Norwegian with the Pullman set at Harvesters Crossing on a Northiam–Tenterden empty stock working on 19th April (Phil Edwards)

Pullman car Aries in the Back Siding at Wittersham Road on 3rd June. It had been delivered from Rampart Engineering of Barrow Hill the previous day. (André Freeman)



30 Years of Celebrating the Work of Colonel Stephens

The Colonel Stephens Society issued the following press release on 3rd June.

The 30th anniversary of the birth of the Colonel Stephens Society was marked during our now traditional Members' Weekend in May. We usually visit a railway with a strong connection with light railway pioneer Colonel Holman F. Stephens. This year we toured the route of the long-closed North Devon & Cornwall Junction Railway – which once ran between Halwill Junction and Torrington – stopping off at points of interest, including the remains of several stations and halts. It was the last railway engineered by the Colonel, opening in 1925 and operated by the Southern Railway. Regular passenger services were withdrawn in 1965.

We spent the following day at the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway. Members were so impressed with the restoration work there that, although the line was not directly associated with the Colonel, the committee decided at a special meeting held on the platform at Chelfham to make a contribution to the cost of making new doors for the station.

To mark our anniversary we decided to award Honorary Membership to founder member



***The* COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY**

Jon Clarke – only the third such award in the Society's history.

Over the years we have made modest donations to several projects to preserve and restore relics of the lines of the Colonel. This year, at the Society's AGM held in Barnstaple, a decision was made to contribute towards the re-creation, by Colin Shutt, of a Ford rail lorry as once used on the Colonel's Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway.

About the Colonel Stephens Society

Colonel Holman Fred Stephens was born in 1868 and died in 1931, while resident at the Lord Warden Hotel, Dover. He was a promoter, engineer, locomotive superintendent and director of light railways. He was connected in one or more of these capacities with 17 such railways, both standard and narrow gauge, in England and Wales. His office was in Tonbridge, Kent.

The Society continues to provide modest donations to projects with a strong connection to the railways of Colonel Stephens. Projects seeking support should contact our Secretary: David Powell, 'Gateways', Bledlow Road, Saunderton, Princes Risborough HP27 9NG; e-mail david.powell@waitrose.com

The Society has contributed to a number of restoration projects, including:

- The restoration of a Ryde Pier Drewry tram
- The re-creation of a Ford railmotor
- The restoration of the K&ESR's Terrier No.3 *Bodiam*
- The restoration of the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway's *Russell*
- The creation of a mannequin of Colonel Stephens for the Colonel Stephens Museum at Tenterden
- The restoration of Shrewsbury Abbey Foregate station by the Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust
- The restoration of the Ashover Light Railway's Planet diesel shunter *Ashover*

For further information contact the Society's Publicity Officer, Ross Shimon, on 01795 533137; e-mail andrshimon@btinternet.com

The society's website can be found at colonelstephenssociety.co.uk

THE ROTHER VALLEY HOTEL

The former Rother Valley Hotel, near Northiam station, is famous in the history of preservation of the K&ESR as the venue for the inaugural meeting of the Kent & East Sussex Railway Preservation Society on 15th April 1961. However, as Tom Burnham explains, its connection with the Railway goes back long before that.

William Langham Christie was a prominent Sussex landowner in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. His holdings in East Sussex included the Great Knelle Estate at Northiam, which amounted to three or four thousand acres. He served as the MP for Lewes from 1874 to 1885. With a view to benefiting from the arrival of the Rother Valley Light Railway, which was then under construction, he had plans drawn up for "a small commercial hotel, with a sufficiency of stabling and three or four acres of land" near Northiam station, which he regarded as the principal one on the new railway.

It would be about a mile and a half from Northiam village, where there were two licensed premises at that time: the Six Bells (now closed and converted for residential use) and the Crown and Thistle (now the Mucky Duck). The White Hart at Newenden was about half a mile away from the station, on the far side of the River Rother, in Kent.

An application for a provisional licence for the proposed hotel was considered at the annual licensing session of the Sussex County Bench (Rye Division) on 27th September 1899, when it aroused considerable local opposition. Objectors from Northiam believed that Mr Christie was simply out to improve the value of his property, and that as soon as the licence was granted he would sell out to a brewery company for a large sum of money. It was asserted that the existing licensed houses were quite adequate for the needs of the local population.

Three petitions were presented against the application, one each from residents of Northiam and Newenden, headed by the rectors of the respective parishes, and a second from Northiam. The Chairman of the bench announced that, after careful consideration, the magistrates "had come to the conclusion that at the present time the case had not been made out for the granting of the licence".

The Rother Valley Railway with its station at Northiam opened the following spring, and in

September of the same year a fresh application for a licence was brought before the magistrates. Mr Christie's agent, Hubert John Powell, showed the plans, which were on a somewhat larger scale than previously, and said they would cost about £3,500 and would provide a "first-class small hotel for travellers and visitors". Robert Huxford, the stationmaster at the new RVR station at Northiam, said he "attended by direction of his company to support the application. He was sure the hotel was required. There were about 1,500 passengers a month and the line was to be extended."

Beckley district councillor Albert Roberts supported the application, but it was opposed by Albert James Edwards, a district councillor and Chairman of Northiam Parish Council, and by James Selmes of Lossenham, Newenden, both of whom considered that the existing public houses were quite sufficient for the local population.

However, this time the magistrates decided that a case had been made for the new hotel and granted it a provisional licence. This was confirmed at a hearing the following month, when it was emphasised that Mr Christie intended to keep the hotel in his own hands, and not dispose of it to any brewer or speculator.

The builder of the new Station Hotel, as it was now named, was probably Frederick William Parker (died 1932) of Bexhill. He completed the contract in about May 1902, as on 11th June there was an auction of surplus materials, scaffold planks and builder's plant at the hotel.

Bench sessions in July and August of the same year confirmed the grant of a full licence and then approved its temporary transfer to John Reader, of the Cinque Ports Hotel in Rye, who had taken on its management.

Mr Reader was born at Kennington, near Ashford, Kent, in about 1850, and before moving to Rye had been the landlord of the Junction Inn (now the Curlew) at Salehurst and of the Castle Hotel at Bodiam. While he was at Bodiam he had been summoned for permitting gaming, in the form of "rattling for beer", but



The Rother Valley Hotel today (Hugh Nightingale)

this does not seem to have weighed against him with the magistrates.

There was a change of tenant in 1909 when Charles Wills advertised the hotel, "Under new management", in the *Hastings & St Leonards Observer* as an "Ideal place for Country Holiday. Extensive and beautiful private grounds. Strictly moderate tariff. Families specially catered for. Stabling and garage. Croquet and tennis lawns. Special terms for Parties, Picnics, Teas."

William Christie died in 1913 and the management of his estates passed to the trustees of A.L. Christie (his principal heir). There were no drastic changes during the period of the Great War; but soon afterwards, on 28th March 1919, the trustees sold most of the Great Knelle Estate, including the Station Hotel, Northiam, by auction at the Castle Hotel, Hastings.

In September of the following year James Herbert Atfield, who was now the licensee, applied to the Rye County Bench for permission to change the name from the Station Hotel to the Rother Valley Hotel. He said that when people heard the word "station" they thought it

would be a noisy place. Granting the application, the Chairman, G.M. Freeman KC, said he had noticed that himself.

Mr Atfield found the bench less sympathetic in September 1921 when he applied for a temporary transfer of the licence to Geoffrey Herbert Algernon Hawkins. Superintendent Braine of the East Sussex Constabulary opposed the application. He informed the magistrates that Mr Hawkins had recently held the licence of the Old Golden Cross Hotel in Hastings, where he had been fined £2 for supplying drink to a police constable on duty without the consent of his superior officer.

The Rother Valley Hotel, in his opinion, required a man of good conduct to manage it properly.

The application was refused. It seems surprising that Mr Hawkins was not given a little more benefit of the doubt, as he had served throughout the Great War, first as a lieutenant in the Manchester Regiment and then as a captain with the Royal Flying Corps, in which he had flown with 22 Squadron.

Over the next 18 months there were at least two landlords, but in March 1923 the licence passed to Mrs Sophia Marion Oram (1867–1956), who was the proprietress for several years. She and her husband (who died in 1924) had previously run the Clarence Hotel in Hastings. Mrs Oram advertised the Rother Valley Hotel particularly to anglers who came to fish in the Rother, and offered “Family and Residential, Luncheons, Dinners, Teas and Suppers”.

The Rother Valley Hotel used to play an important role in the social life of the district. The Rother Valley Harriers often met there to begin their hunts, and it was a favourite venue for wedding receptions and supper dances, for which a licence extension was sometimes, though not always, granted. In due course Mrs Oram was succeeded as landlord by Frederick Rivers.

In November 1938 the hotel was bought by the well-known East Sussex brewers Beard & Company (Lewes) Ltd. The company sold it again in about 1949, however, and it became a free house once more.

The hotel’s importance in the local community was emphasised in less happy circumstances in November 1953 when officials from the Ministry of Agriculture set up their headquarters there during an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the locality.

It seems doubtful whether many of the Rother Valley Hotel’s customers were arriving by train via Northiam station by this time, but in any event they were unable to do so from January 1954, when British Railways withdrew regular passenger services on the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

A more reliable source of trade disappeared later the same year when auction sales at the Northiam Cattle Market ceased. The market had occupied the site between the station and the hotel since 1903.

In 1955 the British writer Gerald Kersh published a short story, *The woman who wouldn’t stay dead*, in an American magazine, the *Saturday Evening Post*, which brought the Rother Valley Hotel to the attention of an international audience. Mr Kersh opened his story: “When the mist comes up from the marshes in the Rother Valley, and you do not know whether you are coming or going between Tenterden and Northiam and Beckley and

goodness knows where, best go to the Rother Valley Hotel.

“People get lost in the valley, and are grateful for the hospitality of the hotel, where the wines are good, the food is good, and as for the company, you can take it or leave it. You may meet a long-lost friend or enemy in the saloon bar, squeezing the foggy dew out of his moustache. You may encounter the unlikely people. In the Rother Valley anything can happen – as someone said of New York.”

The story appeared in Britain in 1960 in a collection of short stories, “The ugly face of love”. Gerald Kersh added, for the benefit of his British readers, “This establishment, incidentally, also doesn’t know exactly where it is; one of its signs says that it is The First Hotel in Sussex; the other, that it is The Last Hotel in Kent. The reverse of this holds good, since the hotel is on one of those English frontiers...”

In fact the River Rother itself forms the county boundary hereabouts, so Kersh was perhaps employing a little literary licence.

At the start of this article we mentioned the historic meeting at the Rother Valley Hotel at 3pm on 15th April 1961. Chaired by M. Lawson Finch, author of the first book on the history of the K&ESR, the meeting was attended by around 125 people and saw the launch of the Kent & East Sussex Railway Preservation Society.

The later part of the 20th century was a difficult time for country inns and hotels, because of various economic, social and legislative changes. Many have closed, and many of the survivors have had to change the services they offer. The Rother Valley Hotel was no exception.

In the early 1990s the former pleasure grounds of the hotel were developed for camping and caravanning, and the hotel itself was sold into separate ownership in about 2007. After a rather unsettled period when it traded under the name of the Station House Inn, it finally closed in the summer of 2010. It reopened in December 2011 as an Indian restaurant called Sahebs.

The Rother Valley Caravan and Camping Park is now under new ownership as well. It advertises a ride on the K&ESR from Northiam station as one of the attractions available to its visitors, and so maintains the connection first established in 1902.

RED NOSE DAY

On Friday 13th March a group of staff and volunteers decided to go the extra mile – or 100 miles – for charity.

The team, comprising James Taylor, Jamie Douglas, Richard Stone, Andy Hardy, Debbie Kilgannon, Rosemary Geary, Jack Ticehurst, Dan Dickson, Jonathan Marsh and Jemma Hosmer, took on five return trips from Rolvenden to Bodiam on the Railway's historic pump trolley, raising funds for Comic Relief while publicising the Railway. Prior to the event the vehicle was repainted into a special (and unique) Red Nose Day livery of white with red dots.

Starting early in the morning, the first group of five took the pump trolley out to Bodiam (via Junction Road) before swapping with the next group who returned to Rolvenden (again via Junction Road). This journey was repeated four more times during the day.

A GPS tracker was used to monitor and record the group's progress during the day, including registering a top speed of 19mph. After five round trips the target of 100 miles was reached (on New Mill straight in the Up direction). However that was not the end, as the team wished to finish in style. On arrival at Rolvenden

the entire team crammed onto the trolley and set off up the bank to Tenterden. As the trolley passed Orpin's crossing the intrepid crew knuckled down ready for the really hard work.

Having already covered 100 miles the incline seemed a daunting task but the team were determined and slowly worked up the bank, passing bemused motorists at Cranbrook Road crossing. Finally the team arrived at Tenterden Town to be met by a crowd of supporters a mere 12 hours after starting.

The group was sponsored by friends and family along with colleagues from the K&ESR, with over £2,000 being raised for the charity.

The event received lots of publicity and appeared on several social media websites, in some railway magazines, in local newspapers and on television, along with a brief mention on national radio on the *Chris Evans Breakfast Show* on Radio 2.

The team would like to thank everyone who supported us along with those who helped on the day providing logistics, manning crossing gates and supplying much-needed refreshment.



The team of ten pauses at Rolvenden (Phil Edwards)

Andy Hardy

Thank You, Gerald

Cathy Crotty writes in appreciation of the efforts over many years of signalling doyen Gerald Beck.

Gerald joined the K&ESR after a career in banking and a lifetime of travelling the world. A man of great knowledge and experience, he had been brought up in the now old-fashioned tradition of doing one's best, being aware of one's surroundings and the effect a careless word or action might have on others. His sense of duty is profound, as is his meticulous record keeping and tidiness.

He started with us as the Wittersham Road Station Agent and wrought wonders in the tiny office and wild garden, transforming it from a neglected wilderness to a peaceful haven. He was persuaded to join the ranks of signalmen but, always preferring the company of birds and animals to loud commercialism, it was at Wittersham Road Box that he began his signalling career. Retired from paid employment he quickly became indispensable at the Wittersham Road 'Permanent Way Extension to Northiam' Yard where his 'intelligent anticipation' of the shunting moves was legendary. He is still the only man who can out-think a Frim Halliwell shunt!

Gerald was reluctantly persuaded to extend his field of operations to the new Rolvenden Signal Box, to Tenterden Town (very rarely) and then to Northiam, where he was very much in demand in the early days of that entirely new construction. His comprehension of the signalling rules – coupled with a natural affinity

for the rigorous procedures of 'box work' – made him much sought after, initially as an operator and then, of course, as a teacher, though it has always been his habit to hide his light under the nearest and most obscure bush! His ability as an administrator meant he took to Inspectorship like the proverbial duck to water, though to him it was too much like the banking career he had left behind.

As the years rolled on, Gerald found his eyesight was deteriorating to the extent that he feared he might no longer be able to drive to Tenterden and began to make plans for retirement from the K&ESR Inspectorate. However a double cataract operation improved his sight beyond belief – afterwards he said he could see better than he could when he was 30! With his second retirement temporarily shelved, Gerald continued to inspect the inspectors and tried to maintain his sane and level-headed influence on the increasing complexity of the signalling infrastructure and regulations. Always one to see clearly through to the nub of any matter, he became frustrated with the modern trends and the litigious society which requires so much paper to cover everyone's back you could use up several rainforests a year!

At 85 Gerald has finally decided to hang up his Inspector's hat and, after a lifetime of service to others, to spend time enjoying himself! Having already demonstrated an expertise with

computers and other technological wizardry many a younger man would envy, he has now taken up photography and so, although he will no longer be signalling, he will still be around and about the Railway, seeing it from a different perspective!

His gain is very much our loss; we will miss his wise counsel, his self-effacing manner and his clarity of thought. We will not see his like again, but we shall do well if we try to follow his example.



Where signalling began for Gerald – Wittersham Road Box (John Rose)

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 to 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 the typeface or size, but please keep it simple and do not include page numbers. 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. Please do not embed photos within text – submit photos separately.

Photos

Prints, negatives and transparencies can always be accepted, but generally speaking negatives and transparencies need to be of particular interest or quality to justify the necessary work.

For news and current events digital is preferred, especially if the picture is as least as good as more traditional formats. Unless used to accompany an article, a low-resolution jpeg copy of the original is initially requested. Typically the longest dimension should be no greater than 900 pixels, or resized as a copy for the web. We will request a full-size image if for possible future use, but please bear in mind that the image/file needs to be typically suitable for cropping to a minimum of 1800 pixels (longest dimension) for A6/half a page or 2700 pixels for A5/full page.

We can also accept pictures saved to DVD-R or CD-R.

Our request for a full-sized image does not guarantee inclusion in the next or any future edition of the *Tenterden Terrier*.

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