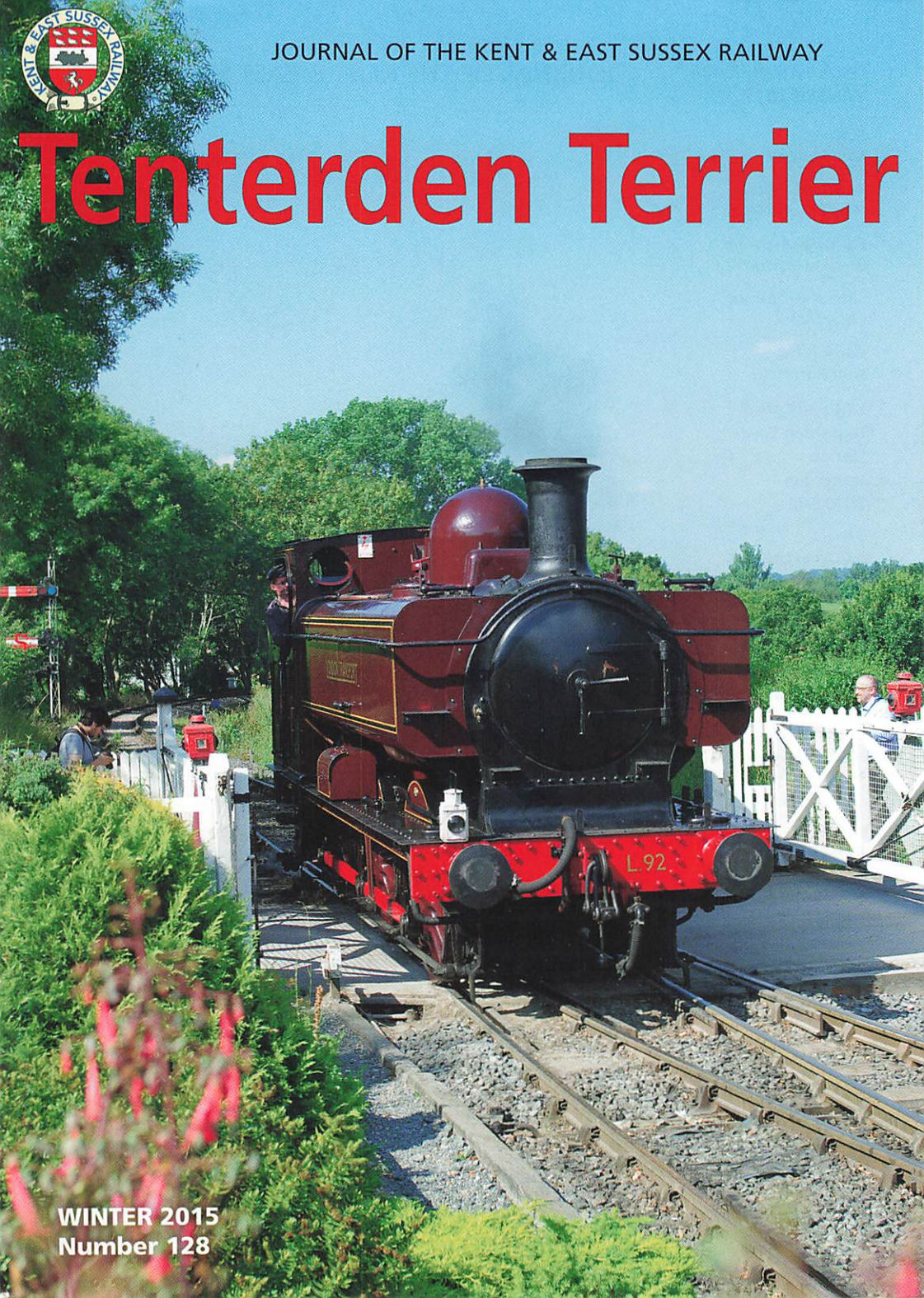




JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

# Tenterden Terrier



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**Front cover:** *Visiting London  
Transport Pannier Tank L.92 enters  
Tenterden Town Station during  
August 2015. (Hugh Nightingale).*

**Back cover:** *Top: USA 30065 departs  
Bodiam with the 'A' Set  
(John Wickham)  
Bottom: 'Norwegian' about to  
ascend Wittersham Bank with the  
Vintage Train (John Rose).*

# Tenterden Terrier

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# Editorial

## Credit Where Credit's Due

Elsewhere in this issue we include a photo feature of the official opening of Rolvenden Riverside Carriage Storage Shed on Sunday 20th September. This new facility, of which any heritage railway would be proud, will of course provide a snug and safe home for our carriage fleet, and not least the vintage vehicles, against the worst of the weather's ravages.

'Nothing grows from naught at call' and we must first express our gratitude to the Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust and its members for channelling the necessary finance in our direction.

But as anyone who has ever run a K&ESR project will know, having the money is only one of the resources needed. Nothing can be achieved without people – and especially Volunteers. For the extensive and complex new track layout, built to the highest standards, we must thank the heroic efforts of our Permanent Way Department staff – not a single one of which receives payment. Thank you all of you, for the vast amount of work you put into this task. By definition there is nothing more fundamental to a railway than its iron road. If one could have all the sheds imaginable they would be useless without the track to serve them. The same can be said for the Railway as a whole and here we must be at pains to sincerely thank the P. Way Department for their tireless efforts over many years in building and maintaining the very foundation of all else we do. Thank you again – you are an example to others.



*Branch Line Society dmu short rail tour between Tenterden and Rolvenden on 11th October, including tracks within the newly-opened Rolvenden Riverside Carriage Storage Shed and yard. (Alan Crotty)*



# People in Profile – Shaun Dewey

Regular contributor Chris Fautley interviews The K&ESR's new General Manager Shaun Dewey who started with the Railway in July

**CF: It's quite a change, from the aviation industry to a heritage railway. What attracted you to the job?**

*SD: Slower pace at ground level, but there are many similarities between the two....safety, regulation, seasonality, punctuality, training, risk, branding, product delivery, customer service, weather etc. In fact Richard Branson's comment about "how to make a small fortune in the airline industry....start with a big one", seems to apply just as much to the railway sector, so I feel totally at home..*

**CF: Could our railway learn anything from big industry, do you think?**

*SD: Big business and heritage railways are very different animals but big business is continually reinventing itself because the world does not stand still. Clear targets, focus, direction and teamwork. We have some or all of these in small enclaves across the railway, but, we are not yet "one railway"*

**CF: And vice versa?**

*SD: Big business can learn a lot from our volunteers, "the impossible is not impossible, it just takes a little longer."*

**CF: What has surprised you most?**

*SD: Dysfunctional sums it up, but somehow it works. I have met, and been amazed, at the enthusiasm of so many people across the railway, and feel quite excited with what we could achieve once we sort ourselves out.*

**CF: When you first started work on the railway, was there anything in particular that immediately struck you as requiring attention?**

*SD: The life blood of the railway... **Revenue!** Falling traffic and revenues year on year have resulted in reduced infrastructure investment, so it is essential we refocus and do something about it or else failure will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Only by increasing our revenue will we have the funding to properly invest in our infrastructure and product.*



**CF: How are you addressing that?**

*SD: By focussing on **price, accessibility and systems**. First get the customer through the gate, then we have the opportunity of generating ancillary revenues – shop, buffet, and whatever else we can add.*

- 1. Increase the profile of the railway;*
- 2. Define the customer; and establish how to reach out to them in each area;*
- 3. Review our products and price proposition;*
- 4. Introduce a proper online reservations system over the winter with a target of 85% of bookings online by next summer;*
- 5. Review our retail product with more local produce and establish on line sales so we can improve our winter revenues;*
- 6. Work to integrate our various systems with our accounting system so our financial forecasting and reporting can be improved.*

**CF: If you could achieve just one thing during the next year, what would it be?**

*SD: There are so many thing, process, procedure, order.... but I have to stay with the **revenue line**. In order to invest we need to earn, so one step at a time, starting now with what was a very*



successful Thomas weekend 26/27 September. Our ticket revenue was 19% up on the same event last year, the first event this year to show a year on year increase. In addition we took over £10k in station catering and £11k in the shop, so a big thank you to everyone concerned, hard work but enjoyable. This was achieved by reinventing the event, making it slightly different, being creative, so well done to all, but before we get carried away, we all know we could have done just that little bit better. We will however take the upside and bottle that enthusiasm and creativity for the next event – Halloween / Fright Night and we will be targeting another year on year improvement. December brings Santa, and more innovations. The Santa Specials are our biggest revenue earner and is an enormous logistical exercise. We will be introducing project planning for this event onwards (more innovation) which should enable better inter departmental co-operation. The Santa program at the end of September was 17% sold, so again ahead of last year.

**CF: Similarly, what are your principal aims in the longer term – say the next three years?**

*SD: Three years brings us into the Robertsbridge extension, which will be a major task affecting everyone on the railway, and which will require a great deal of lateral thinking. Prior to this however, I think we need to look at our stations and within our heritage brief plan how each can be developed in their own right. How can they generate an income stream regardless of whether a train is running or not, or whether it is wet or dry outside. One option is a model railway club which ticks the educational box and kids love model railways. I understand it has been tried before and fell away, but surely a heritage railway is all about making the impossible happen. We have the example of the garden railway at Bodiam Nursery. We apparently turned them down two years ago, but how can we link with them and create something similar at our other stations. I do not necessarily have the answers but I know I am surrounded by hundreds of railway experts so if anyone would like to assist developing the project, so it can be put to the Board, then please let me know (sdewey@kesr.org.uk).*

**CF: Any amusing moments on the railway you would like to share with us?**

*SD: Yes, I was told it was a three day a week job.*

**CF: I hear you and your wife volunteered to help wash up on an evening Pullman. How did you get on?**

*SD: So many duties across the railway in August were unfilled so if I was to push for volunteers to fill the empty slots I felt it important to set an example, so no second thoughts when Andre advised he had a staffing issue that weekend on the Pullman. Kathy was over the moon when I told her we were going on the Pullman until she realised it was rubber gloves not white gloves, and she wouldn't be going on board and turning left ... however, we both had a great night, good fun, good people, good food, a superb product, and one we must not let slip.*

**CF: Any aspirations to try your hand at other volunteer roles?**

*SD: We helped out at the Hoppers event, which was also great fun. I do not really want to commit to any one area of volunteering, instead supporting different areas throughout the year.*

**CF: Shortage of volunteers is always a serious concern. How do you think we might address this?**

*SD: I agree. 20% of the membership do 80% of the work. It is important to increase our pool of volunteers in all areas across the railway. In my opinion we have to have a vision of what the railway will be, so volunteers can have pride in working to achieve that vision. Nothing succeeds better than success.*

**CF: And finally, a few quick-fire questions...  
Champagne or a nice cuppa?**

*SD: A large Malbec*

**Caribbean holiday or good old Blighty?**

*SD: Cruising on the Canal du Midi*

**Ferrari or Roller?**

*SD: My old 6.0 litre V12 XJS, what a car, but I never did work out which was the rev counter and which was the fuel gauge, they both moved at the same speed !*

**The Times or The Mirror?**

*SD: The Times*

**Fine dining or fish and chips?**

*SD: Fish and chips, my favourite*

**A night at the flicks, or a night in?**

*SD: A night in, watching the film online*

**CF: Shaun, thank-you for your time.**



## COMMERCIAL

### Acting Chairman – Ian Legg

All change, please, all change!

This must have been announced at Tenterden thousands of times in the line's history. Change though, like death and taxes, is always with us in all walks of life, and the K&ESR is not immune. The railway has seen many changes over the years - closure, re-opening in stages, culminating in 2000 with completion of the Bodiam extension. But as well as the major changes, we have also seen many other improvements ranging in scale from the new Carriage Storage Shed at Rolvenden this September to the flower tubs at Tenterden – didn't they look good this summer! And we have the re-opening to Robertsbridge to look forward to. This will affect how the whole Railway works, bringing its own rewards and challenges.

Change is not confined to infrastructure though - it affects all aspects of the business. The legislative and regulatory climate is continuing to become more stringent; our customers are changing; our supporters and our volunteers all want different things than previous generations.

I visited a few other railways and heritage sites this summer. Some clearly embraced giving what the public wanted while others, I'm afraid, had few visitors. I question their long term survival. The National Trust recently identified that their customer base was changing – less interest in the “stuffed & mounted” but more in the gardens and areas that visitors can really engage with. Here too at the K&ESR I believe that the changing nature of our customers is the main challenge. Apart from the Thomas and Santa special events, we attract few families. We seem to be an attraction for the older generation. Nostalgia is not what it used to be though! I don't actually remember steam on BR myself. As time marches on fewer of our customers will be attracted by actual memories, so we need to capitalise on the perception of the good old days. But how do we get the younger and the family markets to come to visit and spend money? We need to change what we offer to make the K&ESR a real day out.

Our volunteers are also changing; they are less keen on doing the “boring” support roles

(paperwork or cleaning toilets) or the hard grind such as the manual labour of ballast tamping by hand. They want interesting roles that challenge them and where they can clearly see a difference. We need to change our systems and processes to match volunteers to roles they are willing to do, and accept that some jobs will need to be done by paid staff.

Supporters (the armchair army) provide the funding for us to enjoy our hobby! However, the recent scandals around charity fundraising mean we need to make sure that we source funds ethically and donors get what they are looking for as well - it's rare that you get “money for nothing”.

So how does the K&ESR survive in this changing world? By adapting and evolving as Darwinian Theory tells us. At the AGM there will be new Trustees – with good positive ideas to help us develop. We have appointed a new General Manager who is looking at the organisation, our customer offer and our processes with new eyes. There have been significant changes to our Rule Book. We need project managers, though, to take forward the ideas and turn them into reality.

There's a saying: *100 years from now, all new people*. So we need to embrace change in order to survive and keep the things that matter alive – trains running to Tenterden. All change please!

### Catering – André Freeman

Reference was made in the last edition of this journal to the difficulties being experienced in gaining sufficient and accurate information from our computerised booking system, in order to deliver the service to our customers.

It is pleasing to report that the delivery data has improved, although sadly this is not as a result of improvements to the system. Instead, it is the result of countless hours devoted to correlating, checking and double checking of data: a dreadful waste of precious staff time that could and should be spent productively. Fundamental deficiencies remain in the process, some of which adversely impact on our ability to gain meaningful management information in a timely manner. At the risk of sounding like a cracked record, accurate data is fundamental to success – we look forward to the necessary changes that are



required to offer such information.

Trading during the summer has remained flat and generally mirrored passenger numbers, although "Pensioners Treat" in September has again proved popular and the new format of "Thomas"<sup>®</sup> resulted in increased dwell time on site. The net result of this was that we managed to regain much of the previously lost ground, with station catering exceeding budget by 33% during September: a most creditable achievement. On train catering is pretty much spot on budget when considering pre-booked and on the day sales combined. We were also able to conduct catering on the B set during August, thanks to the inclusion of some corridor stock. There's clearly a demand for cream teas on the 15.25 service from Bodiam and we hope to be able to meet this demand next year, although we are severely

restricted by the lack of facilities that a proper catering carriage provides. We'll certainly need to be able to provide proper catering on both sets when operating services to Robertsbridge.

**'Wealden Pullman'** services continue to operate at, or near, capacity and our calendar of 2016 services has been made available. As is usual, customers booking and paying in full before the end of this year can travel during 2016 at 2015 rates. The popularity of our Wealden Pullman Facebook page continues to grow. With this we try not to bombard users with marketing messages; rather provide topical information on events connected with the train and its staff. Interestingly, amongst the most popular posts were a short series depicting our Chef Meg Gooch, in her other role, signwriting the recently overhauled GER carriage.

## ROLLING STOCK

### Rolling Stock – Nick Pallant

#### Mark I's

**SK S25446 (K&ESR No. 63)** has had various routine work undertaken recently. It is nevertheless being held out of service for upgrading to First Class thus allowing this coach to provide extra accommodation on the Santa Specials.

Steady progress continues to be made on the extensive overhaul to **TSO No. 64**. The 'Headcorn' end of the body ahead of the vestibule is being almost completely rebuilt and at the time of writing the structural members are in place. Refitting of the interior is underway. The 'Headcorn' end bogie has been removed ready for overhaul and its 'Robertsbridge' end companion will follow in due course. No. 64 is absorbing considerable paid and volunteers staff time but it will be a while before the vehicle returns to traffic.

#### Vintage Coaches

Work on the **Great Eastern Railway six wheel brake (K&ESR No. 81)** has progressed well and the coach now been painted in its post-grouping LNER brown livery. Sign writing has been in the capable hands of Meg Gooch and No. 81 will be ready to rejoin the fleet for 2016 season.

**SE&CR No. 2947 (K&ESR No. 88)** After some delays, Hitachi at Ashford have re-profiled the wheels from this four wheeler which has now been in service on the Vintage Train for 20 years. No. 2947 should also be rejoining the service fleet for 2016.

**Balcony Saloon, BNO No. 53 and Pullman Car Aries** took part in the opening of Rolvenden

Riverside Shed on 20th September 2015 (see separate photo feature) and are as a result the first vehicles to be stored in this new facility. It is hoped that the varying degrees of work due on these coaches will commence in the not too distant future.

#### Goods Vehicles

Work to privately owned **LMS Box Van, M515184 (K&ESR No.128 aka the 'Kit Kat' Van)** is complete. It presently trapped in the shed and will leave the shed once there are wheels back under No 2947! For those who may be wondering, the 'Kit Kat' Van is a reference to the vehicle appearing in an advertising campaign for the famous confectionary over 30 years ago.

Now his LMS van, featured in the Spring Terrier, has been returned to service, **Jon Colwell** has been working on his **Midland Box Van** which is conveniently located just outside the C&W shed at Tenterden.

**Dogfish hopper wagon 993620 (K&ESR No. 154) and Medfit K&ESR No. 158** have been in the shed recently for general repairs. This work has provided apprentice pieces for Anthony Wilson and the finished products will much assist P.Way Department who make frequent use of these wagons.

#### People

**Dave Brailsford**, a well-known K&ESR member, leading light in Rolvenden Steam Enterprises, and loco driver has now also joined C&W paid staff for three days per week.



## Guards Report – Bradley Bottomley

It has been a very good year for our department; we have seen a record number of trainees in 2015 with three recently passing out as Guards. This is the second year we have run our Guards classroom training sessions, which have proven popular with trainees. Mick Leech has been appointed as training officer and has run a number of these classes.

Kevin Goodsell has decided to step down as Guards Roster Clerk after nearly three years in the post. Freddie Drayner has been appointed to the role; we all wish him well in his new post.

Congratulations are given to Craig Tyler who passed his Guards test on Tuesday 7th July. He was followed closely by Alan Crotty who passed his test on Monday 27th July, and then it was the turn of Patrick Favell who also passed out on Tuesday 18th August. We wish all three gentlemen the very best in their new roles.

We have three Guards that have stepped down this year: David Cutts, Tony Mills and Martin Sherwood. I would like to thank them for their time as Guards on the railway. Their efforts are much appreciated over their long service with us.

## Signalling Department – Tony Ramsey

As another season draws to a close, I wish to thank all Signalmen and Crossing Keepers for your contribution and for coping with everything from lineside fires to flash floods! *(It was quite something to see floodwater running over the top of the railhead at Cranbrook Road – Ed.)* My personal perception is that the summer has been demanding but exciting. I hope your perspective is equally positive.

We welcome two newly-qualified Signalmen at Wittersham Road – Rob Jacques-Bartlett and Patrick Nairne – and applaud Alan Crotty who has passed out at Rolvenden (his second box). We also congratulate those who have passed out as Crossing Keepers: Martyn Butler, Andy Hardy, Rob Leach, Margaret Leadbeater, Ian Mantel, Dave Reid, Ron Spencer, Malcolm Stewart, Nigel White and Kenneth Yarham (Cranbrook Road); Roger Allin (Rolvenden); Bernie Bone, Mark Chamberlain, Patrick Favell, Chris Lowry, Ian

Mantel and Glenn Whipps (Northiam).

In addition to running the training course, Joel Pearson (our Signalsman Training Officer) has been out and about, busily filming in order to produce some training videos. Our thanks to all those who have been willing to exchange the role of Signalsman for that of temporary film star. Further videos are planned, so your thespian skills may be required again. Meanwhile, new training folders are now available in the signal boxes, to support the practical exercises which trainees are required to undertake.

## S&T Engineering – Nick Wellington

The last few months have continued to be busy for the S&T team, as the various stages of bringing new and revised signalling to match the layout alterations for the Rolvenden Carriage Sidings come to fruition. These few words belie the size of the task involved.

Further alterations to the existing wiring have brought both a more robust power supply to the location cases alongside the carriage sidings in the Wittersham direction; the nature of the cable previously meant not only a shortage of power to operate equipment, but a shortage of cable cores to operate new or additional items. One of the track circuits installed last year has been split into two, in order to provide more operational flexibility, and also both converted to a more modern type which is more robust against the vagaries of railhead rust which impedes its proper operation.

By the time that you read this, all four point machines will have been transferred to control from the signal box, and the signal provided (a “ringed” type arm), which takes you from the Down Starting (bracket) signal into the carriage sidings. This of course also needed a further update to the box diagram, ably produced by our contractors Omicron reprographics.

Within the sidings, six sets of handpoints, including those over both ends of the double slips, required the fitting of handpoint spring levers; these were refurbished in our Tenterden workshop and installation of these ably led by “Frim” Halliwell on our behalf, assisted by members of the P. Way team.

### Bodiam Station Group – Robin Dyce

A slightly different type of report for Bodiam this time around..

#### ...from the Garden:

Thanks to a referral from Veronica Hopker of the Gardening Group, and in many ways the most important thing to have happened at Bodiam this summer, is that the station was entered into the Ewhurst in Bloom 2015 competition. The cudgels were taken up by our gardeners Pam and Sheila Stevens with the result that the station won a Certificate of Excellence. Here is the story in Pam and Sheila words:

“Earlier this year we were approached by a lady from Ewhurst Green, asking if we would support the village with its entry in the RHS Britain in Bloom competition. (It has taken us 25 years to learn that the station is in the Parish of Ewhurst Green not Bodiam!)

“We duly agreed though pointed out we could not do much more than we already attempted. The Village had a committee overseeing their requirements and under the direction of Maggie Whitaker (the Chairman) and Susie Hewer (Secretary), they worked extremely hard clearing land for a wildflower bank, sorting the drainage and levelling the land behind the new Herdman Pavilion to establish a sports area, tidying verges, cleaning road signs, and much, much more.

“We were told that the judging would be on 8th July and that two judges would appear at 3.20 for about ten minutes. We duly worked towards this date, the girls working on the garden, the boys on the hedges and grass. We even managed to weed the yard but it is showing a green haze again now. The roadside was tidied and everything was told to stand to attention.

“The judges duly arrived and were very gracious about everything they saw. They were very impressed with the Hoppers Hut and Hop Garden,



*Pam and Sheila Stevens. (Robin Dyce)*



the new Waiting Room/Museum and the Cavell Van. They said we must be sure to keep records of everything so that we do not lose the heritage and that we should make more of what we have. They stayed much longer than the allotted time.

“We had to wait until September to hear the results. Areas of achievement and for development were looked at in three sections: Horticultural achievement, Environmental responsibility and Community participation. We think we assisted in all three – the Village was awarded 163 points out of a possible 200 and gained Silver Gilt, and Winner of the Small Village Category in South & South East in Bloom 2015. Amongst the Judges’ comments was reference to The Kent and East Sussex Railway and the beautiful garden display. The Village also received the County Award for East Sussex. Maggie and Susie were also given certificates they could award to those who they considered deserved a special mention.

“Along with the judges’ comment: ‘For maintaining a truly delightful garden at the entrance to the station, and preserving the heritage of hopping, and the age of steam both locally and nationally’, Bodiam Station was



awarded a Certificate of Excellence.”

...and of more mundane matters:

The summer (?) has been very busy and most areas have had some TLC, but in contrast to winning the certificate, during July, our Hop Garden suffered a heavy attack of aphids that decimated both the leaves and (hop) flowers. However, after a phone call for help, our local friendly hop expert sprayed the plants and they almost recovered in time for the Hop Festival on 12th and 13th September. The Station Master's Garden was not affected by the aphids and our runner beans, tomatoes, rhubarb and main crop potatoes were excellent.

Grass cutting and hedge trimming continued apace with no let-up and we also removed the stump and roots of an old willow tree that had blown down some years ago to provide more usable space in the grassed area especially for the Hop Festival.

However, just before the Hop Festival, we hit a snag in arranging for public car parking in the farmers field to the north of the station, which resulted in a meeting between the farmer and our new General Manager, Shaun Dewey, that has immediately resulted in much improved communication between the two sides and we have agreed to work together on mutually beneficial projects. On the down side the adjacent Vinall and White light engineering business is up for sale. Messrs Vinall and White have been great supporters of the Railway since before we extended back to Bodiam and their invaluable help in assisting the Railway will be greatly missed. Hopefully we can have a similar good relationship with the new owners.

Our renewed level crossing gate certificates enabled us to assist most trains on Tuesdays and Thursdays throughout the summer but the lack of staff in the shop led to it being closed on a number of running days.

At Bodiam we often get asked ‘Where are the toilets?’ so a new finger post sign has been erected indicating the Toilets, Cavell Van and Hoppers Hut. The GM has also suggested that we try to get more people to walk past the shop (platform side). Despite signs many visitors do

not realise that the shop is there, so a number of measures are being looked at so that the visitor is drawn either through or by the shop when moving between the train and road and vice versa. Having been criticised in the last two annual ‘Visit England Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme’ (VAQUAS) secret visits, we are now looking again at refurbishing the interior of the toilets. The toilets were built in conjunction with the Bodiam 2000 project that extended the line to Bodiam station at the turn of the century, and it was suggested that a more modern approach to the interior design, furniture and layout would provide a better environment for our visitors.

Due to holidays etc, construction and station maintenance work have slowed, but an old South Eastern Railway (SER) station platform seat has been restored (paid for privately), and Pam and Sheila have introduced some splendid new framed hopping photos into the new waiting room. It is intended that the restored seat will be sited in the new waiting room in due course to match the other SER seat already there.

With the centennial anniversary of Edith Cavell's Death on 12th October 1915 to be marked by events around the country, our Cavell Van which is normally on display at Bodiam station, went to Norwich, where Edith Cavell is buried, and formed the centrepiece of an exhibition commemorating her life and death. Having had an internal clean and repaint at Bodiam, the Van was towed from Bodiam to Tenterden on Tuesday 22nd September where the outside was cleaned before leaving for Norwich. What made the move from Bodiam more interesting and unusual was that the Cavell Van and a brake van were pulled by the ‘Ford’ diesel, which has recently had a substantial amount of money spent on the engine.

Although being credited as our best run event yet, the Hop Festival on 12th and 13th September did not attract the same number of visitors that it had done in the past. Similarly, although we had a good number of entries, very few exhibitors turned up. There may be several reasons for this, and remedial measures to be introduced have yet to be discussed in detail, but it is already thought that the poor weather, particularly on the Sunday, didn't help. Should you already be filling in your

diary for 2016, the Hop Festival will be on 10th and 11th September. As the event is closely allied to the Hop Picking season, which reached its peak during the second week of September, we are unlikely to hold an event earlier in the month than this.

At Bodiam station, the arrival of October signals the end of the daily running season, which gives us a chance to get some work done that is difficult or impossible when visitors are around. As readers will remember the Group cleaned and repainted the inside of the station building earlier in the year, so now it is the turn of the outside to receive attention. This work will include scrubbing down the paint work (why is it that station buildings and especially the newly cleaned ones, act as a magnet for all the ash and cinders thrown out with the exhaust from steam locos) and repainting as well as checking the integrity of the rain water channel that lies between the reverse slopes of the station canopy and main roof. Some rainwater appears to have leaked from the roof onto the ceilings below.

As this is the last 2015 Lineside News from Bodiam station, may we take the opportunity of wishing everybody connected with the Railway a great Christmas and a healthy New Year.

#### **Ashford Area Group – Ted Micklam**

We are enjoying good attendance at our meetings. Our indoor programme continues with:

16th December – Brian Stephenson illustrates a talk from his extensive Railway Photograph Archive.

21st January 2016 – Andy Main presents railway videos, including a review of mainline and preservation events in 2015.

17th February – Donald Wilson gives a slide show on distant railways.

16th March – Michael Bunn's PowerPoint update on Narrow Gauge Railways, and looking forward to the CFBS Fête de la Vapeur.

We plan to visit the CFBS Fête de la Vapeur on Sunday 17th April. If you are interested in joining us for the day contact Keith Mapley [keithmapley@btinternet.com](mailto:keithmapley@btinternet.com) or telephone 01303 269138.

Indoor meetings are held at The Rail Staff Club,

off Beaver Road, Ashford, Kent TN23 7RR. They start at 7:30pm and end by 10pm. Everyone is welcome to attend indoor or outdoor meetings, subject to availability. My phone number is 01233 503999 or please email me at [edward.micklam@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:edward.micklam@tiscali.co.uk)

#### **Museum Notes**

The event that has dominated the public persona of the Museum this time has been the participation of the Cavell Van in events marking the 100th anniversary of Nurse Cavell's death at the hands of the German Military in October 1915. Norwich, near her birthplace, Swardeston, decided to lay on a fortnight of events. These ranged from talks on the subject, exhibitions concerts and a service in Norwich Cathedral in whose grounds she is interred. As a centrepiece the Cavell Van, being the means of conveying her remains to London, was transported 150 miles to be exhibited outside the Forum in central Norwich for the first two weeks of October. This involved a considerable amount of preparation by museum, Bodiam custodians, and the organisation of a stalwart band of volunteers to be in attendance for 12 days, to explain our custodianship and the Van's history.

The only photos available were taken before it was opened to the public on Monday 5th October. Interest was intense, queues built up at busy times, and the Van was full of visitors all day, with commensurate donations. This had been helped by intense media coverage. The Curator was interviewed over the preceding weekend by three TV channels for local news: BBC, ITV and the Local 'Mustard TV'! This in turn stimulated further items on the Monday 12th October, the actual anniversary of Edith Cavell's death; there was live coverage from Norwich on both BBC Breakfast and News at One. BBC South East also reported on the story. Local Press interest was also virtually continuous and the Eastern Daily Press was preparing a special supplement for the whole event with at least two pages on the Van itself. All of this brings extra publicity for the Railway, and shows the importance of the Van and its story. How many 'museum exhibits' bring tears to the eyes of visitors as this one did on every day it was open. (...national importance ...



*for in the eyes of many, the Cavell Van transcends merely railway interest..Ed)*

Back on home ground, as predicted in the last Terrier, three fixed audio points in the shape of converted vintage phones are now in place and being well used. Lift the phone and hear a commentary – one on Pre-Raphaelite artists (Stephens' father was one); one with a voice like the Colonel extolling the wonders of contemporary communication, particularly the telegram and excellent postal service; and finally a Station Agent bemoaning the burdens placed on him c1905 (things never change).

On the exhibits front, the predicted K&ESR hand lamp arrived and is on display. It has been joined in the collection by a lamp fitting from the Weston, Clevedon and Portishead. Also acquired and on display is a valued, and almost certainly unique, item in the form of a pocket watch marked 'RVR'. This is thought to have been passed down to us through one of Stephens' legatees, Alfred Willard, who was a long-term Tonbridge employee and Robertsbridge resident.

Museum visitors have held up this year in the face of another poor year for railway passengers. We can also be content with a large number of very appreciative comments made to custodians and in the visitors' book. The usual stalwarts

continue to serve upfront and work backstage. It would be nice to see a few new faces.

Finally, this is a sad sign of the times. It now appears to be unfashionable to collect, or perhaps even read, second-hand magazines, as sales of these items have fallen off dramatically in recent years. Formerly a valued source of income they have now become an encumbrance. May we therefore ask that no further donations of loose periodicals be brought to the Museum?

### **Gardening Report – Veronica Hopker**

As I write this report we are enjoying some marvellous early autumn weather. The spiders are creating fantastic web designs around the gardens and first thing in the morning, with the sun shining on the water droplets on the webs, the whole garden sparkles. This is really a fascinating time of year.

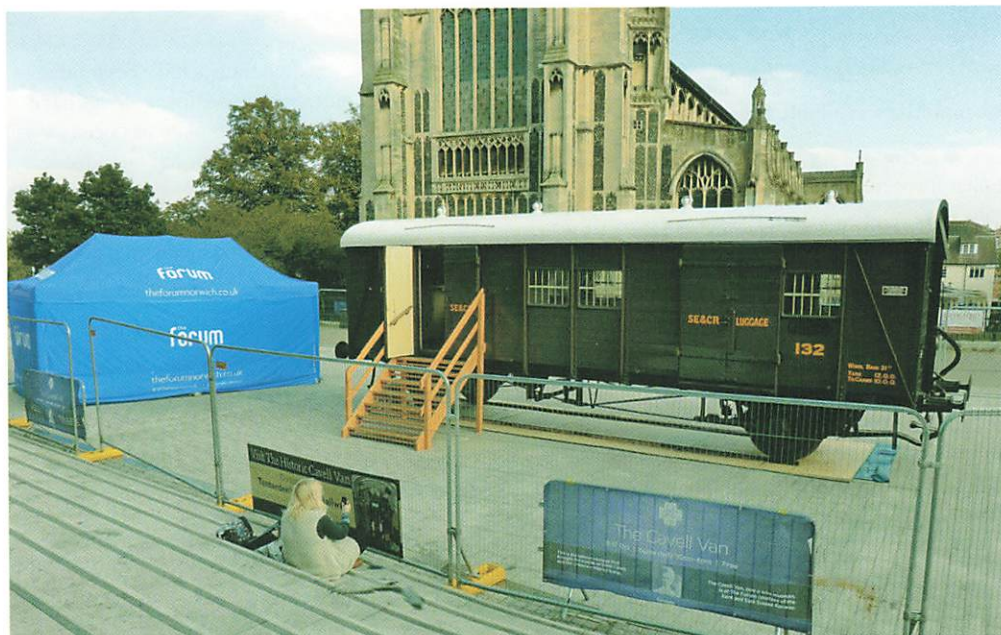
### **Tenterden Town Station:**

The annual flowers are coming to the end of their displays; the hanging baskets have finished and planning for the winter season and next year is under way. The gardens have performed well for us this year despite the struggle early in the season due to the very cold nights.

We have continued to add more plants to "the mound". This will look so much better as it matures. However, we have been very pleased



*The Ford and Cavell Van at Bodiam on 22nd September 2015. (Robin Dyce)*



*The Cavell Van at Norwich, 3rd October 2015. (Brian Janes)*

with the results so far. The little garden in front of the office block has put on a very good show which we will endeavour to keep going through the winter and into Spring.

Jan and I have to thank Chris and his helpers for watering the gardens during the dry and sunny days. Also a big thank you is extended to Paul Bridger for watering and feeding the tubs around the station during the summer months.

#### **Rolvenden Station:**

The tubs have done well all summer. I have decided to plant them for the winter months to see how they survive. The watering system will be turned off when the frosts start but, hopefully, they will keep going if watered once a week if it does not rain.

The trees and shrubs, which were planted in the field several years ago, are growing well and this winter will need tidying up.

#### **Wittersham Road Station:**

Thanks to Humphrey Atkinson of Tuesday Group, the troughs on the platform at Wittersham Road have added colour and life to the station.

The weeds have also been kept under control resulting in the platform area looking tidy and cared for. *(The often-maligned buddleia has also been a magnet for butterflies this year – Ed.)*

#### **Northiam Station:**

Doug Ramsden and Mark Taylor of Tuesday Group have continued to keep the grass cut in all areas of the station. Cutting it regularly has kept the station looking very attractive throughout the summer. The Memorial Garden is maturing and the wild flower garden is slowly developing thanks to the efforts of Doug Ramsden. The Pyracantha bushes are absolutely brilliant with their bright orange and red berries which lights up the whole garden.

Liz Brown and Nell Joint have worked all through the summer to keep the pots on the platform and the garden in the picnic area looking very attractive. There has been so much more colour around the station thanks to their efforts.

As always we are very grateful to everyone who has kindly donated plants for the various station gardens, which has enabled us to produce the displays for everyone to enjoy.



## Rolvenden MPD – Paul Wilson

### Locomotives available for service:

**32670** is stopped for washout and final annual boiler inspection before the ten yearly overhaul falls due.

**32678** is running well although the smokebox will need attention this winter to replace the thinning front ring. The smokebox saddle bolts will also need to be replaced at the same time.

**14 Charwelton:** As there were no RXDs running over the summer, the annual boiler inspection was carried out. We renewed some of the rivets around the firedoor ring; otherwise all was in good order.

**376 Norwegian** has passed her annual boiler inspection with no issues and running well.

**30065** was once again on washout at time of writing, having run 27 days without stopping. Thanks have to go to the locomotive department staff that came in very early in the morning to carry out exams and repairs to keep the loco going.

**Ford diesel** seems to be running fine at the moment. With the failure of the Class 14, the Ford has been used more than it normally would, to move vehicles and locomotives around the railway. Provision has been made in next year's budget to carry out a significant amount of bodywork repairs that are long overdue. We need help to do this so please get in touch if you'd like to help look after this fantastic old vehicle.

**Ruston diesel** has had a six-monthly exam carried out including an hydraulic test on the starting air receiver.

### Locomotives under overhaul:

**11:** Progress on the P-class has been very slow for it has to take second place to the bigger ones that we are so short of...

**21 Wainwright:** Whilst progress has been slowed due to resources being used elsewhere to keep the other locomotives running, things have been

happening. New gauge frames have been fitted to the backhead and are now complete. Stays have been fitted where new boiler plate has been welded in. The boiler inspector has attended to carry out final inspections inside the boiler so that we can now order and fit a new set of tubes. New front sand boxes have been made to replace those transferred to sister loco 30065 a while ago.

**23 Holman F Stephens:** In store pending shed space for overhaul.

**25 Northiam:** Work continues to weld the new platemwork in place around the foundation ring. The Boiler Inspector has been to check on the work, supported by additional ultrasonic checks.

**1638:** The boiler is now ready for an hydraulic test witnessed by the Inspector. After this, it will be steam tested before going back in the frames. The big ends are back from the contractor, remetalled and awaiting machining and fitting. Then all that needs to be done is to put all the rest of the bits back together.

**6619** is in store pending shed space for overhaul.

### Cranes:

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

## GWR Railcar W20W – Andrew Webb

We continue to maintain progress on the restoration and rebuild of the Railcar.

On the 18th August, the overhauled north engine was returned from the repairers and the south engine collected for its overhaul. The two engines will be fitted to the underframe on return of the second engine.

The last section of the timber body frame rebuild is imminent with most materials in stock for the Headcorn cab. The work will entail the replacement of the steel footplate below the cab framework together with cleaning and painting of the underframe beneath. Rebuild of the cab will follow with many timber sections ready for fitting.

'Thank You' to all of you who have donated to the GWR Railcar Appeal. The project has benefitted substantially from all donations and considerable progress has been achieved. Recently we were very pleased to receive a donation from the Sussex Group of some £2000; this is in addition to the £2000 received a few years ago. The latest donation has enabled a vital number of small works, within the overall scheme, to be funded and moved forward. The total project spend to date is about £37,000. Unfortunately, the fund is now nearly exhausted and we urgently need further funding to continue the project. Please consider a donation to ensure completion of the Railcar if you can. **W20W** has been identified as one of the vehicles necessary for the extension to Robertsbridge.

### 4253 Locomotive Company – Bryan Atkins

The major achievement of the summer was sending the now-complete bunker to The Weald of Kent Steam Rally by traction engine. As a result, pictures were published in *Steam Railway* magazine of the bunker trundling through Tenterden High Street behind steam power.

Advantage has been taken of the good weather to build the new cab outside. A trial fit of this structure has been completed and work has started on riveting it together. Inside the shelter a new

smoke box has also been riveted together and the door fitted. Volunteers are now busy fitting it out.

On the frames, new running boards have been built and fitted from the front buffer beam to the rear of the cylinders. It is starting to look like a steam engine at last! On the boiler front, the firebox dismantling continues, with the systematic removal of hundreds of stays on a weekly basis. New boilerplate has been ordered and is expected to be delivered on site by the end of the year.

The horn-grinding machine has now been built and trials are being conducted on the frames. Once the challenges of building this new machine have been solved, we will be closer to re-wheeling the engine...

New parts continue to appear on site. A set of cylinder drain cocks have recently been delivered along with a pair of anti-vacuum valves.

Boot Fairs at Rolvenden throughout the summer have made a useful contribution to funds. A big

thank you is extended to the many people who have kindly donated items. Now the Boot Fair season has come to an end we cannot accommodate any more goods for the time being. New boiler tube products have been manufactured into interesting Christmas presents. For details please see [www.4253.co.uk](http://www.4253.co.uk).



*Dick Beckett removing broken cylinder studs from 4253.  
(Charlie Masterson)*



*The Tuesday gang busy refurbishing Wittersham Road, 8th September 2015 (John Rose)*



## Tuesday Group – Graham Hopker

Since the end of June most of our effort has been at Wittersham Road with the considerable amount of work involved in repairing rotten wood and repainting both the Signal Box and the station building.

Whilst at Wittersham Road we took the opportunity to cut the hedge and replant all the flower troughs on the platform which had been sadly neglected. We also repainted the platform edge white line.

The platform seats and benches have all been refurbished.

During the summer period, it was still necessary to continue cutting the grass in the picnic area and the Memorial Garden at Northiam Station. The long platform hedge also requires regular attention.

Our Electrician, Dave Brown, has carried out some additional work in the Museum at Tenterden. This was to provide power from the various lighting circuits to the position of the three Vintage Telephones fitted at strategic points around the Museum. This involved locating a convenient source of power adjacent to each of the telephones, then fitting and connecting a socket at each location, so that the power supplies could be plugged in. The telephones are programmed to give a narrative for the visitors to listen to. All the telephones work but are yet to be set up correctly.



*The Ford trying stock for size at Rolvenden carriage storage shed including Pullman car 'Aries'. (Jon Edwards)*

Also replaced was one of the florescent fittings in the Camber Tramway cabinet with a pair of LED strip lights, as it had become noisy and was running very hot – a possible fire risk!

Whilst at Tenterden, we helped Chris Fumston with the construction of "Cranky the Crane", for the July Thomas Event.

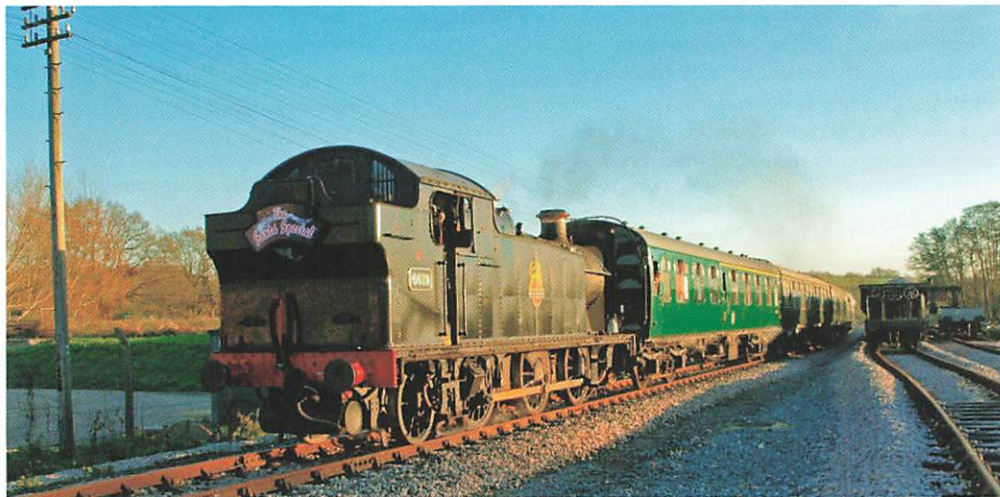
At the end of September it was reported that the toilet pan in the Booking Office at Wittersham Road Station was wobbling a bit. We investigated and found that the flooring had completely collapsed. The cause was traced to a loose down-pipe from the cistern and consequently flooding the floor. We removed the pan and took out all the rotten flooring and beams. The supporting beams were rebuilt and new supports fitted for the pan. The whole cavity was then filled with concrete. The pan and pipework were refitted, ensuring that it was sealed properly, and finally new hardboard floor was fitted and painted.

Thanks are due to Jean Hook, one of the shop volunteers, who kindly donated various tools and other bits and bobs from her shed when she recently moved. All of which will be useful to the Tuesday Group's skilled artisans.

## Permanent Way – Jamie Douglas

By far the biggest event that has taken place in this period has been the culmination of over 18 months of major works – the handing over of the new Carriage Storage Shed at Rolvenden and the associated yard. A huge amount of finishing works has already been undertaken, with just a few more to go! These include finishing ballasting to make up the walkway levels, provision of a walkways around the hand point operating levers, final setting up of the limit switches on the roller doors and making up of the ground levels under the roller doors to close off wildlife access and egress.

In addition to this, after a summer of intensive running by the USA tank 30065, the operating line has taken quite a pounding and the issue of dropped joints has been raised again. This necessitated the imposing of some temporary



*Santa Special season is here again. A year ago 6619 was working its final turns and is seen passing Rolvenden on 6th December 2014. (Phil Edwards)*

speed restrictions over some quite extensive sections of track, and in order to minimise the impact to the train service the tamper crews swung into action to carry out tamping over extensive sections of track – from Newmill Bridge to Popes Cottage being tamped in one evening, and from Cyster's Curve to the top of Wittersham Bank being tackled over four or five evenings. These are amongst the all too often unnoticed jobs, attracting little or no thanks, which are undertaken during weekday evenings by only a very small group of volunteers.

By the time you read this, the department will have tackled another track renewal – replacing a short length of track immediately at the Sussex end of Rother Bridge, where the ground beneath the track has been soft for many years. The increase in the line speed over the bridge some years ago has led to the transition joint from flat bottom to bullhead rail on the Sussex side of the bridge becoming particularly poor with cracked fishplates having required replacing on more than one occasion. The renewal was planned to lift out three lengths of track, dig out the ballast and sub-base between the bridge abutment and the concrete flood defence wall buried in the track formation, install drainage in this area and then

remake the trackbed with clean ballast before extending the flat bottom track towards Northiam for another 3 lengths, welding up the flat bottom to bullhead transition.

We will also be preparing logistics for the planned works at Newmill Bridge throughout January, February and March – which will see the track lifted over the bridge, the bridge trough lifted out and sent away for shot blasting, any repairs as required and then recoating with a modified epoxy used for the protection of dock steelwork. Some detailed lift plans are being put together already to consider the complex lift required to remove the bridge trough for transport to the shot blasting contractor.

Finally, this is the last Lineside News article I will be writing, as, after nearly five years in the role of Permanent Way Manager, I have decided to step down. I can look back on those five years knowing that on the whole we have improved the quality and standard of the track infrastructure of the Kent & East Sussex Railway, having undertaken some demanding and complex track renewal projects. I also believe that the department is now one of the best equipped Permanent Way Departments in preservation with a broad range of On Track Machinery available to



assist the volunteers, as well as a good selection of modern small plant and equipment for tasks that do not justify use of On Track Machinery. There is still plenty to do, and I'm sure that the next manager will embrace the challenge and continue to improve the track infrastructure.

**07 Tamper 73434** – Has worked hard this year; between its visit to the Spa Valley Railway earlier in the year, tamping a large proportion of the new track in the new Carriage Storage Shed (CSS) development and large stretches of maintenance tamping to improve some of the dropped joints on the operational railway. The machine is now overdue for maintenance and so will have to be stopped until this can be completed. The timescales for this will have to depend on availability of workshop space and availability of volunteers to undertake the work.

**Ballast Regulator 77329** – Has also had a hard year in retirement! It too visited the Spa Valley Railway earlier in the year, and has done a lot of ballast regulating in the CSS development. We had to get one of the ballast conveyor belts repaired on its return from the Spa Valley, and since then has worked without issue. However it too is now in need of maintenance and so will have to be stopped until this work can be carried out.

**TRAMM 98211** – Is another machine that continues to work hard and has, over the past two years, played a central role in the CSS project at Rolvenden. Since its arrival on the K&ESR in 2006, the TRAMM has almost become a victim of its own versatility – it is so convenient for so many jobs that it becomes difficult to get hold of the machine to maintain it. However, we now need to take the plunge with this machine as well and stop it for maintenance.

### **Forestry & Conservation – David White**

One of the benefits of summer working for the Forestry & Conservation team has been the chance of hitching a lift on various forms of motive power to remote sites along the line. This summer, the team has been able to call upon the services of both the DMMU and the Track Renewal and Maintenance Machine (TRAMM), acquired from the Balfour Beatty Rail Plant. The great advantage of the TRAMM is that it can

carry all the forestry equipment on its trailer with no inconvenience to passengers or crew. Loading equipment into a scheduled train has the effect of turning the guard's van temporarily into a garage sale.

Transport was needed early in the summer for the long trip out from Wittersham Road to the so-called "secret siding" east of Ewhurst Crossing. The task here was to clear undergrowth from disused rolling stock which the railway planned to move later in the year. The siding is aptly named, since the stock was barely visible under a thick canopy of briar.

The hot weather of early summer provided a moment of drama on Wittersham Bank, when a piece of coal dropped from a passing locomotive set fire to the lineside grass. The two members of the F & C team who were involved in strimming the bank found themselves unexpectedly cast in the role of firefighters – with nothing with which to fight the fire.

As one of them said, it was a question of "fight or flight". Deciding to fight, the two made judicious use of their boots to contain the fire until the signal box at Wittersham Road could be alerted, and fire beaters and fire buckets either issued or offered.

The changing weather conditions later in the summer meant that visits had to be divided into two operations, which could be described broadly as "slash" and "burn". Slash when the weather is too wet to burn, and burn when the weather turned drier and the cut willow could be burned off.

The human flails of the forestry team, who hurl themselves at hawthorn and briar armed only with slashers and loppers, do their best to clear the fast growing vegetation, but clearing over 10 miles of trackside is beyond their capabilities.

So in September the team enlisted the help of a rail-mounted flail for two days to clear the line between Northiam and Bodiam. Thanks must go to Andy Hardy who acted as conductor both days. But what the team really need is its own flail. If anyone has one to spare..?

# K&ESR Guest Engine Club

Visiting guest engines are an important feature of the Kent & East Sussex Railway. They provide added interest for members and volunteers, and they help to enhance the visitor experience by allowing repeat visitors to see something different each time they visit us.

A group of volunteers have set up a fund which will be held independently from K&ESR finances to sponsor visiting locomotives, and we are inviting **YOU** to contribute, so helping **YOUR** railway. We aim to raise sufficient funds to sponsor transport and steaming days for a visiting locomotive for the Kent & East Sussex Railway on a regular basis. This will provide for locomotives which are as different from the K&ESR home fleet as practicable – subject to them being able to satisfy the technical requirements and commercial considerations of our railway.

## **As a contributor to the fund you will:**

- be kept updated throughout the year by regular newsletters concerning the fund and possible choices of engine.
- help decide the choice of engine(s) by offering suggestions and views as well as voting for the engine(s) of your choice.
- be able to obtain a priority footplate pass, subject to availability, for a trip out on the engine(s).
- if holding footplate grades will, where possible, get “first refusal” on turns on the engine(s) sponsored through the fund.
- be invited to attend a special event and ride on a special train using the guest engine(s).
- be invited to attend photo charters using the guest engine.

But we need **YOUR** help to make this happen!

A monthly standing order to the K&ESR Guest Engine Club will make this happen. All we ask is for a subscription from as little as £5 per month – though of course one-off payments will be gratefully received!

When we have an idea of funds available we will go and see what locomotives could be available. Once we've narrowed it down to a shortlist of feasible candidates we'll email you to give you the opportunity to vote on the candidate locomotives. We'll also send out email updates to keep you updated on fundraising progress and other news.

If you are interested in getting involved in helping **YOUR** railway through this fund please email [kesrguestengineclub@gmail.com](mailto:kesrguestengineclub@gmail.com) for further information.



# The Terrier Trust in Focus

This has proved to be a difficult year for motive power on the K&ESR, and as a consequence the Terriers have been called to work more frequently on public operating days. As 2015 also marks the 20th anniversary of The Terrier Trust, it is therefore appropriate to record some of their activities.

An unusual commission back in the spring was a special charter for a sound recording of 32678 to be fitted in the sound version of the new Dapol O-gauge Terriers. Demand for the early non-sound editions proved significant and we look forward to seeing the version for No.3 "Bodiam" in blue.

Easter at the beginning of April saw appropriate emphasis on the 75th anniversary of (3)2678's arrival on the line in February 1940. Generally the weather over the weekend was poor; the Terriers took turns on the "Hayling" and Vintage sets over the four days so at least there was a modicum of variety.

The unavailability of the DMMU for the Easter holidays saw 32678 further celebrate her landmark in style; working Vintage trains to cover those turns. In an impressive fortnight ending April 16th, she worked all 12 possible operating days. 32678 next worked on the 25th but a shard of metal blocking an injector meant she was replaced by "Bodiam" the following day.

32678 again in service for the 1940s Weekend which unfortunately witnessed her hauling the DMMU on the Monday due to vandalism of carriages.

Southern Steam Sunset was the undoubted highlight of the first half of the season with both Terriers taking their turn, although most emphasis was rightly on the M7 30053, on loan from the Swanage Railway. The next two weekends saw the Terriers pressed into Sunday "Wealden Pullman" duty; a service they performed admirably on several occasions throughout the summer.



*(Photo Neil Instrall)*

32678 was used for Andy Hardy's driving tests – the passenger working formed as a "Hayling Billy" on June 18th; a fine sight in spite of the harsh mid-summer sun. This type of scene was repeated again by default, with the B-set largely replacing the Vintage train during August albeit strengthened with one or two vintage carriages at the Robertsbridge end, conjuring up views reminiscent of Saturdays on the Hayling.

A suspected broken spring waylaid 32670 for several days at the beginning of August. This was a shame for it meant on only one day was it possible to witness facing passes of two generations of London Suburban motive power during the fortnight's loan of Pannier L92, on hire from the South Devon Railway.

Wednesday 23rd September proved a red-letter day with the two late-liveried Terriers rostered to double-head three round trips on the service train.

32678 requires a new smokebox ring during the winter. Due to the nature of her reconstruction, with some parts welded rather than riveted, it is possible she may not be immediately available for traffic for the start of the 2016 season.

At the time of writing, 32670 is being prepared for the annual boiler examination. Her 10-year ticket expires at the end of April.

By the time this edition is published, The Terrier Trust will have held its Annual General Meeting. The Trustees are seeking to convert the unincorporated Trust into what is called a

Charitable Incorporated Organisation or CIO for short. The intention is to call the new charity The Terrier Trust CIO to distinguish it from the old organisation and because it is a new CIO, the number of the charity will also change. One objective of CIOs is to provide legal protection for its Trustees similar to that enjoyed by Trustees of the K&ESR, which is of course a Company limited by Guarantee.

Hopefully in the not too distant future we will be able to report a successful conclusion to negotiations with two separate Hire Agreements, one for each locomotive. An area that has slowed this process

is that whereas TTT owns 32678 outright, the proprietary of No.3 is split 75:25 between the Trust and the K&ESR. Thus concentration has been focussed on the latter and once this has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties that for 32678 should be relatively straightforward.

TTT always welcomes new members; details may be found on the website at [www.terriertrust.org.uk](http://www.terriertrust.org.uk) or in writing to the Secretary, Hugh Nightingale, 28 Manor House Drive, Ashford, Kent, TN23 3LP. The funds that are raised are used to help finance major repairs or replacements to keep these Victorian masterpieces in service.

## *Kent & East Sussex*

# 300 Club Winners

### May 2015

1st	A C Thatcher	No. 119	£70.00
2nd	R Lukehurst	No. 217	£50.00
3rd	Richard Beckett	No. 294	£45.00
4th	Paul Bridger	No. 655	£30.00
5th	Mr E Stockdale	No. 557	£25.00
6th	Kent Evenden	No. 193	£20.00
7th	Patrick Nairne	No. 640	£15.00
8th	Dave Drewry	No. 124	£10.00

### June 2015

1st	Mr E Stockdale	No. 663	£80.00
2nd	Graeme Elgar	No. 619	£70.00
3rd	Mike Dawes	No. 687	£60.00
4th	Mr & Mrs J P Fry	No. 650	£40.00
5th	A J Clark	No. 064	£35.00
6th	Ron Dawes	No. 034	£30.00
7th	Mr & Mrs J P Fry	No. 646	£25.00
8th	Mr G P Foster	No. 341	£20.00
9th	Ron Dawes	No. 034	£15.00
10th	Tom Webb	No. 412	£10.00

### July 2015

1st	Tom White	No. 032	£70.00
2nd	Mrs Sue Woods	No. 342	£50.00
3rd	Keith Howell	No. 534	£45.00
4th	Mr S Foster	No. 354	£30.00
5th	Ken George	No. 359	£25.00
6th	Malcolm Heywood	No. 456	£20.00
7th	J B Cooper	No. 243	£15.00
8th	Michael Webb	No. 326	£10.00

### August 2015

1st	Colin Avey	No. 117	£70.00
2nd	Roger Chaplin	No. 566	£60.00
3rd	Dave King	No. 622	£50.00
4th	John E Brice	No. 273	£45.00
5th	Meg Gooch	No. 239	£30.00
6th	Brian Heyes	No. 151	£25.00
7th	Mr J Bignell	No. 581	£20.00
8th	Richard Halton	No. 468	£15.00
9th	Roger Diamond	No. 436	£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

## National Pride and Accuracy

Sir – The energy and enthusiasm of the events management team of the Kent & East Sussex Railway is beyond doubt and is much to be admired. However in the interests of national pride and historical accuracy, I believe it is important to point out two matters of detail.

Firstly – At this year's 1940s event, our national flag was prominently displayed upside down. This can be seen clearly in the photograph on page 23 of the Summer 2015 edition of the 'Terrier'. This is an unfortunate lapse at an event in which the main focus is patriotism and pride in our history and we must hope that this will be corrected in future events. It is perhaps worth pointing out that historically, the flag has sometimes been flown upside down as a sign of distress!!

My second point is a continuation of a long running discussion with management relating to the Evacuation event, which is run for local schools. My concern is that US military re-enactors are always used in this event. This is quite obviously historically inaccurate, as the USA was not involved in the Second World War until long after the Evacuation. US armed forces were certainly not involved in the Evacuation in any way and indeed, to the best of my knowledge, the Evacuation was an entirely civilian matter. The result is that we are contributing annually to the mis-education of school children (and perhaps many teachers?) and we should remove US military re-enactors from this event in future.

As an organisation whose objectives are the preservation and portrayal of aspects of our history and heritage, we should strive for accuracy and authenticity in all that we do.

Charles Lucas  
Maidstone



## Balcony Saloon Locomotive

Sir - Those readers of Tenterden Terrier No 127 who were sufficiently interested to get as far as paragraph three of my article Our Balcony Saloon may have been puzzled by the extended description of the locomotive that did not in fact appear in the adjacent photograph. This was presumably due to over enthusiastic cropping at production stage. (*Actually a collective failure on the part of the team – let's not blame it all on Jon! – Ed.*)

For those curious enough to see the loco referred to I attach a further photo; this time with the loco in front and thus less likely to find itself cropped. The loco in this one is almost certainly the former *Sunbeam* the second of the two, largely identical, locomotives described in my early article. This one was built in November 1857 and rebuilt in 1867, becoming 'Engineer Northampton' in April 1895 and ran with our saloon till withdrawn in May 1901.

So nice to be present on Sunday 20th September to see the balcony saloon at last safely placed under cover awaiting its further long awaited overhaul.

Brian Janes, by email

# Gallery



*Normally resident on the Swanage Railway, L.92 crosses the River Rother during its August visit to the K&ESR (John Wickham)*



*L92 approaches Bodiam, the noble outline of the castle in the background (Chris Kennedy)*





*Two eras of London steam – 32670 meets L.92 at Wittersham Road (Hugh Nightingale)*



*A charmingly rural scene at Bodiam – far from L.92's inner city days with London Transport (David Ware)*



# Rolvenden Riverside



*At the opening of the carriage storage shed, Acting Chairman Ian Legg addresses invited guests and volunteers who took part in the project (Phil Edwards)*



*'Charwelton' about to break the white ribbon accompanied by the Balcony Saloon, 'Aries' and BNO No 53 (Phil Edwards)*





*Vintage carriages which formed the special train for guests and volunteers being shunted into the shed (Phil Edwards)*



*The view of the new shed yard, looking to the south west (Phil Edwards)*



# More Bridges of the Kent & East Sussex Railway

*Graham Bessant always approaches the writing of articles for heritage railway publications with some trepidation for fear that he will get "shredded" by outraged gricers. However his fears were groundless because after his previous articles he received two very pleasant and helpful letters, one from Mike James and the other from Peter Carey.*

The first letter, from Peter Carey, related to my comments about culvert 2325 just west of Tenterden. I was very puzzled by the expensive construction, and wondered why Col Stevens or British Rail could have justified the expenditure. In fact the culvert was rebuilt by K&ESR. The Col Stevens construction was a 9 ft dia clayware

pipe laid to a poor alignment with disused barrels serving as a catchpit. It was totally inadequate for the task. Neither entry nor exit could be located and a fair sized lake had developed at the upstream side and this was threatening the stability of the embankment. Temporary relief was obtained by pumping the water over the embankment and imposing a 5 mph speed restriction; the K&ESR volunteers then tried to locate the pipe. This was eventually found about 4 feet under the mud, but proved to be blocked with tree roots. Attempts to clear the blockage failed and so the decision was made in 1985 to replace the clayware pipe with a 2'-0" dia steel oil pipeline obtained from Scotland, the pipe



*Close up of Bridge 2330 (Graham Bessant)*



was to be driven by pipe thrusting.

The work was carried out by Messrs Thrustmole of Bedford. The work took some three weeks to complete. The pipe emerged higher up the embankment on the downstream side than had been envisaged, so the extensive drop pit had to be constructed. This consumed 120 tons of concrete.

The pipe thrust method of installation was better than I could have hoped as the soil is virtually undisturbed and gives almost perfect support to the pipe. I carried out a strength assessment of the pipe and this indicates a strength nearly 1 1/2 times the applied rail loading. It was certainly built to last.

The second letter was from Mike James who directed me to the *Terrier* No's 73 and 74. Mike was the Job Creation Programme Manager for unemployed people in 1977-79 and was responsible for construction of Wittersham Road Station and for laying the track to Northiam. This latter task involved the reconstruction of the Hexden Channel Bridge (No 2347). The articles in issues 73 and 74 give details of the works. Mike states that Col Stephens original abutments at Hexden Bridge were retained and raised using old pre-stressed concrete sleepers as formwork. As I surmised, the steel bridge beams were second hand but they came not from a building, but from the temporary works cofferdams for the Thames Barrier.

Nick Pallant has also sent me extracts from the book *Holding the Line - Preserving the Kent & East Sussex Railway* which gives interesting details of the rebuilding of Mill Stream Bridge (No 2330). The Kent River Board had mentioned at the Public Enquiry that this bridge had been subject to severe scouring. K&ESR took steps to prevent further scouring and then raised the abutments to support the new rail bearer type bridge beams.

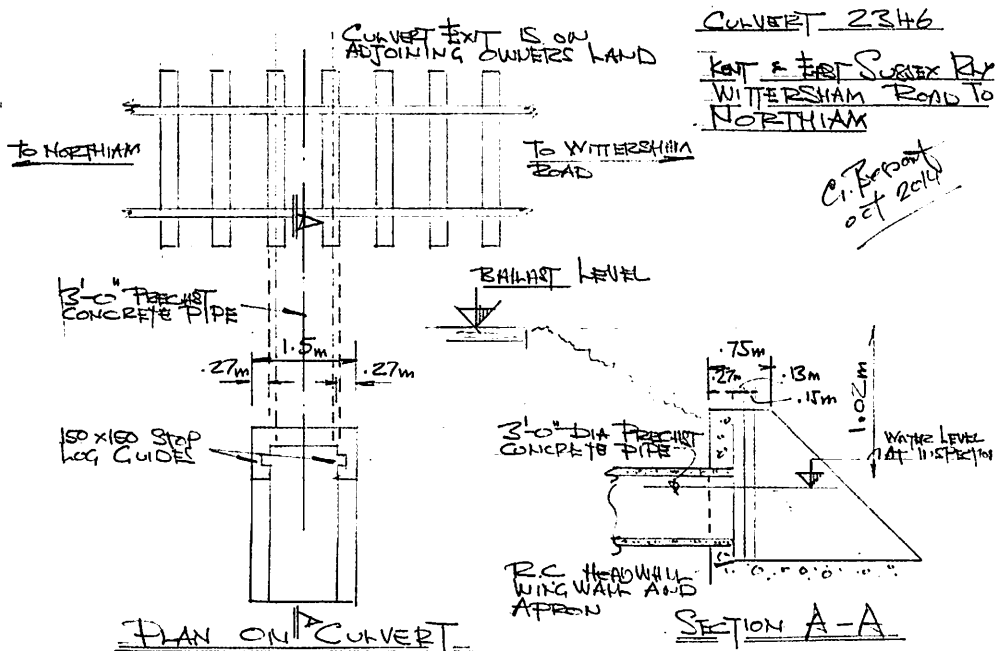
The extract from the book states that this bridge was the first on the line with a 15 ton axle loading, and that Major Rose of the HMRI authorised the lines axle loading to be raised to 17 tons. Now, rather than use axle loads to determine what stock can run, I use the

Equivalent Uniformly Distributed Load Method (EUDL) which is used by both Network Rail and London Underground. This method calculates the moments and shears imposed by the stock in question and then derives the equivalent uniformly distributed load that would create the same moments and shears. These are then compared to the actual bridge capacities. This enables heavier axle loads than would be permitted by the simple axle load method. K&ESR Class 33 Diesel locomotive and the Dogfish wagons have axle loads of 19 tonnes and 18 tonnes respectively, but the EUDL method shows the bridges to be perfectly capable of carrying their loads safely.

Interestingly axle loading is mentioned in an extract from the *Terrier's* predecessor, *The Farmers Line*, again sent to me by Nick Pallant. The subject of the extract is the poor quality of the concrete on the Robertsbridge to Tenterden line. It states "These smaller bridges consisted of two parallel girders set directly into unreinforced concrete abutments. These had been amongst the first applications of concrete to that type of work and its poor condition reflected the lack of knowledge of the material at the turn of the century.....the earliest possible replacement was essential and at the same time the opportunity would be taken to increase the axle loading to 18 tons".

My fieldwork has progressed and continues to spring surprises. Culvert 2334 is situated west of Rolvenden near the end of the Crayfish Lagoons. It consists of a concrete shaft some 3 metres deep on the east side of the line with 450mm diameter concrete pipes leading into and out of the shaft. I could not find the end of the culvert and assume it discharges into the Crayfish Lagoons. There were step irons built into the shaft segments, but bitter experience dissuaded me from climbing down the shaft until I had a safety rope and headman in attendance. Dimensions were established by dropping a weighted tape down the shaft.

Culvert 2342, an unusual type of structure for a railway is located east of Wittersham Road station near the end of the yard head shunt. It was built by the Rother Drainage Board between



Sketch plan culvert 2346 (Graham Bessant)

1968 and 1970. It is an Armco culvert. For those not familiar with the term, it is essentially a 2 metre dia tube made from galvanised corrugated steel. The problem with these culverts is that if not properly backed with concrete, they can rotate and buckle. However, Peter Barber spoke to people who had re-laid the track and they confirmed that the culvert was topped with good quality concrete 12 ins to 18 ins thick. Whenever I have visited the culvert, water has always filled the culvert to within 150mm of the soffit so an internal inspection has not been possible. Probing of the invert with rods indicated that there is a thick layer of concrete in the invert and so I was assured of its stability. The subsequent assessment showed that the culvert has a capacity at least 2.73 times the applied railway loading. I also carried out a longevity check in accordance with DfT standard BD12/01 and it

indicated a life of at least 100 years.

I have now progressed to just west of the Hexden Channel Bridge (No 2336). Locating culverts is now more difficult as some start and end some way into adjoining owners land. Around the Hexden Channel Bridge, culverts seem to be of a standard construction with reinforced concrete headwalls and rebates to take dam boards, which are in place. I assume that water levels have risen in the area, as water fills the pipes which are all 3ft 0 ins diameter. The water prevents inspection of the bores. I have no idea who controls the dam boards, but assume that K&ESR has no responsibility for doing this.

I have no idea what further oddities and surprises I will find as I work westward, but as was shown by Culvert 2325, even the humble culvert can surprise and if not located and inspected can bring the railway to a halt.





# CHECK CERTIFICATE FOR RAIL VEHICLES TO TRAVERSE BRIDGES OWNED BY THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

VEHICLE DESCRIPTION		Class 33 Diesel Locomotive Stock No D6570					
VEHICLE DATA							
No of Axles :	No of bogies :	Axle Centre distance :		Bogie centre distance :			
4	2	3.04m		8.83m			
Vehicle weights (tonnes)		Axle weights (tonnes)		Actual		✓ (tick as appropriate)	
Tare		Gross	Axle 1	Axle 2	Axle 3	Axle 4	
N/A		76	19	19	19	19	
STRUCTURAL ROUTE ACCEPTABILITY							
The load effects of the above mentioned vehicle has been assessed and may traverse all Bridges and Structures owned by the Kent & East Sussex Railway subject to the following restrictions.							
No restrictions.							
RA NUMBER							
The calculated Network Rail Route Availability Number for the above mentioned vehicle is:							
RA6 (Bending 15.35BSUs) (Shear 13.26 BSUs)							
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS							
Class 33 data sheet							
CHECKED BY							
Date							

CLASS 33			
LOCOMOTIVE TYPE	Class 33/0/1/2/ Island (Intermediate 3260)		
LOCOMOTIVE LENGTH	51 Ft. (15.5m)	WEIGHT (TONNES)	76
ENGINE TYPE	Vacuum and Air	MAX SPEED	60
MAX IM PRESS	8 10 6	R.A.	6
COAL HD.	18K2 NCR NCR	ENGINE NCR (TONNES)	35
FUEL (GAL)	750 Gallons		
NCR -	33008, 33009, 33025, 33070, 33026, 33046, 33021, 33116		
NCR -	33002, 33012, 33021, 33026, 33042, 33048, 33022, 33053		
NCR -	33043, 33050		
NCR -	33057, 33064, 33109, 33201, 33202, 33208		
DIMENSIONS			
1/ 1200 HP B.R.C.N. Type Diesel Electric locomotive			
2/ NCR locomotives are used on weekday WTT services and weekend work			
3/ NCR locomotives are used on Weekend WTT services and weekend work			
4/ NCR are weekend only locomotives used between 1800 Fri - 1200 Mon and stored during the week			
5/ 33201/202/208 are built to 'Bathings' gauge which is approximately 5" narrower			
6/ 33/1's are fitted with hook-eye couplings			
7/ Used mainly on the South Eastern, South Central and South Western Division.			
8/ Maintained at Stewarts Lane (NCR, NCR) and Bathing (NCR)			

-76-

## Class 33 details



A reminder of what we started with. The original Newmill Bridge – note supporting wooden beam. (CSHA)

# Halcyon Days at Northiam

*Chris 'Gricer' Fautley continues his reminiscences about Northiam Station in the 1990s.*

Like most parts of the railway, Northiam was ever-reliant on retired volunteers. Were it not for them, it would have been almost impossible to run the place as we did. Many, sadly, have taken the departure for the engine shed in the sky; other, younger, volunteers simply seem to have vanished. (Some of us are left, though – including one who has become a loco driver.) Still, the happy memories remain, including that of the booking clerk who was an amateur opera singer. He would regularly breach the peace (and invariably frighten the life out of me), as a chorus of, “Lah – lah – lah – lah – lah – lah – lah,” came from the booking office as he practiced his musical scales. Another, without fail, used to come into the tearoom and buy a can of ginger beer to have with his lunch. You could set your watch by it.

A third volunteer used to travel with his bicycle on the “big” railway, alight at Dolcham Halt and cycle from there. It’s about seven miles from Northiam, and cycling there is no mean feat – not least because there are hills of epic proportions to be negotiated. He was probably the only person to use Doleham. (“It’s there to be used,” he would rightly state), and he was surely the only passenger with a bicycle to do so. I doubt he could do it now, Doleham being all but a parliamentary station.

Among the investments made by the Friends of Northiam were the lovely stone flower tubs on the platform. As elsewhere, anything not bolted down was susceptible to theft: the prospects of this were alleviated somewhat by filling half the pot with ballast from the track. An intruder alarm on the station building was less effective: within a matter of weeks, the bell box had mysteriously vanished.

During the mid 1990s, the potential of Northiam was enhanced by the arrival of the Hastings & District RE Bus Group. On Sundays during July and August, they used their buses to run a circular service covering the western part of 1066 Country, including Battle, Rye, Bodiam and

Hastings. In addition, they provided a shuttle between Northiam Station and Bodiam Castle that connected with our trains. This, understandably, was extremely popular with visitors. On peak days, there were up to eight services – which in those days matched the Sunday train service.

There is a particularly charming story relating to this, which I have no reason to believe is untrue. Two lady ramblers presented themselves at the booking office and asked if it was possible to catch a train to London. The booking clerk replied that unfortunately the line between Northiam and Robertsbridge was closed (true), for major engineering work (not quite true: even Bodiam was a pipe dream at that time). There was, however, a replacement bus service (sort of true), that would take them to Battle for the mainline connection. Two very happy ramblers bought their tickets and went on their way. They could be the only tickets between Northiam and Battle that will ever be sold on the preserved line.

As now, most special events on the railway were centred on Tenterden. However, the tradition was broken on a couple of occasions when Northiam hosted two vintage bus rallies – largely through the sterling efforts of just one volunteer. Mind you, on the first occasion we did it we were very



*Most Halcyon Day – Northiam reopen, 19th May 1990 (Brian Stephenson)*



concerned that nothing was going to happen. At 10.45 there wasn't a vintage bus to be seen and then, miraculously, fifteen minutes later, a convoy of a dozen or so came processing across Newenden bridge. What a fine sight it was.

The buses, though, were mere newcomers in history's bigger picture. Few of our visitors realise that our railway actually passes two castles. There's Bodiam, but also the lesser-known and mysterious Castle Toll motte and bailey. It lies about half a mile northwest of the line where it crosses Hexden Bridge. Nobody seems to know much about Castle Toll: it may have been Roman, it may have been Viking. There certainly isn't much to see, and the nearest settlement is Newenden about a mile to its southwest (*Fans, like the editor, of Bernard Cornwell's Saxon historical novels will be interested to know that this may have been the lair of villainous Viking Harald in the fifth book of the saga, 'The Burning Land' – Ed.*)

In typical Colonel Stephens style Newenden is closer to Northiam station than Northiam. It also aspires to a number of claims to fame: birthplace of cricket; England's smallest village and site of Edward the Confessor's palace among them. Add a fine selection of 16th and 17th century architecture, and it's a very appealing place to visit. On that basis, in my capacity as a professional writer, I was commissioned to write and illustrate a feature about the village and Castle Toll. This, for me, was a dream commission – not least as I hoped to get some unusual shots of the Victorian train (as it was then known), while I walked out to Castle Toll.

My plan was to leave my car at Northiam station, then walk from there. However, the day in question was blistering hot, so I figured the best thing to do was drive to the main street at Newenden (which runs at right angles to the A28), do my research, take some photographs, and then drive as close to the castle as I could. That, it transpired, still left a walk along a public footpath of more than a mile.

Accordingly, I unpacked all my photographic gear (no digital cameras then), and staggered forth into the heat. I had only taken a few paces

when a man's voice called, "Are you going to the castle?" I confirmed that I was. "I'm the land owner," he replied. "Open the gate and take your car along until you reach a track, then drive parallel with the railway line. You'll be fine."

I thanked him profusely, and tentatively set off. It had been a wet winter; the fields and the track were as hard as rock and heavily rutted. As I gingerly drove along, it readily became apparent that this may have been fine for an off-road vehicle, but not a family saloon car. "This can't be good for my suspension," I recall thinking. (It wouldn't have done much for the car's either.) Progress was tortuously slow; it would undoubtedly have been quicker to walk, but at least I had the benefit of air conditioning. I also couldn't help wondering how I would summon help if I became stranded. (Mobile phones were a luxury in those days, and I certainly didn't have one.) Anyway, how do you tell the AA your car is stuck in a field a mile from the nearest road?

For sure it must have made one of the more unusual sights seen from our trains: my bright red Vauxhall Vectra creeping across the fields in the middle of nowhere. Nonetheless, I did make it to Castle Toll - which was little more than a shrub-covered mound with an English Heritage information panel. And I did get some good pictures of the Victorian train, too.

Ten years after the railway reached Northiam, it finally arrived at Bodiam. And that, sadly, heralded the start of a long decline in passenger usage. Put bluntly, no longer being the end of the line there was no reason to alight. And, for some inexplicable reason, relatively few passengers chose to start their journeys there – notwithstanding its proximity to Hastings, Rye and Camber. It was to turn into one of the most enduring and perplexing issues faced by our railway: "What are we going to do about Northiam?"

I continued in my role in the buffet for the rest of the 2000 season, but trade was desperately quiet. On some occasions, I sat there all day and took only £5 or so: at times, it was like a ghost station. I was happy to give my time to the railway, but preferred to be contributing something a little more meaningful than that. I decided to call it a

day, and return exclusively to my ticket inspecting duties. It was only a few years before most of the old crew also departed – either through lack of enthusiasm or old age catching up with them.

However, in recent years, Northiam has been revitalised. A new group of dedicated volunteers has arrived, and the station is once again looking loved and cared for. Crucially, it is regularly staffed: how uninviting it must seem to turn up to buy a ticket and find nobody there. The tearoom is open for business, and on one notable occasion

earlier this year took more money on one day than Bodiam.

A vintage bus group, independent of the railway, has also expressed an interest in opening a small museum there. It could be just the answer to, “What are we going to do about Northiam?” I know I am not the only volunteer hoping our Board will devote time to making this happen, rather than looking for reasons why it can’t.

*(Concluded)*

## The Headcorn Extension 60 years on – Doug Lindsay

*This year, amongst the many anniversaries, is the 60th anniversary of the lifting of the Headcorn Extension in 1955. Closed completely as we know in January 1954, this eight miles of our railway, the last portion to be opened in 1905, was only fifty years old and a very short lived piece of railway infrastructure compared with the mainstream system that had developed during the 19th century.*

This section of line, as many members will know, is of particular significance to the writer as he was the unofficial ‘tea-boy’ on the demolition gang back in the Summer of 1955. (See illustrated articles in *Tenterden Terrier* Nos. 66, 67 & 68 of 1995.) Lifting started some couple of hundred yards above the Tenterden station limits in May of that year and continued throughout the Summer and on into Winter and was completed by Christmas. George Cohen (known as The 600 Group) were the contractors employed by British Railways to lift the line and sort materials that were re-usable or scrap and these were sorted at Biddenden to start with then moving to Frittenden Road and finally Headcorn as lifting progressed. Cohen’s used a lorry mounted road crane which backed up the trackbed and lifted the track panels one by one which were separated, with the sleepers being loaded on to a bogie-bolster wagon and the rails being dragged to rail stacks some quarter mile apart. They hired a locomotive each weekday from British Railways and this loco was always one of four ‘01’ class 0-6-0s, 31048, 31064, 31065 or 31370, all of which had worked on the line since the Second World War until closure and were one of

the few classes still in service that were permitted on the line. The day’s loco worked up from Ashford each morning at the head of a stopping train, detached at Headcorn to work the demolition train, then returning each evening, again as a pilot loco on a down stopping train. Unusually for the KESR line, the loco was always chimney facing north, whereas, prior to closure, they always faced south (as far as is known from photographic evidence anyway!).

There was a slight hiccup in the proceedings early in the contract as no loco was available during the elongated ASLEF railway strike of that year which lasted some three weeks (imagine that today!!). Therefore lifting came to a standstill for the duration and the labourers, of which there were about fifteen in number, sought work elsewhere.

However, that summer was a scorcher if my memory serves me correctly, I recall cycling each day from home in Langley to Biddenden in fine dry sunny conditions to join the gang on every day that I was able. I recall the lovely walks down the, now weed infested, line from Biddenden to find the demolition train as it





*Much adapted Biddenden Station building with the chimney stack of the Station House on the left  
(Doug Lindsay)*

worked its way northwards around High Halden Road. On those walks, looking at the remaining infrastructure now virtually unused and about to be removed, I would ponder on the fact that the next time a fishplate spanner is used on those fishplates it will be the last, or very soon no more trains will run over those rails. A sad thought really as this was always my most favourite line. The 'Whistle' boards at each crossing stood forlornly there with paint peeling and very soon no more trains would pass and have to whistle, or observe the 10 mph as instructed by the small wooden signs at each crossing. Likewise at each gateless road crossing there was a pair of standard rectangular glass beaded road signs with triangular top warning road users that 'Trains Cross Here'... one thought, 'not for much longer'... and would be trespassers were also warned to not trespass on the railway, again there would shortly be no railway to trespass upon. Each accommodation crossing had a pair of white gates on which was screwed a neat KESR brass plate warning users to 'Shut This Gate – Penalty for leaving open 40/-'. Soon it would not matter if they were indeed left open and the farmers livestock and workers would not have the worry about snorting steam trains worrying the cattle or whatever. Likewise, as the season progressed and we were now taking the track up near Frittenden

Road, it was fruit and hop picking time. Many of the pickers and their young families were in the area and were surprised to see the train back and forth along what had become 'their' footpath, the children were taking the opportunity of placing pennies on the rail head to be flattened and distorted by the loco back and forth over them! A passtime of our youth that is no longer possible, or desirable, in these days of fast trains, stringent safety measures and heavy trespassing fines! Moreover, no longer will visiting children, if indeed there are any, be able to 'put a penny on the line' at that location on our railway.

So the summer turned to autumn then winter as the final lengths of track were lifted towards Headcorn and by early December the job was almost complete save for tidying up the former K&ESR side of the station. The actual running line from its junction with the main line headshunt at Headcorn was left in place back as far as the little bridge over the river Shere, about 400 yards or so. This was subsequently used as a 'cripple siding' for vehicles awaiting attention at Ashford Works. Even this section was taken out about five years later during the alterations for the electrification of the Kent main lines which brought about a final end to 'Headcorn Junction' as it was always referred to by the K&ESR, but

only as 'Headcorn' by the SR and BR companies!

Today a curved line of trees clearly mark the course of that cripple siding back towards Tenterden from the fencing on the Up side at Headcorn station back to the Shere where the abutments of the bridge are still extant. This location was for many years a K&ESR landmark, as Col Stephens had one of the famous windpumps installed here to raise water from the tiny river to the tank used to replenish locomotives – it is featured on many photographs of that part of the line.

In addition to that line of trees, there are still a few locations where one's memory can be stirred such as Biddenden Station which still survives as a dwelling though altered several times. The two platforms are still there and the station building, though altered again recently, now has a very good likeness of the 'Biddenden' running-in board on display at its rear. (The original enamel Biddenden running-in board can be seen in the NRM). Also at Biddenden the masonry fireplace and chimney of the former station agent's corrugated iron 'bungalow' still stands sentinel adjacent to the now busy A274 (formerly the B2078 in K&ESR days!). Back towards High Halden Road much of the trackbed has been reclaimed by farmers, only the odd concrete gatepost here and there remaining. Of course the actual station building at High Halden Road is still standing and over the years has seen several uses and has had as many 'restorations' but there still seems doubt as to its survival, sadly. From there a line of hedging across the meadows signifies the straight section on towards St Michaels, but soon even this is to be lost where the golf club have developed a large acreage for their course. However, the next landmark is well in existence and now sports a Network Rail notice (!), for this is the only overbridge on the whole line and is in fact the 70 yard tunnel under Shoreham Lane just before the site of the Halt, and is still to this day the responsibility of what remains of British Railways is responsible for its upkeep, presumably as no one wished to purchase it. It is however surrounded by private land and some new development and has recently been refenced to deter would be vandals no doubt. Just below the tunnel the line emerged from the well

photographed cutting to cross Grange Road and St Michaels Halt. From here, although no trace whatever remains of the Halt, the trackbed has been surfaced and illuminated as a public footpath for several hundred yards towards Tenterden and passes, on an embankment further on, the very aptly named Colonel Stephens Way, one of the recently developed roads in the area which was formerly farmland.

This path becomes unsurfaced and ends near a former public crossing point adjacent to Juries Road. This point is about 150 yards from the present K&ESR Tenterden headshunt boundary.

So, in this 60th Anniversary year of the lifting of the Headcorn Extension, there are still some remnants remaining to remind us of that part of the line which had such a short life as a railway.

However, for me, nothing can replace the memories I have of that Summer sixty years ago when the sight of an '01' class locomotive slowly chuffing its way across what seemed to be a field of growing hay wavering in the heat of the summer breeze and sun, for the grass was as long on the track as it was in the fields at that time, is a memory I cherish dearly!

I repeat the letters that I chalked on the wall of Biddenden station all those years ago... 'R.I.P.' - Headcorn extension!



*The remains of the Biddenden Platforms 2015  
(Doug Lindsay)*



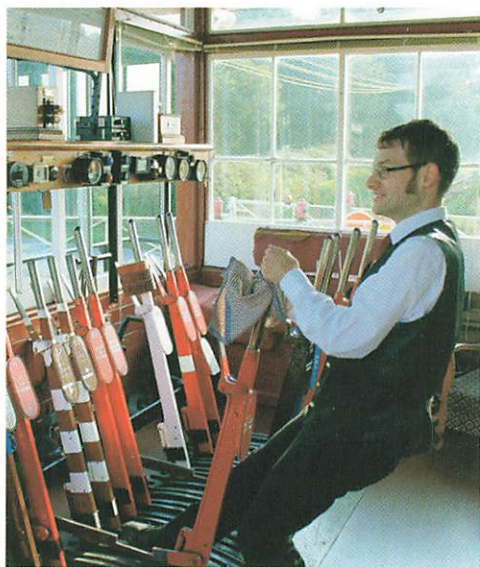
# The Next Generation

*In recent editions of The Next Generation we have covered the roles of Guards, Footplate, Shop and Catering staff. In this edition Anthony Ramsey meets up with Keith Allen a Signaller at Wittersham Road.*

When the present Prime Minister was asked about his religious faith, he responded "It's a bit like the reception for Classic FM: it comes and goes." I was reminded of that quotation recently when I went to interview Keith Allen for this article. During his earliest years, Keith's interest in railways tended to wax and wane. However, a chance visit to the National Railway Museum in York revived his enthusiasm and when, soon afterwards, his wife bought him a Signal Box Experience Day with us, he was hooked! He joined the K&ESR, volunteered to train as a Signaller and last year passed out in Wittersham Road signal box with, he says, "no regrets".

Keith is one of those volunteers who came to us from a non-transport background. At one time, he wanted to be a biochemist, but his plans gradually changed, and eventually he opted to train as a nurse, studying at the University of Hertfordshire. He is now qualified as a neo-natal nurse and works as a Senior Staff Nurse at St Thomas' Hospital, where he is in charge of a unit of up to ten nurses and sixteen patients on a shift basis. One of the joys of that role, he says, is seeing babies become well enough to be able to go home with their parents although, conversely, one of the hardest elements is when a baby's health deteriorates. (He has a personal experience of the trauma involved for parents, for his own son was born ten weeks' prematurely and had a lengthy stay in hospital.)

Returning to the role of Signaller, I asked Keith what aspect he found most challenging. Without hesitation, he replied "The training! I knew it would be hard, but didn't realise it would be *that* hard. Partly it was because I'm not very good at theory and partly it was the sheer volume of material to be covered." Nevertheless, he is glad he stuck at it, and finds it very satisfying now to be able to work a signal box on his own, to make decisions and to give something back to the railway. He hopes he is rewarding the efforts of



*Keith Allen at work in Wittersham Road Box  
(Elliott Waters)*

all those who trained and supervised him, whilst he in turn seeks to pass on his knowledge to others and is delighted if one of his trainees says he has had a good day. Is there anything negative about the role? "Well," he said, "I had a major lineside fire up the bank one day, which was pretty scary, and there was another day when the visiting Pannier was unable to get up the bank and kept rolling back, whilst the queue of cars at the level crossing got longer and longer. You have to be able to think on your feet. But, generally speaking, every turn is really enjoyable and worthwhile." I also asked him if he would be willing to reveal his most embarrassing experience. "On a crossing move, I once dropped the token which I was meant to be giving to an Up train. The train had to stop and, to make it worse, all the passengers from the Down train were on the platform watching!"

Away from the railway, Keith lives in

Bexleyheath and is married to Jenny, with whom he was at school. Childhood sweethearts? "Oh no", he says, "I didn't really like her at school. We had to spend a lot of time in the library and the School Librarian said we bickered like an old married couple!" In one of those quirky coincidences, Keith recently attended that librarian's funeral and bumped into Peter Parascandolo, who also knew her! Meanwhile, that tradition of bickering seems to be continuing: Keith has recently started building an N-gauge model railway about which, he says, his

wife's comments are "unrepeatable".

Keith and Jenny have a son, Charlie, who (after that anxious beginning) is now a healthy, bouncing two-year old, with such a keen love of trains that, when Keith is coming to the railway, he has to pretend he is going to work or else Charlie insists on joining him. Indeed, Keith reveals that Charlie learned to say "signal" and "buffers" before he could say "Grandad". Hopefully, then, he will be a member of the next "Next Generation"!

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## Change at Three Chimneys for Tenterden – Tom Burnham

*The Cranbrook, Maidstone & Weald of Kent Railway proposal of 1856*

A previous article in the *Tenterden Terrier* (No. 79, Summer 1999) outlined the proposals for a Hastings, Rye & Tenterden Railway, connecting with the South Eastern Railway at Headcorn. This was turned down by the Parliamentary committee in 1844 in favour of the line from Brighton to Ashford via Hastings, which was of course built and is still in use today. However, it was not the only plan affecting Rye in those days of the Railway Mania. Another scheme, provisionally registered in 1845 with a proposed capital of £500,000, was the Tonbridge & Rye Harbour Direct Railway. This was said to be supported by the Rye Harbour Commissioners and boasted Francis Giles and his son Alfred as engineers. Many of the gentlemen listed in its very large provisional committee had little connection with the district, but an exception was Robert Tooth (1799-1867), a hop merchant who lived at Swifts Place, Cranbrook.

The Tonbridge & Rye Harbour Direct went the way of many other "Direct" schemes when the bubble of the Railway Mania burst, but Robert Tooth had apparently not lost his interest in promoting railways. Another opportunity came ten years later. The South Eastern Railway, with its main line from London Bridge to Dover via

Redhill, had by then become established, but its board of directors seemed to be more interested in fighting amongst themselves than in running an efficient railway, and the company was widely perceived as exploiting its monopoly of railway transport in Kent. This had provided an opening for the promoters of the East Kent Railway, a mixture of Kentish landowners, speculative financiers and railway contractors. Originally presented as a local line to connect Sittingbourne, Faversham and Canterbury to the South Eastern's North Kent line at Strood, it was becoming clear by the mid 1850s that the East Kent's ambitions would eventually extend to challenging the South Eastern Railway for the Continental traffic via Dover. Meanwhile, in 1853 the South Eastern had extended the North Kent line of 1849 from Strood to Maidstone to join its 1844 branch from Paddock Wood, and the new line was reported to be doing very good business.

It was against this background that a provisional committee chaired by Robert Tooth was formed in the hope of using the situation to connect the Wealden towns of Cranbrook and Tenterden to the national railway system. The committee held a meeting in Tenterden at the end of August 1856, which was then adjourned to meet a deputation



from Cranbrook. Plans for a Cranbrook, Maidstone & Weald of Kent Railway could now be made public, and the committee called a meeting of "gentlemen and inhabitants of Cranbrook and district" at the Bull Inn, Cranbrook, on Wednesday 10th September.

Thomas Law Hodges (1776-1857) of Hemsted Park was asked to chair the meeting. He had served as the MP for West Kent from 1832 to 1841 and from 1847 to 1852. The meeting began with Robert Tooth claiming – it is not clear on what grounds – that the South Eastern wanted to build a line from Headcorn to Maidstone to give them a shorter route so that they could compete more effectively with a future East Kent Railway line from Dover to London. This would give the opportunity to continue the new line south from Headcorn with branches to Cranbrook and Tenterden. He explained the advantages that a railway would bring to the district, including a large saving on the price of coal in Cranbrook. "Putting it in the most moderate way, he believed that so soon as the line was opened into the heart of the Weald, the occupiers of land would be immediately benefited to the extent of 2s per acre."

A.H. Fernandez (1823-1898) of Parliament Street, Westminster was the engineer of the proposed line. He had invented and patented a new design of rail chair and at the time of the meeting was in partnership with George Furness as contractor for the Caterham Railway. He explained that the route had already been surveyed. From a junction with the South Eastern Railway at Maidstone, it would run up the Loose valley, passing twelve mills, each of which could have its own siding. It would pass close to the Boughton ragstone quarries, and there would then be a tunnel under Chart Hill, between half and three-quarters of a mile long. After the tunnel, the line would continue to join the South Eastern main line at Headcorn. South of Headcorn, it would continue to Three Chimneys, an inn on the Biddenden to Sissinghurst road, where there would be a junction with branches to Cranbrook and Tenterden. The line would be laid with a single track, apart from double track through Chart Hill tunnel, and the cost was estimated at £200,000.

Mr W. Durrant was present on behalf of S.F. Noyes of Lincoln's Inn Fields, the solicitor for the promoters of the independent company which would build the line. S.F. Noyes represented the promoters of a good many railway schemes in the mid-nineteenth century, including the Potteries, Shrewsbury & North Wales, the ill-fated line that much later became the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway. Mr Durrant repeated the route the proposed line would follow, and said that "if constructed he thought the South Eastern Railway would certainly work it and probably lease it". He said that a well-known contractor had offered to take £60,000 of shares at par if the remainder were subscribed by people in the district to be served by the line. Mr Durrant thought £50,000 could be raised south of Headcorn and the remainder north. One press report named the contractor who was said to be interested as a Mr Wyse. While there was a railway contractor named William Wyse, it is also possible that the newspaper reporter mis-heard, and Mr Durrant was actually referring to George Wythes (1811-1883), who built many miles of railway, including numerous contracts in Kent and Sussex.

During the ensuing discussion, a Mr Wilson declared that the South Eastern must do something to save their continental traffic - if they did not shorten their line, all their continental traffic would leave them. Robert Tooth then proposed a resolution that the proposed railway was desirable. This was carried, and a committee was appointed to make further enquiries.

After a busy seven weeks, Robert Tooth and his committee reported back to another public meeting, this time held at the George Hotel, Cranbrook, on 29th October. Thomas Law Hodges was asked to take the chair again, and Mr Fernandez and Mr Durrant were once more in attendance.

The committee had been given an interview by some directors of the South Eastern Railway, but the results were not as encouraging as they might have hoped. The South Eastern was "favourably disposed to the line", but would not find any of the capital needed, and nor would they lease it once it was built. They would be prepared to

work the line for half the gross receipts. After Mr Wilson had read out the correspondence between the South Eastern directors and the committee, the meeting discussed the terms offered. Mr Barlow produced figures to show that the offer was a liberal one and should be adequate for a return of 5% on capital, and Mr Durrant said that the terms on offer were much better than those given to most other lines by the South Eastern Railway. However, Robert Tooth thought the South Eastern directors ought to allow two-thirds of the gross receipts or at least 60%, and if they did that he himself would be prepared to invest a few hundred pounds. Mr Durrant pointed out that the contractor had offered to construct the line for a fixed sum and to take one-third of this in shares if the remainder was raised in the district.

However, the response from the local landowners and gentlemen who had been approached by the committee had been mostly unfavourable. They had made difficulties about finding the capital required, and many thought that the proposed line was not the best that could be had and that another route would prove to be of greater advantage. Mr Law Hodges observed that the present time was not favourable for the construction of the line. Finance would inevitably be difficult because of the state of the money market and because farmers would be called upon to pay a very large amount in hop duty later in the year.

Finally, a resolution was proposed by Mr Tooth, seconded by Mr Jennings, and carried unanimously, "That in the opinion of this meeting the communication from the directors of the South Eastern Company was not satisfactory. That the present was not the time for carrying out the proposed undertaking, but the meeting was fully convinced that the establishment of a railway for the district was in every way desirable. That the consideration of the question be for the time adjourned, but that the committee or committees already appointed be requested to keep the subject in view and to summons another public meeting, should circumstances arise that, in their opinion, would render it advisable to do so."

In the absence of support from the investors of the Weald, in November 1856, promoters

represented by S.F. Noyes gave notice of their intention to promote a Parliamentary bill in the next session for a Maidstone and Loose Valley Railway, from a junction with the South Eastern Railway line from Paddock Wood "at or near the New Tank House, at the Maidstone station", terminating "at or near the public road or highway leading from Chart Wents to the Langley Park ponds". Powers would have been included for the line to be worked by the South Eastern. Although plans showing the course of the proposed line were deposited with the local authorities, needless to say, even this much reduced scheme came to nothing.

While it may have been true that the South Eastern needed a more direct route from London to Dover than its original line via Redhill, it is doubtful that the Maidstone to Headcorn line surveyed by A.H. Fernandez would have been an improvement. It would have been largely single track and probably heavily graded, and trains would have used the North Kent line between London Bridge and Strood. The North Kent line was already becoming congested with local traffic, and Parliamentary committees and other commentators of the period had emphasised the desirability of separate lines for Continental traffic and for serving the busy towns from Woolwich to Rochester.

Ten years later, the South Eastern Railway took a more radical approach to shortening its main line by opening the Tonbridge Direct line via Sevenoaks. Part of the Maidstone to Headcorn project reappeared later and was authorised by the Loose Valley Railway Act, 1877, but construction even of this much reduced scheme got no further than the bridge over the Medway leading to Tovil goods station. It was not until 1905 that Headcorn became a junction with the opening of the Kent & East Sussex Railway extension from Tenterden.

This article is based largely on reports from *The Times* and the *Morning Post* of 15th September 1856, and the *Kentish Gazette* of 2nd and 16th September 1856, and from the *Sussex Advertiser* of 4th November 1856.



# Summer Sunday in Tenterden

## Town Box – Roger Temple

The Sunday lunch timetable is fun to work in all four boxes on K&ESR, especially in August when all three trains are steam-hauled. I arrived for duty on 11<sup>th</sup> August to find the rostered trainee had been hi-jacked the night before to wash up on the Pullman, so I had the box to myself. I signed on duty in the Train Register and recorded the weather conditions as dry, cloudy and warm, before putting the closing switch in and checking the Fortnightly Operating Notice to confirm there were no changes to the Working Timetable Calendar.

There was one new yellow Equipment Failure form on the desk: Nick Wood had reported difficulty in turning the commutator on the block instrument (Tyers No. 6 Tablet, dating back to 1888). I had had difficulty with this earlier in the season, but it didn't give me any trouble today. There was also a note from Jamie Douglas (the Permanent Way Manager) advising of an Engineer's Possession on Monday night, but this wouldn't affect me.

The next thing was to unlock the level crossing gates before calling attention on the block instrument and, on acknowledgment, sending Opening of Signal Box (5 – 5 – 5) to Rolvenden. When this was acknowledged by repetition, I called attention again and sent Testing of Bells and Instruments (16 beats continuously), holding the plunger down on the last beat to enable the Rolvenden Signaller to get a tablet out and a release on his section signal. When Peter Lamont was doing the Signaller training, he always used to stress "Watch the galvanometer" (the needle at the top of the instrument). When it flickers across the second time, you know the Signaller at the next box has got the tablet out.

When you have sent 16 bells, you have to be ready for the Signaller the other end to repeat the signal, as you have to get a tablet out on the last beat while he is still plunging. You then have to test the section signal (the Down Advance Starter

No. 18). Actually we have two section signals at Tenterden, as we have a Shunt Ahead signal (No. 15) under the main arm. When I did my passing-out turn in Tenterden box, Clive Norman (the Signalling Inspector) watched me test No. 18, and then said in his gentle way: "Don't you think it might have been a good idea to test No. 15 as well?" Of course it was, but once you've cleared No. 18 you've lost the release. So ever since, I've made a point of testing No. 15 first (the release gives you as many pulls as you need on No. 15 but only one pull on No. 18).

The first light engine was offered (2 – 3 on the bells) as soon as I'd replaced the tablet in the instrument. By this time Peter Taylor, the Guard of the A set, was champing at the bit for news of his engine, but I didn't get Train Entering Section (2 on the bells) until 10 02 (17 minutes late). When up trains pass N treadle (near the Rolvenden Down Outer Home signal), they set off a bell in Tenterden box. That's my cue to go down and open the gates. When you get back to the box, you have to normalise the gate lock lever (No. 20) before you can clear the signals. I find it helpful to make sure the duster is on that lever before I leave the box, to remind me which lever to work first when I get back. The A set was in the Loop, as the Pullman ran the night before, so before clearing the signals I had to disengage the Facing Point Lock (No. 14), reverse the points (No. 13) and re-engage the Facing Point Lock.

Normally you clear signals in the order in which the train passes them, but at Tenterden we have a shunt signal (No. 21) protecting the points ahead of the Up Home signals. This is known in the trade as a running shunt or, colloquially, a running dummy (always reminds me of my grandchildren when they were babies). In such a situation, if you were able to clear the signals in the "right" order, there's a danger you may be distracted (for example by a phone call) before you've cleared the shunt signal, creating a "SPAD trap." So the

locking requires you to clear the shunt signal first before clearing the stop signal in rear of it.

At Tenterden we have three Home signals: the Up Main Home (No. 22) brings a passenger train into the unoccupied platform, the Up Main Calling-on signal (No. 19) brings an engine onto stock in the platform, and the Up Loop Home (No. 23) brings trains into the Loop, which is a goods line or siding not to be used by passenger trains. For this move I needed No. 23. As the next stop signal is a Stop Board, which can't be "cleared," you mustn't clear No. 23 till the engine is nearly at a stand at it. Before 2007, there was nothing in the locking to prevent you clearing this signal prematurely but, if you did, you might hear a voice from down below saying "That was a bit previous." In 2007, Nick Wellington changed the locking to stop you clearing the signal too soon. Since then, when the engine hits "B" treadle 160 yards below the Home signals, you get a bell and the lever is unlocked. Clearing the signal silences the bell but, if for some reason you can't bring the engine in straightaway, you can silence the bell with a plunger on the block shelf.

You can't see the Home signals from the box, as there are large bushes in the way, so you have to rely on the repeaters to check the signal is showing the correct indication. I got the necessary Off indication, and the engine came in, No. 23 *Holman F. Stephens*, driven by Matt Green. I always call this engine the Colonel. When an engine comes into the Loop, you can collect the token on the balcony (since the points were moved in 2005). Check that it's got a tail lamp, put the signals back and unlock the gates before opening them to road traffic. On returning to the box, take the tablet out of its pouch and restore it to the instrument before sending Train Out of Section (2 – 1).

Peter the Guard used the shunt bells to get permission to take the "A" set up the headshunt (4 – 1) and into the platform (2), taking care to stop the train at the platform stop board, leaving the points clear to bring the next engine up the Loop.

Before offering the second light engine (the Pullman engine), David Manger (the Rolvenden Signalman) phoned me to say he was planning to

send the "B" set engine up with it (normally it comes up after the first train has gone down). I briefed Bradley Bottomley (the "B" set Guard) and Elliott Waters (the Pullman Guard) accordingly. But then David phoned again to say the Pullman engine (the Norwegian) wasn't ready, so the "B" set engine (*Knowle*) would come up on its own, and the Norwegian would come up in the path of the "B" set light engine. *Knowle* arrived at 10 35, sporting a wreath on the smokebox to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the closure of the Newhaven West Beach branch (on which *Knowle* had been the resident engine).

As he handed me the token, Driver John Furness (one of our regular visitors from the North Yorkshire Moors) asked if I wanted him to shunt the Pullman stock out of the Pullman Dock into the platform. This seemed a very good idea, so I gave one long plunge on the shunt bell to bring Bradley to the phone and tell him about the change of plan. *Knowle* still shunted onto the Vintage set in No. 1 siding to pose for photographs before shunting across to the Pullman Dock.

I hadn't got the Off indication on No. 23 signal for this move, but the signal had cleared. As I now knew the Pullman engine would be coming straight into the platform, I didn't expect to use No. 23 again. By this time a volunteer had offered to do the gates for me in between his other duties, so I was able to give Train Out of Section for *Knowle* and offer on the 10 45 Tenterden (3 – 1 for a stopping passenger train) as soon as I'd put the signals back. I usually go down to the platform about five minutes before departure to give the Driver the token, but this time I stayed in the box a bit longer in case Elliot gave me the shunt bell to take the Pullman stock up the headshunt before the 10 45 left. He didn't, so I went down to the platform just before departure, and checked with Station Master Charles Lucas that he was ready for me to start the process for despatching the train. With the gates open for me, I normalised the gate lock lever and cleared the Platform Starter (No. 17) and the section signal (No. 18) before hovering near the Cranbrook plunger to give the two long plunges to tell the Cranbrook Road Crossing Keeper the train was



on its way when it started at 10 46.

I always do the Cranbrook Road plunger first and then give Train Entering Section (2) to Rolvenden before watching the train from the balcony. As well as checking for things like doors on the catch and locked wheels (none of either today), this gives me the opportunity to respond to the passengers who wave to me as they go past. Once again, someone did the gates for me, which left me free to authorise the shunt moves for the Pullman stock from the Pullman Dock to the headshunt and back into the platform, where it arrived at 10 56, about the time Rolvenden gave me the Train Out of Section for the 10 45 Tenterden and offered on the Pullman engine.

The Norwegian still wasn't ready, so they sent up the Class 14 diesel driven by Charlie Masterson with George Harman as Second man to take the Pullman empties down to Rolvenden, where it was planned the Norwegian would take over. To bring the Class 14 onto the stock berthed in the platform, I had to use the Up Main Calling-On signal (no. 19). I didn't get the Off indication, but the signal cleared normally and the engine arrived at 11 05 (the booked departure time for the empties). I put the signals back but left the gates open as I expected a quick departure. I gave Out of Section and offered on the empties (2 - 2 - 1).

I then made my first mistake of the day. I cleared the signals for the train to depart without checking it was ready to go. It wasn't, so I had to watch helpless as a queue of eight cars built up in Station Road. Luckily Ken Lee of Carriage & Wagon was on hand to go and explain things to the car drivers. The empties finally departed at 11 15.

Then Bradley brought the Vintage set out of No. 1 siding and into the platform, and *Knowle* took water and ran round. The moves were complete by 11 30. A few minutes' respite before it was time to offer on the 11 45 departure and take the token down to the platform. The half hour or so after the 11 45 leaves is the first break you get on this timetable, so on went the kettle for my second mug of tea.

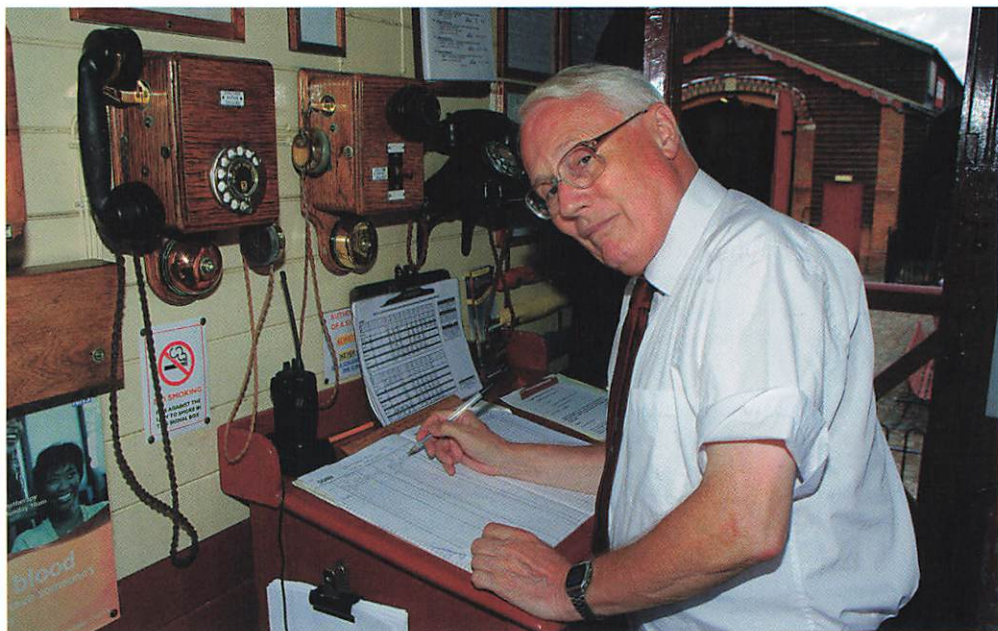
The break was longer than usual, as the 11 43 Bodiam wasn't offered on till 12 17, so it was 12 minutes late off Wittersham (the Rolvenden

Signalman offers on an up train when he gets the In Section from Wittersham). This wasn't entirely surprising, as the Pullman empties were 10 minutes late leaving Tenterden, and further time would have been lost changing engines at Rolvenden, so the "A" set would have had to wait for the Pullman at Northiam.

I told Charles the "A" set was running 12 minutes late, and then realised this would eat into my "lunch break" (I usually eat my sandwiches after the 11 43 Bodiam has come in and the engine has run round), so started my lunch early. I was glad I had because, just before the train arrived, Nick Wellington and Dave Brown came to investigate a problem with the track circuit protecting the points which Philip Crow had reported a few days before. The engines of up trains arriving in the platform detach and go up the headshunt before the Fireman give three rings on the shunt bell to come down the loop to run round. Nick asked me to hold the engine on the dummy while he tested the circuit at the loop end of the points (the engine of a five coach train occupies the track circuit after running round). I had to observe the track circuit indicator in the box to confirm it was responding correctly to what Nick was doing. When he had seen enough, he confirmed I could complete the runround, so I opened the gates, changed the points (no need for the Facing Point Lock in this direction) and cleared No. 11 dummy. When the engine had occupied the track circuit, I put the dummy back and waited for the track circuit to clear before changing the points, engaging the Facing Point Lock and clearing No. 21 dummy to bring it back into the platform.

Nick and Dave then turned their attention to the other end of the track circuit beyond the gates, and established there was no continuing problem. Nick concluded the problem Philip experienced was probably caused by a power failure which had occurred on that day.

It was soon time to offer on the 13 15 departure, which left on time, the loco crew having had a very shortened lunch break. This train crosses the 12 48 Bodiam at Rolvenden so, as soon as I'd acknowledged David's Out of Section for the 13 15, he offered on the up. This arrived at 13 39, giving me time after doing the runround to do



*Roger Temple (Hugh Nightingale)*

some filing in Soweto before offering on the 14 20 departure. Hugh Nightingale returned from photographing *Knowle* and the Vintage set at Northiam, and offered to do the gates for me, signing on duty in the Train Register for that purpose. This helped me get the 14 20 away on time.

From the 14 20 departure to the 15 30 departure, the box is very busy again, as the “B” set crosses the Pullman at Rolvenden, and the Pullman crosses the “A” set at Rolvenden on its way back. The Pullman arrived at 14 45 (seven minutes late), with Paul Beale driving the Norwegian. With Hugh doing the gates, I was able to give Out of Section and offer the down train on in time to give the token to the Fireman as they passed the box on the runround.

Ten minutes is allowed for the runround (it used to be eight). To achieve this, I usually put the gates back immediately after arrival, open them for the runround and leave them open for the departure. I usually wait a couple of minutes before clearing the signals, to give them time to couple up and, more importantly, give Meg Gooch time to cross

the line before the train departs. After a hard slog in a hot kitchen, she deserves not to be kept waiting! This time there was no sign of Meg, but there was a solitary car waiting to cross, so I unlocked the gates and asked Hugh to open them briefly before I cleared the signals.

For some reason the Pullman was in no hurry to go, but it eventually left at 15 00 (12 minutes late). This delayed the “A” set, which arrived at 15 22 (17 minutes late). I gave Out of Section and offered the 15 30 straightaway. That was my last runround of the day, and the train departed at 15 35, only five minutes late. Time for the next mug of tea, as the Vic set was not due back till 16 12, after which it’s all go till close of work. It arrived at 16 27.

When I give Out of Section for this train, the Rolvenden Signalman often offers the Pullman empties soon after, but not this time. *Knowle* had shunted the Vintage set to No. 1 siding and come down the Loop and still the Pullman empties hadn’t left Wittersham. The booked move is for the “B” set engine to go down immediately on arrival of the Pullman empties, so I like to have it



waiting on the Loop dummy so that I can get it away without putting the gates back. This is one of my “party pieces.” When the empties arrive, I work up the frame, putting signal nos. 22 and 21 and the FPL back and reversing the points before going to the block instrument, replacing the tablet, giving Out of Section, offering on the light engine, getting the tablet out, clearing the Loop dummy and the section signal and giving the tablet to the Driver as he passes the box. The timetable allows two minutes for this move, but I have sometimes done it in seventy seconds when everyone else involved is on the ball.

On this occasion, the late running of the empties meant I wasn't able to demonstrate this to the three eager young future Junior Trainee Signalmen who had made a surprise visit just after the Vic set arrived. Instead I phoned David at Rolvenden (who was the Controlling Signalman) to get his permission to change the booked sequence and send the light engine down before the empties came up. David agreed to this and told me the empties were still at the Wittersham Up Home signal owing to a lineside fire at the summit, so I offered the engine on, changed the road and cleared the signals for *Knowle* to leave at 16 47.

The Pullman empties eventually arrived at 17 13. This meant it was too late to get the Pullman engine back to Rolvenden before the last return of the “A” set, which arrived at 17 30. The “A” set was booked to berth in the platform, so we coupled the engines up in the loop and got them both away at 17 37.

From this point, the day winds down very quickly. I locked the gates after the engines had gone through. Clare Walker, the Cranbrook Road Crossing Keeper, phoned to book off duty once the engines had passed her. I engaged the Derailer to protect the stock in the platform, put a reminder appliance on the Up Main Home signal lever (to remind the Signalman the next morning that he would have to bring the “A” set light engine in on the Calling-On signal) and had a quick sweep-up before David sent me the Out of Section from Rolvenden, which I acknowledged before calling attention and sending the Box Closing signal (7-5-5). Finally I pulled the Closing Switch out

and signed off duty in the Train Register before locking the box and going home.

*If you think you'd enjoy doing this sort of work and would like to join the next Signalman Training course, we'd like to hear from you. Please contact Tony Ramsey, the Assistant Signalling Inspector who looks after Trainee Signalmen and Crossing Keepers. His email address is ant.ramsey@gmail.com.*

## Marketing and Events – *Jemma Hosmer*

Day Out With Thomas in September was extremely popular due in no small part to the glorious late summer sunshine. We welcomed 2700 visitors with ticket revenue just short of £38k. To better suit the target age group, we redesigned the day, running between Tenterden and Rolvenden, which enabled visitors the opportunity to enjoy more than one trip. We introduced an under-fives soft play area, booking two inflatables and for the first time, introducing characters Rusty & Dusty whose stage shows and interactive platform scenarios resulted in superb feedback from staff and visitors alike.

The appearance and functionality of websites is often discussed; earlier this year the decision was taken to rebuild the site. It will have the same address but will adapt in scale to be visible on every type of device.

The Austin Counties Car Rally in was very well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all. This gives us encouragement to proactively increase the number of such events in 2016. Should you know of any family or friends that are involved in vehicle or specialist interest groups that would enjoy our venue and facilities please do get in touch. Email: [jemma@kesr.org.uk](mailto:jemma@kesr.org.uk)

For 2016 in the summer months (subject to timetable approval) we will be introducing real ale trains, whilst in August initiating a new Food Festival. The idea is to host a local produce day in August – watch this space!

Filming and photo shoots in recent months include Hidden Villages with Penelope Keith on More4, Hornby Trains Sound Recording, Album Cover for ‘Squeeze’, BBC Radio Kent and Purl Alpaca Designs Photo Shoot.

# The Northiam Christmas Nightmare

And now a fun piece appropriate to the season by Andrew Morris...

The fog had started to form as the last up train to Tenterden stood at Northiam waiting impatiently for the gates to open and the right away to be given. It had been a long, cold day entertaining the children on the Santa Specials. Everyone had enjoyed themselves but now the winter chill was beginning to bite the crew of 65 just wanted to get the engine back to Rolvenden.

Everyone felt it to a certain degree. The eeriness of the Station and surrounding valley made hair stand up on the back of the neck of some, while others seemed to sense something strange in the air. The fog swirled round the engine, made thicker by the steam being emitted by the loco and steam heat pipes. The lights of station and carriages cast a gloomy light in the early evening darkness, exaggerating the shadows. It was more like Halloween than Christmas.

Finally the gates were open and it seemed even before the signal cut its way through the fog to show the way was clear the engine was straining to escape from the station. The Stationmaster blew his whistle and the guard showed his green lamp. The shrill whistle of 65 sounded like the scream of a soul lost in the dark and echoed around the valley as the regulator was yanked open. The hiss of steam from the cylinder cocks and the beats from the chimney heralded the departure of the last Santa Special of Christmas Eve.

As the train rumbled into the distance the crossing keeper came back onto Northiam platform and met the Stationmaster. Whenever the two worked together it was tradition that they both had a cup of tea after the last train.

"That fog picked up a bit before that train went didn't it!" Remarked the crossing keeper as he took the hot tea from the Stationmaster.

"Gives it atmosphere I suppose. Seems to be clearing now though," Replied the Stationmaster. It was true, the fog was lifting, although a little

lingered. "But it seems to be following the train!"

All of a sudden it grew so cold and silent that it made the two men shudder violently.

"Look at this mate!" The Station Master held his mug upside down, the liquid inside frozen almost instantly. But something had already taken the crossing keeper's gaze, and as the sense of fear spread across his face the Station Master sought out what could be causing it.

As they looked out over the fields towards Newenden and Wittersham Road in the gloom they saw the outline of a large black horse. Astride the beast's back sat a man wearing a cape, and a tricorn hat like something out of movies about Dick Turpin. It seemed to have materialised from nothing, the horse and rider looking frozen in time. The two men felt uneasy as they watched the still figure.

"Do you see that?" asked the crossing keeper, unable to break his gaze from the figure. The stationmaster couldn't speak. He'd heard of a legend but being a rational man he never thought was true. Yet here it seemed to be, in front of his very eyes.

A terrifying, blood curdling scream shattered the silence. The outline of the beast reared up and the two men heard the sound of a gunshot and a whinnying as a flash came from the figure on horseback as if it had fired a pistol into the air. The horse dropped back onto all fours and galloped off in the direction of Wittersham road; the clatter of hooves and shouts from the man on the back of the beast meeting the ears of the two terrified railwayman. Both the men dropped the cups on the platform and ran to their cars; tearing out of the gate. The signalman, who had seen none of the episode in the field was highly annoyed that he had to lock the station up too, he had things to do on Christmas Eve!

On the footplate of 65 the mood was light, despite



the crew being tired. The driver was working her a little harder as it was home time. The beats from the chimney were loud and fast as they approached Hexden Bridge. Not now having to slow down for the speed restriction should give a better run up Witt Road Bank, but the driver was being cautious as the fog wrapped itself round the train like a blanket. He could barely see ahead but through years of experience he knew where he was.

"Its gone ice cold in 'ere," the Fireman shouted across the cab to his mate over the roar of 65's exhaust. He went to pour a drink of the freshly made tea he had prepared at Northiam from his billy can.

He looked inside... The tea was frozen! "What the! Look at this!" He went over to his driver to show him.

"Ha you poor thing, have to wait till back in the mess now," The Driver laughed, taking his eyes off the track for a few seconds, until, over the roar of engine a loud whinnying brought his gaze back to the track. On the farm crossing before Hexden there stood the large black beast, with the figure of what now could be recognised as a highwayman on its back not 30ft away from the train that was thundering towards them. The pair seemed to emit an eerie white light and the driver saw the figure raise its arm, an old style flintlock pistol pointing straight at the engine as a booming voice shouted over all the other noises "STAND AND DELIVER!".

There was no time to stop. The driver shut off and slammed on the brakes, all the while sounding 65s whistle, but it was too late. The figure looked straight into the eyes of the two enginemen and gave a crazy laugh as 65, her whistle still screaming, slammed straight into him. Instead of a thud a bright white light filled the firebox and as the engine was still being push forward by the weight of the coaches the head of the spectral horse and the entire highwayman burst into the cab. As it did there was a loud unsettling laugh as the highwayman passed into the bunker. The crew saw the coaches lights go off and on as the train continued through the spectres body. They could hear screaming coming from the coaches as the

highwayman made his appearance in each coach, but it was only the adults screaming, none of the children seemed to notice anything. The guard, shocked by all the commotion stood rooted to the spot as the spectre passed through the brake van and out of the closed vestibule door of *Petros*.

When the train finally stopped the crew clambered down and ran to the back of the train to meet the guard. They stood watching the highwayman who was still stood on the bridge, cackling at the terror he had caused. Then the spectre spoke.

"I told you lawman, you will never take me alive!" and with wild eyes he raised his pistol and fired once more, straight at the halted train. His horse reared up once again, another blood curdling cry, and both man and beast jumped into the river below, where they promptly vanished. By the time the train was back at Tenterden the passengers had forgotten their encounter with the Highwayman, but it lingered long in the minds of the staff present that night.

Legend has it that this disturbing spectre is that of James Maxton, a local Highwayman who, on a foggy Christmas Eve 1756, finally ran out of luck. Hunted by the local magistrate and his men he took his final ride from Northiam village to where Hexden Bridge now stands on a road that no longer exists. With nowhere to run he faced his pursuers who charged at him with a coach. He stood his ground but the coachman lost his nerve and swerved off to avoid a collision and toppled the coach, leaving only the magistrate and one other man alive. The highwayman shouted at the lawman that they would never take him alive, shot the magistrate dead and jumped into the river, hoping to get out further down. His and his horse's body were found a day later by a farmer.

No one knows what triggers the spectre's return to once again try and escape his pursuers, and to maybe take one last haul to the grave. No one knows why most people forget him or why he is not visible to children, but if you are in the area, on the evening of Christmas Eve, especially near the bridge; listen for the sound of hooves, or check your drink, as if its frozen, you are about to meet James Maxton.

## 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 form at (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*.

## The Kent & East Sussex Railway Company Limited

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*(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)*

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### Patron

Christopher Awdry

Details of Directors below were correct at the time of going to press.

These will change following the AGM on 14th November.

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Ian Legg (Acting Chairman);  
Geoff Crouch, Jamie Douglas,  
Derek Dunlavy, Paul Hutchinson,  
Brian Janes, Paul Jessett, Ken Lee,  
Carol Mitchell, Philip Shaw

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*(A wholly owned subsidiary)*

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