



JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

Tenterden Terrier



SUMMER 2016
Number 130

Editor:

Nick Pallant

Assistant Editor:

Hugh Nightingale

Editorial Assistants:

Bradley Bottomley

Jon Edwards

Ian Scarlett

Layout & Design:

Jon Elphick

Consultant:

Tom Burnham

Editorial Office:

Tenterden Town

Station

Tenterden

TN30 6HE

E-mail:

nick@kesr.org.uk

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

ISSN 0306-2449

© Copyright Kent & East Sussex Railway Company Limited 2016

Printed by
Hastings Printing Company Ltd.
St Leonards-on-Sea TN38 9BJ

FRONT COVER

K&ESR No. 19 Norwegian celebrating 20 years of twinning with the CFBS at the 2016 Festival de la Vapeur.

(Michael Bunn)

BACK COVER

32670 in a delightful light railway setting on the occasion of The Terrier Trust 21st Anniversary on 4th June.

(Ian Scarlett)



Refitting the arm to the water crane at Northiam on 1st March.

(Alan Crotty)

Tenterden Terrier

Contents

Editorial	3
The Colonel Stephens Society in Focus	4
Lineside News	
Commercial	6
Rolling Stock	8
Operating	9
Motive Power	10
Groups & Associates	12
Obituaries	16
Ready for Robertsbridge	18
Northiam Tea Room	19
Flash! Bang! Wallop! What a Picture!	20
Book Review	22
300 Club Winners	23
Gallery – Ford in Traffic	24
People in Profile	26
The Baie de Somme Railway Tenth Steam Festival	28
Railway Experience Days	35
Reading Between the Lines	41
Early Memories of the K&ESR	45

Editorial

It Takes All Sorts

Somewhere in the distant past a former Chairman said that railway enthusiasts tend to be intolerant. It may be true that ordinary human shortcomings are certainly to be found on the K&ESR but, generally speaking, we seem to be not too bad. Over a good many years it has appeared to me that we do rather better than a local authority I used to work for and which prided itself on a wedge of policies dealing with such matters. These thoughts came to mind when reading the obituaries which sadly we have to publish in this issue. Although two of the tributes are to people who did similar volunteer jobs, the

individuals concerned were three distinctly different personalities and represented three different approaches to supporting the Kent & East Sussex Railway. All of these were equally valid; a railway is a complex organisation, and I like to think we are good at finding something for everyone and accepting people for what they are. The K&ESR has long been known for being friendly and welcoming. Long may it continue – may we never have a small range of ‘acceptable’ stereotypes lurking beneath a ‘correct’ surface!

Nick Pallant

Owing to space considerations it has not been possible to include an article in the ‘Next Generation’ series in this issue. It is hoped to publish another of these popular articles in November.



No.32670 entering Tenterden Town station with the last train of the day on Saturday 12th September 2015.

(Geoff Silcock)

The Colonel Stephens Society in Focus

Colonel Holman Fred Stephens – promoter, engineer, locomotive superintendent and director of light railways – was born in 1868 and died in 1931. He was connected in one or more of these capacities with 17 railways, both standard and narrow gauge, in England and Wales, and was the foremost developer of lines under the provisions of the Light Railways Act, 1896. His approach was tough and innovative, introducing pioneering railmotors and doing all he could to avoid costs and raise revenue. His lines, especially in later years, ran on a shoestring; but, as Brian Janes says in his booklet *Colonel Stephens – A Celebration* (2006): “at least they did run and provided real benefit to their communities”. Priced at £3.50 this remains in print and is available from either the Shop or the Museum at Tenterden.

The Society began in the classic manner with a letter in the railway and model railway press inviting those with an interest in the railways of Colonel Stephens to help set up a society devoted to the man and his works. A newsletter of three A4 pages was sent in April 1985 to those who replied.

At first no subscription was required. If you wanted to receive the newsletter, you simply sent enough stamps for a year's worth of the publication – a method in harmony with the Colonel's frugal management approach. In due course modest annual subscriptions were charged, and even now they are at the low figure of just £10 a year. The newsletter was renamed *The Colonel* with the second issue in June 1985 and the format was revised to the current A5 size (the same as the *Tenterden Terrier*). Typical issues in those days consisted of 12 or 16 pages of typescript, some excellent drawings and a few rather murky photographs. Thirty years and 120 editions later, each issue of *The Colonel* consists of 32 pages, with good illustrations including some in colour. There was some scepticism in the early years about the continued availability of interesting material, given the length of time since the Colonel's death; but this has, so far, not proved to be the case.

Interest in Stephens and the railways associated with him seems greater than ever. Several of the railways he engineered or managed are now thriving as heritage lines – the K&ESR, the

Ffestiniog and the Welsh Highland, for example. Others, such as the Ashover, are the subject of ambitious revival projects, while excitement mounts as the restoration of the link between Bodiam and Robertsbridge gets closer.

Substantial books on such lines as The Selsey Tramway, the East Kent, the K&ESR (said to be his favourite line) and the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire have been published in recent years, with more believed to be in the pipeline.

Several superb representations of the Colonel's lines in model form are on the exhibition circuit, including scale models of both Selsey Town and Rolvenden, as well as two stations on the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway. Others are based on planned lines – such as Rye Town and Hadlow – forming ‘might have been’ essays. Kits of relevant locomotives, railmotors and rolling stock are increasingly available. There are even a few ready-to-run models coming onto the market, including a delightful 7mm scale model (O Gauge) of K&ESR Terrier *Bodiam* in early blue livery, and, before long, a 4mm scale model of the ex-L&SWR Adams Radial as No.5 of the East Kent Railway.

Les Darbyshire, long-serving outgoing Chairman of the Society, explained the appeal: “The



Bill Simpson, author of the history of the Brill Branch, explaining the remains of the branch existing at Wood Siding, 21st May 2016.

(Ross Shimmion)



LBNGR Baldwin 4-6-0T No. 778 admired by CSS members at Page's Park, 20th May 2016. (Ross Shimmon)

railways of HF Stephens were (and in many cases still are) very diverse in character, but united by the ethos of providing a real service at minimum cost. The Society similarly has a membership with diverse interests, ranging from those researching the history of the Colonel's lines, through those who contribute to present-day preservation activities, to those whose interest is primarily in modelling. We think that, like the Colonel himself, we provide a good service at minimum cost."

In addition to publishing *The Colonel*, the Society:

- Organises special events to mark such occasions as the 75th anniversary of the Colonel's death and the centenary of the opening of the extension to the Rye & Camber Tramway.
- Contributes funds towards the purchase of artefacts for the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum at Tenterden, which has an enormous collection of fascinating exhibits – and admission is now free! Indeed if you want to know more about Stephens, the man and his works, then this is the best place to start.
- Donates modest sums to a number of important restoration projects. In the past this has included the Ffestiniog archives, restoration of locomotives (such as K&ESR's *Bodiam* and the Welsh Highland's *Russell*), and the building of a replica of a characteristic Ford railmotor by one of our members, the late

Colin Shutt. Later this year this iconic vehicle will be transferred to Tenterden to be cared for by the Museum.

- Provides a representative to sit on the Museum's committee.
- Makes available for sale at low prices the drawings prepared by Les Darbyshire, available via our informative website www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk – where membership details can also be found.
- Has developed the annual general meetings into enjoyable members' weekends, visiting Stephens-related railways and sites.

Our most recent event was this year's members' weekend, based at the Leighton Buzzard Narrow Gauge Railway where we saw and rode behind ex-WD Baldwin 778. The Society contributed towards its restoration. The reason? Well, because the Colonel acquired several of these engines to work on three of his lines.

The next day we all met at Quainton Road for a popular element of our gatherings: a vintage bus tour of the route of a disused railway. This time we followed the remains of the Brill Branch, once operated by the Metropolitan Railway. Our bus was, appropriately, an LT Routemaster. The connection is, however, a little more tenuous than most – Stephens was apprenticed to the Metropolitan Railway in 1888!

Ross Shimmon

Lineside News

Compiled by
Hugh Nightingale

COMMERCIAL

Chairman's Statement – *Jamie Douglas*

Quite a brief update; there is much going on at the moment, but not a lot that can be reported.

The first two months of the season have been a mix of fortunes. Easter was broadly successful, despite the storm which passed through on the Sunday night doing its best to disrupt Monday's service! Well done to all those involved in keeping the show running – it goes to show yet again that we can overcome all kinds of difficulties and deliver the train service for our guests.

Overall, however, trading is behind where we really need it to be at this point in the year and I really can't emphasise enough how important it is that we turn this around to avoid having to further prune back expenditure. We really need all of your help in this; we need ideas, we need support in developing those ideas into actions and we need support in delivering those actions. We need to develop our product into a good value for money day out, which always offers something, so that after our visitors leave they think: "Oh, we didn't have time to see... We must go back again."

It's not all doom and gloom however; there are things already under way which will form the first of many small-scale projects and developments. The first of these has been the decision to convert the building at the back of the forecourt at Tenterden back into a visitor area. Many of you will remember that this building used to be a video theatre and print room where visitors could watch printing presses in action – and escape the weather if necessary.

Over time, the video theatre became a general store room and the print room became the meeting room, meaning that – aside from the Station Refreshment Room and the Shop – there was nowhere on the platform side of the site for our guests to be entertained when no train was in the platform. Dave Hazeldine has led a project to install a coin-operated model railway in the old print/meeting room, and around the walls we intend to put up some interpretation boards to tell patrons our story. When all this is finished it will be well worth a visit.

This is just the start of our journey towards improving the overall Guest Experience, but we need all of you to help us!

Company Secretary – *Nick Pallant*

The Board has appointed Philip Clark-Monks as Company Secretary Designate with the intention that he will formally take over in the autumn.

This will hopefully allow for a smooth handover, with Phil gradually taking on the duties – he is already responsible for the Board minutes. For the time being correspondence should continue to be addressed to me.

Phil is a K&ESR member of long standing who has recently moved back to the area. Those with long memories may remember that he previously held the post of Company Secretary during 1995/96 and that his late wife Angela ran the Gift Shop on Tenterden Town Station for some years. Their son Adrian is of course both a professional railwayman and a K&ESR driver.

We also welcome Kevin Bulled to the Board of Colonel Stephens Railway Enterprises. As members may know, it is necessary for one Director of our Trading Subsidiary to not also be a K&ESR Trustee and Kevin, who is a volunteer on the Pullman, is fulfilling this role. Incidentally, we have spelt his name correctly; originating from the same part of Devon he may possibly be distantly related to the famous (Bulleid) railway family.

Tickets Please

It has come to light that Pullman passenger numbers were not included in the 'Tickets Please' article published in the Spring issue of the *Tenterden Terrier*. The figure for the Pullman was 3,198, bringing the grand total for 2015 to 80,119, against 83,886 in 2015.

Shop Report – *Craig Tyler*

The retail department has had an average start to 2016 in terms of trading. February's Thomas provided an average spend of £4.42 per passenger over both weekends. At the time of writing the figures for the 1940s event are not available, and will therefore be included in the next edition of Lineside News.

The process of expanding our local produce selection is under way. Visitors will see a larger variety of jams, preserves and pickles, plus the addition of four new cider products from East Sussex. Following the 1940s weekend, an expanded range of Robert Opie items will be available with a number of new lines arriving shortly.

It is with great sadness that I write to inform the departure of two long-standing volunteers – Hazel Chaney and Jackie Davies. We wish them both all the best for the future and thank them for their tremendous input over the past years. Keeping with staffing, we welcome Gayna Mills and Kathy Dewey to the department; both will volunteer at Tenterden. However, your assistance is needed. We are always looking for new volunteers to help us, so if you have a little spare time, get in touch and join today.

I'd like to extend my ongoing thanks to all the shop staff for their hard work and dedication.

Catering – André Freeman

As our relationship with organisations within the locality continues to develop, so does the range of educational functions we now accommodate. In April we were delighted to host a training session in association with the Dementia Friendly Communities programme. This aims to create small communities around the UK that make daily activities easier for people living with dementia. As a result, the Station Refreshment Rooms now hosts the 'Just the Ticket Memory Café' every Friday from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Around 100 people gathered to witness the official opening by KCC's Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services. Cutting a cake to mark the event, we became one of the first businesses in the town to be officially recognised as dementia friendly. Other regular meetings include 'Café Scientifique', where monthly talks on an incredibly diverse range of subjects are offered – from keyhole surgery to paint technology!

The majority of our customers remain K&ESR passengers however, and we continue to explore opportunities for enhancement wherever possible. The introduction of afternoon teas has generated positive feedback, and certainly helps to fill some of the troughs in daily trading.

Our first Real Ale Train ran on 3rd June and attracted a good number of customers. The logistics of providing a hot meal for over 100 passengers – without the benefit of any form of kitchen or suitable heating facility onboard –

proved rather interesting, but the positive result demonstrated that innovation can overcome. This was also our first real test of the online sales booking system. Resulting sales data is currently less than straightforward to extract, but we can finally offer a limited range of products direct via our new website.

During the Members Day in March, Pullman Car *Aries* was made available for viewing at Tenterden Town Station, coupled to *Theodora* and *Barbara*. Photographic display boards were manufactured, detailing the history of *Aries* and its use by the Royal Family during the 1950s, together with a table, complete with four Pullman armchairs, seemingly set for service. To our surprise, quite a number of visitors expressed a desire to reserve the table for dinner! The story subsequently appeared in the local press and on ITV.

The Wealden Pullman was pleased to welcome members of The Pullman Society on the occasion of their AGM during May. Arrangements were again made for *Aries* to be transferred to Tenterden and opened for viewing. Considerable interest was forthcoming and we look forward to working with Pullman Society members as the restoration project progresses. Members then sampled an evening of our hospitality and we were delighted to learn that our service was felt to be the most befitting of the Pullman name.

After 35 years Colin Duncan has regrettably found it necessary to hang up his Pullman Attendant jacket for the last time. Colin joined K&ESR after moving to the area, having previously worked at two other well-known heritage railways. Whilst nosing about the station, he casually let slip to the Pullman Manager at the time that he had worked in the hospitality trade. That was enough to ensure that Colin was roped in to work that very same evening aboard the Wealden Pullman – as the Chef! Finding that he was in the company of like-minded 'characters', he never looked back and devoted an enormous amount of time and energy to furthering the Wealden Pullman specifically and K&ESR in general. Popular with our younger staff and visitors alike, his uncanny ability to captivate passengers of every age with his nonsensical stories has become the stuff of legend.

Although retired from Wealden Pullman duties, Colin has indicated his wish to continue to provide occasional assistance in the refreshment rooms at Tenterden, where his love for the dishwashing machine is equally unfathomable...

Rolling Stock – Nick Pallant

Mark I's

BSO No.73 (BR No.9269) and CK No.86 (BR No.7927) have both been into the carriage shed at Tenterden for 18-month examinations as well as other work. Interior woodwork has been re-varnished and upholstery repaired on No.73, and a replacement door has been fitted to No. 86.

The overhaul of No.64 continues to progress, with the long job of interior varnishing drawing to a close. The remaining Headcorn-end plate work has been installed, but the general fitting out of this much-rebuilt area remains to be done, including the fitting of new passenger doors at that end. Both bogies have been overhauled and replaced under the coach. Peter Bolton continues with his meticulous preparation and undercoating of the sides and ends, and Paul Bridger has been seeing to the detailed painting of items below the sole bar, which makes for a smart underframe.

We have a couple of spare Mark I bogies, and one is presently being cleaned up and overhauled in the shed as availability of labour permits.

Vintage coaches

The Great Eastern Brake (K&ESR No.81) has returned to service, this time in LNER chocolate livery. This works surprisingly well, the overall effect being highlighted by Meg Gooch's superb signwriting. Work on District No.100 continues, and sponsorship is being sought for this project. The most recent items to receive attention are the windows. It might not be obvious but, due to this vehicle's somewhat varied history (including decades as a shed), the window apertures are all slightly different! Our glazing supplier was able to cope with this, although Ken Lee later asked not to be disturbed while he tried to match what we received with what he had ordered! Pullman Car *Aries* has been up to Tenterden a couple of times in connection with fundraising for its restoration, the second occasion providing an opportunity to assess the work which will need to be done. Please see separate report.

Goods vehicles

We found workshop space for LMS box van No.138 for a week beginning 9th May when owner Jon Colwell arrived from Lancashire to personally undertake roof repairs following storm damage in the early part of the year. These

were successfully accomplished and the van is now again available for demonstration freight trains. Work on Medfit No.158 is nearing completion; this wagon now having been repainted, at the time of writing it awaits the finishing touches. Dogfish hopper wagon No.154 continues to make gradual progress. As reported in the Spring *Tenterden Terrier*, the work required is extensive.

Help to other groups

The Class 14 has also been in the shed for a number of ailments to be remedied, and we have been pleased to find space for work on this more than useful locomotive.

Pullman Car *Aries* – John Wheller

Following two successful public viewings of our Pullman Car, plans are now under way to commence the restoration of *Aries* to enable it to return to revenue-earning service. As a long-time member I have agreed to take on the role to 'Volunteer Lead' the project, along with Life member Andy Hopper. Before retirement Andy was a surveyor, while I was a civil engineer working for construction companies, mainly in Kent. We both volunteer in C&W and have been working on Mark I No.64.

Aries is programmed to come into the shed in mid-summer upon the return to traffic of No.64 following its 18-month major rebuild. The first task will be to carry out a detailed survey and commence stripping the rusting steel sheet to the body sides and roof. This will determine exactly how it was constructed, and the condition of its timber framing. Andy took advantage of the recent visit to the Pullman dock to carry out a preliminary survey that indicated a welded sheet construction screwed to the timber framing. The sheeting will need to be removed carefully by unscrewing hundreds of rusty wood screws (the first job of many –Ed) and to this end we are looking for volunteers to work on this project, which once complete will enable the railway to run a complete Pullman rake on the Wealden Pullman.

If you would like to help, no matter what your skills are, please contact me, John Wheller, (john.wheller63@gmail.com) or Andy Hopper (thehoppers@hotmail.com) or meet us in the shed any Wednesday. You will be most welcome to join this fascinating project.

Signalling Department – *Tony Ramsey*

We began the year in relaxed fashion with an excellent post-Christmas lunch in the Tenterden Town Refreshment Rooms. We extend our sincere thanks to the members of the Catering team for enabling this most enjoyable occasion.

We congratulate Lesley Lee, who recently qualified as a Signaller at Tenterden Town. We also applaud those who have recently passed out as Crossing Keepers: Mick Beadle and Kevin Goodsell at Cranbrook Road, Mark Singleton and Elliott Waters at Rolvenden, and Martin Skinner at Northiam.

The Railway Rules Working Group is continuing its review of the various Sections of the Rules, Regulations and Instructions. Recently, Sections C, J and T of the Rule Book have been reviewed, and the resulting changes will be implemented in March 2017 following appropriate briefing.

Our ever-inventive and resourceful Training Officer, Joel Pearson, has recently made some places on the annual training course available for those qualified Signallers who would like to refresh particular aspects of their Signalling knowledge. There has been an encouraging response to this helpful initiative.

Finally, the time has come to bid farewell to two of our long-serving Signallers, who have decided it is time to retire. Anthony Cooke has served for 20 years and done approximately 400 turns, while

Rod Spratling has served for 13 years – but has apparently lost count of the number of turns he has done! We thank them both for the huge contribution they have made, and wish them well for the future. We are sorry that, due to ill-health, Richard Smith has had to retire as a Signaller at Wittersham Road but we are delighted that he will be continuing as our Roster Clerk.

Guards Report – *Bradley Bottomley*

With the new Carriage Storage Shed commissioned and regular stock movements required, some Guards' turns have needed to start from Rolvenden to work the ECS up to Tenterden Town: so a reminder to please check your book-on point. The carriages are looking much better and the shed seems to be working well.

We have had three Guards step down from their role in 2016. Alastair Forbes retired because he has moved to Dorset. He originally passed out as a Guard in 1982. Graham Hukins and Richard Potter have also stepped down; Graham passed out in 1986 and Richard in 1992. We thank all three gentlemen for their time and effort over the years in keeping our services moving.

Yet again, we need to plea for help over the next few weeks. If you see a turn you can fill, even for only part of the day, please get in touch with the roster clerk – as we all know from past experience, the summer timetables are the most challenging to staff.



The Ruston diesel shunter seen at Tenterden on 30th May.

(Phil Edwards)



The interior of the workshop at Rolvenden on 29th May.

(Jon Edwards)

Rolvenden MPD – Paul Wilson

Locomotives available for service:

32670 will be withdrawn for overhaul after 31st December.

32678: Replacement of the smokebox front is complete. The rest of the smokebox is thinning and will require replacement at overhaul.

14: On the new-format RXDs *Charwellton* has been performing well and travelling outside the confines of Rolvenden Yard. The blower and steam heat valves required remedial work.

376: With two large locomotives available for service this season, the pressure to use *Norwegian* has reduced compared to the 2015 season. She still does well on the Wealden Pullman train. Recently she made an appearance at the Baie de Somme.

65/30065: Still doing sterling work. She was due to appear at the Tanfield Railway on 11th and 12th June as an NCB shunter...

1638 is back in service and performing well.

Ford diesel: Recent analysis of the engine oil revealed it to be contaminated with antifreeze. This is not a major issue, but the loco is to be stopped shortly for a full service and oil change.

Ruston diesel has recently undergone a six-monthly exam. At the same time some rotten platework under the right hand cab window was replaced.

Locomotives under overhaul:

11 P-Class: The crank axle requires refurbishment, as it is worn out of true where the eccentrics are mounted. The weighbar shaft and motion parts, also very badly worn, are being repaired. New piston heads have been made. The frames have been cleaned of years of grime and dirt and are ready to be painted.

21 Wainwright: The two main steam pipes have been installed; work to fit the covers is under way. The modified draughting system, as fitted to Maunsell, is complete and ready to be fitted. The clack boxes and manifold are fitted, as are a pair of new gauge frames. Installation of the manual cylinder cocks is well advanced.

The laborious task of fitting the cladding continues; this is made more difficult as we have extended the covering of cladding from what existed before, so there are no old bits to use as patterns. A new footplate floor has been drilled to fit and will be installed soon. Finally the cab and tanks are being rubbed down and painted.

23 Holman F. Stephens: Is in store pending shed space for overhaul.

25 Northiam: All riveting and stay work is now complete. The boiler is being prepared for hydraulic test. Once this is done it can be steam tested before refitting to the frames.

6619: In store pending shed space for overhaul. The new smokebox has been completed by 4253 Locomotive Company volunteers, and will now be stored ready for use.

Cranes:

10t Taylor Hubbard is available for service.

36t Ransomes & Rapier: Boiler work is almost complete, and the inner and outer parts of it are soon due to be put back together.

TREATS – Mike Grimwood

DMMU M50971 & 51571: The door locks have been refitted following their return from overhaul at the Severn Valley Railway. The set returned to passenger service at the end of March and has given trouble free service. A small number of items required attention during the fuel point and an A examination..

Class 14 D9504: After returning to service the loco suffered a further setback when it was

discovered that the engine's turbocharger had worked loose, shearing four of its eight mounting bolts. The device was removed and the sheared bolts were drilled out of the engine block.

Following the manufacture of replacement bolts the turbocharger was refitted with new exhaust manifold gaskets and flexible exhaust manifold to the turbocharger joints.

Class 03 D2023: The locomotive is in service and has been in regular use at Tenterden. It has also had a small number of outings to Rolvenden during the railway's two Diesel Days in May..

GWR Railcar W20W – Andrew Webb

The internal fitting-out of the Robertsbridge end cab continues. Plywood panelling for sides, front, back and ceiling of the cab has been fitted, together with their hardwood mouldings as required.

We are checking all parts are available for the 12 sets of window toplights for the passenger sections. These are also being checked for correct function and then burnished and lacquered on the inside. The outside of the toplights will be painted. Our grateful thanks go to Dave Strivens, who painstakingly did so much detailed work, making new and refurbishing all the other parts of the window assemblies.



Valancing on the GWR Railcar.

(Andrew Webb)

Bodiam Group – Robin Dyce

With warmer and drier weather the 'painting gang' has finished the station building and it does look good; brighter, and more welcoming.

Just before Easter the Cavell Van returned from its winter quarters in the new Carriage Storage Shed at Rolvenden. Keeping it out of the weather has made a big difference in maintaining its appearance. However, as always at Bodiam, the return of trains heralds the return of spring, even if our first cuckoo was heard some two weeks later than in 2015. Before the start of the season proper at Easter we had a goodly number of RXDs run to the station. Since then loadings have appeared to be good as well, helped by both coach parties and groups off the boats at Dover.

At long last, having dried out, the car park field is now useable again and, before the grass had to be cut, it had a dense carpet of daisies and buttercups. When spring announces its arrival like that it cheers everybody up. Until recently, because of the bird-nesting season, we weren't able to trim the hedges; but having done so it is surprising what a difference a trim makes to the appearance of the platform. As always the grass has to be cut, plants and gardens tidied up, and growing hops trimmed and tied to the new hop strings – with a lot of farm manure added around the plants, which will help to bring a good harvest of flowers for the Hop Festival in September. The tasks are never ending.

The ditch along the southern boundary of the car park takes a lot of surface water away from the field but still has to be cleared of grass and other plants that we don't want growing in there. As we have so much of it, cutting the grass takes a lot of effort and the 'cutters' are to be applauded for the finished appearance.

New half-barrel planters have been placed along the platform, with new floral displays adding a splash of colour and improving the visitor experience.

For far too long we have been unable to get on with maintaining our platform trolleys, or indeed start rebuilding those that have rotted and fallen apart. However a couple have now recently been rebuilt; finished in the corporate colours they are now displayed on the platform. Four platform seats have also been renovated, some with the SER logo, which has been picked out in gold.

Again, this adds considerably to the heritage ambience of the station.

The first stage of the refurbishment of the interior of the toilets was completed in time for Easter with new self-closing taps, new separate urinals in the gents, a more powerful hand drier in the ladies and all the original equipment in the disabled toilet replaced in stainless steel. But perhaps the biggest change was the replacement throughout of all the fluorescent tube lighting with modern but understated LED units. It certainly cheers the interior up while at the same time reducing our power consumption!

Whilst repainting was in progress the opportunity was taken to try a new colour scheme in the disabled toilet. It now has a maroon coloured dado rail sitting immediately on top of the uppermost white tiles, which have been retained, though reaffixed more securely. The walls above the dado rail have been painted in cream a few shades lighter than that used on the outside of the station buildings. Following positive comments, stage two of the refurbishment will be to extend the new colour scheme into the ladies and gents.

For a number of years we have been relying on a kettle in the kitchen/mess room. We've now fitted a new under-sink water heater. The Bodiam Group also fitted a new under-sink water heater in the buffet at Northiam station. I am pleased to report that both units are working well.

During June the National Trust (NT) at Bodiam Castle organised an exhibition of hopping, and following a request, we were pleased to loan some of our equipment for the displays. We were also able to put the NT in touch with one of our main Hop Festival supporters; he has added some of his artefacts and memorabilia to the displays.

As Pam and Sheila Stevens are to stand down this year from the gardeners' job that they have held for many years, we need somebody, or a number of people, to take on this job. If you at all interested in helping us please see the separate flyer which is included in this mailing to members.

On 23rd April, after a long illness, we lost a very valued member, Chris Crouch, whose obituary appears elsewhere in this edition.

Forestry & Conservation – *Steve McMurdo*

One of the charms of our Railway is its delightful rural location, bordered for much of its length by trees, bushes and general greenery.

This pastoral delight is not without its associated problems, though. One only has to look, for example, at historic photographs of the Northiam to Bodiam stretch prior to reopening to see how quickly nature takes over, creating a virtual jungle in places.

Our role in F&C is thus to strike a balance: keeping our foliage and vegetation under control while retaining (or conserving) an environment in keeping with our theme as a country railway. The wholesale destruction of trees to be seen along many stretches of the main lines in the south east is not something which will be repeated here.

Visibility and safety are of prime importance in deciding what needs to be pruned, cleared or even totally removed. Our crews must have a clear view of the track ahead and users of road, foot or occupation crossings need to be able to see oncoming trains. Any suspect branches or entire trees which might fall and damage the railway's overhead telephone lines or even land on the line itself clearly have to be dealt with.

The improving post-winter weather in recent weeks has made our working conditions a little more comfortable. Water levels and flooding in adjacent ditches are beginning to diminish, wild flowers are becoming visible, and we now have regular passing trains as company once again.

Recent activities have included routine ongoing clearance between Wittersham Road and Newmill Bridge, and also on the lower parts of Tenterden Bank below Cranbrook Road. We usually have up to three chainsaws in operation, supported by hand tools to cut and prune. The resulting debris is then dragged to the bonfire for disposal.

Our fires – in which, incidentally, we take very great pride – do seem to represent an added attraction for a number of passengers on trains going by, but they may rest assured that safety and overall management of all of our work sites is always to the highest level.

We have also been active in the Popes Cottage area near to the delightful Gazedown Wood – readers may recall this area was home some

years ago to a farmed herd of wild boar, which could be seen from the train. The railway has an obligation to fence the line, and the length alongside the former crayfish lagoons and beyond had become somewhat life expired. Contractors were initially enlisted to carry out the installation of the replacement fencing; but prior to their arrival our group carried out the necessary clearance work, thus saving the railway additional costs.

If you like the sound of all this activity, enjoy outdoor life and fancy the opportunity to work in otherwise inaccessible areas of the railway, please contact us at kesr.forestryconservation@gmail.com

Ashford Area Group – *Ted Micklam*

Our visit to the CFBS Fête De La Vapeur was very successful. The journey was unimpeded, the coach comfortable, weather ideal and the company of 83 like-minded people excellent! The CFBS are to be congratulated on putting on another marvellous Fête.

Our indoor programme continues after the summer break with:

21st September: An evening of railway delight as we look forward to our forthcoming visit to the **Froissy Cappy Dompierre Railway**.

19th October: John Rose – videos of the **Bluebell Railway Giants of Steam** gala and the **CFBS Fête de la Vapeur 2016**. Indeed, **GIANTS of VAPEUR!**

16th November: Andy Hardy introduces us to some unusual locomotives. If Andy's presentation on The P2 Project last year is anything to go by, this is not to be missed.

21st December: Mike Jackson presents **Lesser-Known China 1985–2015**. This programme features mainline, industrial, steam, diesel and electric trains.

We are now looking for speakers in 2017. If you have a talk to offer, or a recommendation, please get in touch.

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

Tuesday Group Report – *Graham Hopker*

Having spent a lot of time refurbishing Wittersham Road signal box, we turned our attention to Northiam box. It had not been touched since the Bodiam extension in 2000, but on the face of it it only needed a repaint.

However, on closer inspection, and using Ron Dunn's screwdriver test, extensive rot was discovered on the east-facing balcony side. This discovery led to some fairly extensive cutting out and the insertion of new wood. The balcony did not seem to be supported enough throughout its entire length, so we took the decision to put an additional supporting upright in – a substantial piece of wood 7ft x 5½in x 5½in. In addition to wood replacement, the signal box has been given a complete primer/undercoat/topcoat repaint.

On the main station building at Northiam the guttering has been repositioned on the east side lean-to and connected to the entrance road drainage, in order to try to stop the flooding of the disabled parking area which used to occur during heavy rainfall. We replaced the broken letterbox and repainted the entrance door to the store shed.

We have also carried out some work on the main Booking Office entrance door; firstly, to prevent the wind blowing it open and secondly, to prevent water ingress under the door. This was achieved by fitting a metal weather bar across the threshold and a larger drip strip to the bottom of the door. A new 'Entrance' sign was made and fitted to the door.

Now that late spring/early summer has arrived, regular strimming, hedge-cutting and grass-mowing is required, and there is plenty of this to do at Northiam.

Regular maintenance is needed on the considerable amount of wooden fencing, with concrete post spurs being put in to support fence posts rotting in the ground.

The Tuesday Group has increased during the past few months; we welcomed Steve Carter and Ken Ball to our Group.

Gardening Report – *Veronica Hopker*

Tenterden Town As I write this report we are endeavouring to keep up with the plants, which are struggling to get their heads above ground and battle against the ever-changing temperatures which the weather throws at them.

It has been so cold at night that many were late making an appearance, but with a few days of sun and rain things seem to be catching up.

The hanging baskets have now been planted up and installed around the station building. The tubs will be replanted in a week or two. Unfortunately things are still not ready to be planted out, but everything should have been in place by the middle of June.

I am glad to report that Jan Lelean is progressing well, and hoped to be able to join me again towards the end of June.

The new garden on 'the mound' is maturing, and in a year or two all the plants will have spread and filled the empty spaces.

Rolvenden The tubs on the platform have been planted with lobelia and petunias and, with the watering system switched on, are ready for the summer season..

Northiam Liz Brown and Nell Joint continue to keep the picnic area tidy. They have planted Clematis along the fence and moved the Robinia, which had been in a pot on the platform, to the picnic area where it will fill a corner on the roadside by the fence. The tubs on the platform have been planted up for the season.

The wild flower garden within the Memorial Garden has burst into life. It will be interesting to see exactly what we have; it is full of plants, so we wait to see the flowers. Earlier there were some lovely primroses, so we are looking forward to the remainder of the year.

Members of the Tuesday Group have kindly trimmed the privet hedge which runs the length of the platform. Unfortunately we had lost a few sections of the hedge, but Doug Ramsden has managed to replace these.

The gardens are looking reasonable, but being down to one person at present it may be difficult to maintain this. If there is anyone who would like to join us, even for an hour or two, on a Tuesday, you will be most welcome.

Museum Notes

The 2016 season is notable as our visitors now enjoy free entry. This is intended to enhance the railway experience and increase enjoyment of, and footfall in, the Museum. The improvement is certainly impressive: a four-fold increase in visitor numbers means we have already nearly

equalled the total for last season. To judge from comments in the visitor's book, customer satisfaction has continued at its high level and donations have increased markedly.

The event most anticipated this year is the arrival of the late Colin Shutt's replica Railmotor, which many may recall visited us in 2007. When Colin received a thumbs down following hospital treatment, he contacted us to donate his pride and joy. We could not of course refuse such an important echo of our railway's past and, with the invaluable assistance of the Colonel Stephens Society, readily accepted, much to Colin's delight, shortly before he passed away.

The Railmotor is a working replica made from original Ford Model T parts, and we will be looking for interested and knowledgeable volunteers to keep it that way. It is obviously essential to have a good shelter for this exhibit, and plans are well advanced to erect a suitable shelter next to the C&W shed and Museum. Colin also passed to us a largely assembled second unit, which he had intended to be a replica of the Selsey/SMR rail lorry.

This effort will strain the Museum's finances and manpower, and donations are urgently required to complete everything. So calling all vintage and veteran car enthusiasts... your help is needed, come and enjoy.

Within the Museum building we have added to our collection of railway hand lamps (the third in a year) with one from the Weston Clevedon and Portishead Railway. At the same time we also acquired two guards' whistles; an East Kent Acme whistle (of unusual type) and a police type from the WC&P. All are extremely rare, probably unique, items.

We have also been given a large enamel railway warning notice from the Clay Cross Company – a further important addition which

almost certainly relates to its subsidiary, the Ashover Light.

To improve further the general ambience of the Museum we have erected a large banner behind *Gazelle* with a colour view of Meverley Station



(Brian Janes)

in the autumn of the S&MLR's existence. This enhances the ambience of the Museum hall and hides the ugly, but very necessary, insulation on the rarely opened main doors.

With the increase in the number of visitors we need more assistance to meet and greet our guests. Engaging with our visitors can be a very rewarding experience, so please do consider giving some time towards improving their experience in the Museum.

John Bourne 1927–2016

John Bourne, who died in April at the age of 89, was the last of the 'old gang' – the group of largely retired volunteers who, as the Friends of Northiam, were responsible for the phenomenal success of the station during the 1990s.

His K&ESR service, however, stretched back far beyond Northiam. During the 1970s he played an active part in the reopening of the Tenterden site, focusing his attentions on Wittersham Road during the following decade. However it is his contribution to the running of Northiam station for which he will be best remembered. His principal role was as Station Master, but it was not uncommon to see him working in the booking office or serving in the tea room.

He made a point of attending most special events at the station, where he often displayed his collection of tin-plate and clockwork toys. These have now been entrusted to Bexhill Museum. John was also an avid collector of projection room apparatus and reel-to-reel film. His collection contained many rarities, and was considered one of the most comprehensive in the south-east. It was not left to gather dust: he converted a room in his Bexhill home into a cinema, complete with tilting cinema seats, where he entertained his many friends to weekly film shows.

A modest and unassuming man, he kept his private life just that; few knew that in his twenties he was hand-picked to serve in the Royal Intelligence Corps. Subsequent to that he had a short career as a children's entertainer (he was a member of the Magic Circle). His day job was as a primary school teacher.

As a K&ESR volunteer his plain speaking about

railway affairs did not always buy John popularity. However, each and every one of us who had the privilege of working with him respected him for his consistent and coherent voice of truth. To younger volunteers he was affectionately known as Victor Meldrew to whom, despite his slight build, he bore an uncanny resemblance.

"Listen, lad," he would say, placing his hand on your shoulder (anybody under the age of 50 was a lad.) If you were lucky, he would then deliver a five-minute tirade about precisely what was wrong with the railway. (If you were unlucky, it was ten.) It was very hard to find fault with anything he said, and it was always delivered with a sparkle in his eye and a smile on his face.

His sense of humour was the stuff of legend. It was invariably directed at the individuals who made what he (and indeed many of his contemporaries) considered to be some of the more bizarre decisions about the running of the railway. His hearty guffaw could often be heard resonating about the station site; he could scarcely contain his glee, for example, when somebody stole the bell box from the station alarm.

On another occasion he suggested to me that the prospect of having his ashes scattered at Northiam was quite appealing. This was not through any great affection for the place on his part, but rather in the hope that certain individuals for whom he had little time might attend. With any luck, he mused, a gust of wind would arrive at just the right moment... He was probably only joking, but with John you could never be entirely certain.

Chris Fautley (with thanks to Ross Browning)

'Chris' Crouch 1939–2016

Chris Robert Crouch was born in July 1939 in Tunbridge Wells and was baptised the day that WWII was declared, 3rd September 1939.

He lived with his mum in Hurst Green and was picking hops by the age of 4. In April 1960 he was called up for National Service and served in the Army Pay Corps until April 1962. This was

extended, however, as he had been transferred into the 4th Tank Regiment, stationed in Germany, and was there when the Berlin Wall was built.

He married Sylvia in 1968 and they settled in St Leonards-on-Sea. They moved a couple of times, and finally to Bexhill in 2015. Sons Graham and Martin arrived in 1970 and 1972 respectively.

Chris started work at 17 in British Gypsum's payroll office and received their long-service award in 1981. He retired and turned to his interest in internal combustion vehicles. Firstly he used motorcycles to get around and then bought an Austin A35 – it was so corroded that the jack went through the bodywork the first time it was used! In 1982 the Morris Minor bug bit and Chris bought his first saloon. He had a number of 'Morrys' before turning his attention to 'Travellers', acquiring his well-known cream coloured example in 1990, on which he lavished much care. Chris was a long-time member of the Morris Minor club and he and Sylvia 'travelled' a lot to various rallies around the country.

As far as sport is concerned he played for Etchingham football team but his long-term interest was with Brighton and Hove Albion, the 'Seagulls', where he was a season ticket holder.

In 2006 Chris joined the K&ESR as a volunteer booking clerk at Bodiam. His talents were recognised and in February 2008 he passed out, with flying colours, as a Station Master at Tenterden Town, but he later asked to return to Bodiam station. Back at Bodiam Chris undertook all the platform jobs including Station Master and also joined the Bodiam Group, with whom he looked after the gardens and hop garden as well as the Station Master's garden. He spent many years manning the station gates for the Hop Pickers Weekends and Hop Festival, a position he relished.

Chris had been ill for some two years and, having been hospitalised for much of that time, he died in Conquest Hospital, Hastings on 23rd April. He leaves his Sylvia and their two grown-up sons.

Chris will be greatly missed. He was a first class gentleman.

RKD

Stephen Garrett 1946–2016

Students of the history of the K&ESR and the East Kent Railway will be sad to learn of the death in February of Stephen Garrett. He wrote the very first letter to *The Farmer's Line*, the predecessor of the *Tenterden Terrier*, to which he continued to be a frequent contributor. No less than 55 articles appeared under his name in the first 100 issues. His subjects varied widely, from the former royal carriages, the Colonel's links with the Isle of Wight, the dangerous practice of checking tickets by the conductor riding outside the vehicles, the names that Stephens chose for his locomotives, and the railmotors.

Under the pen name 'Morous' he answered questions on Colonel Stephens in early editions. He was Assistant Editor of the *Terrier* for many years, starting in 1974. He also contributed to *The Colonel*, published by the Colonel Stephens Society, especially to the 'Dispatches' section where his extensive knowledge enabled him to add information or point out errors that had crept into articles or captions including, very occasionally, his own. His very last contribution was published in the Spring 2016 issue, just a few days after his death.

His histories, *The Kent and East Sussex Railway*, (Oakwood, first published in 1972, followed by several further editions) and the two-volume *East Kent Railway* (Oakwood, 2003, with the help of papers collected by M Lawson Finch) bear

witness to his meticulous research and will prove a legacy, as will his fascinating *Colonel Stephens Railmotors*.

He proudly received a certificate on reaching 50 years' continuous membership of the K&ESR in 2012. Stephen donated his research materials and photographs to the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum in 2013, in order to make them available for consultation on request. A long-term member of the Colonel Stephens Society, he regularly attended (with his wife, Anne) the annual members' weekends, when his knowledge was especially appreciated on bus tours of long-closed lines. The current Colonel editor, Albyn Austin, says he will also be remembered for his modest nature and friendly manner.

Stephen received a Law degree from Oxford University but, as Anne has said, he was driven by idealism away from the law, which he considered to be geared towards the privileged. His many colleagues attested to his scholarship in teaching as well as his diplomacy and patience with staff.

He did not enjoy good health in later life, including sight difficulties, but he remained as cheerful as ever. He celebrated his 70th birthday earlier this year. His birthday cake featured a representation of Charwelton, aptly demonstrating his long-term devotion to the K&ESR.

Ross Shimmion (compiled from many sources)

READY for ROBERTSBRIDGE

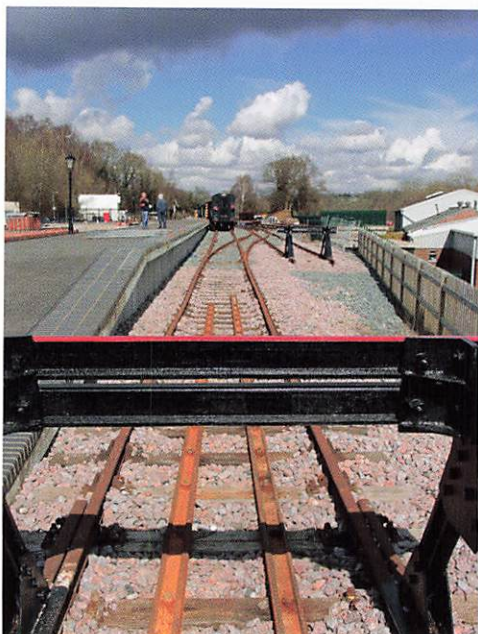


Members will be aware of the appeal, launched in the Winter 2014 issue of this journal, with the intention of assisting the K&ESR to make the necessary improvements to the existing line ready for the day when trains will again run to Robertsbridge. At the April 2016 Board meeting Director for Volunteering Stuart Philips asked on behalf of members that the current state of the appeal appear in the *Tenterden Terrier*.

As at 1st June 2016:

- There was £15,445 in the Restricted Fund
- Gift Aid received and pending amounted to £832.51
- The monthly total of standing orders was £125.00.

The fund is being used to lay the groundwork for projects.



Robertsbridge Junction as seen by members of the Bodiam Group during their recent visit.

(Robin Dyce)



NORTHIAM TEA ROOM

This England magazine (For all those who love our green and pleasant land) has a Finest Tea Rooms Award, for which readers nominate their favourite establishments across the country. To quote from an issue of *This England* published earlier this year:

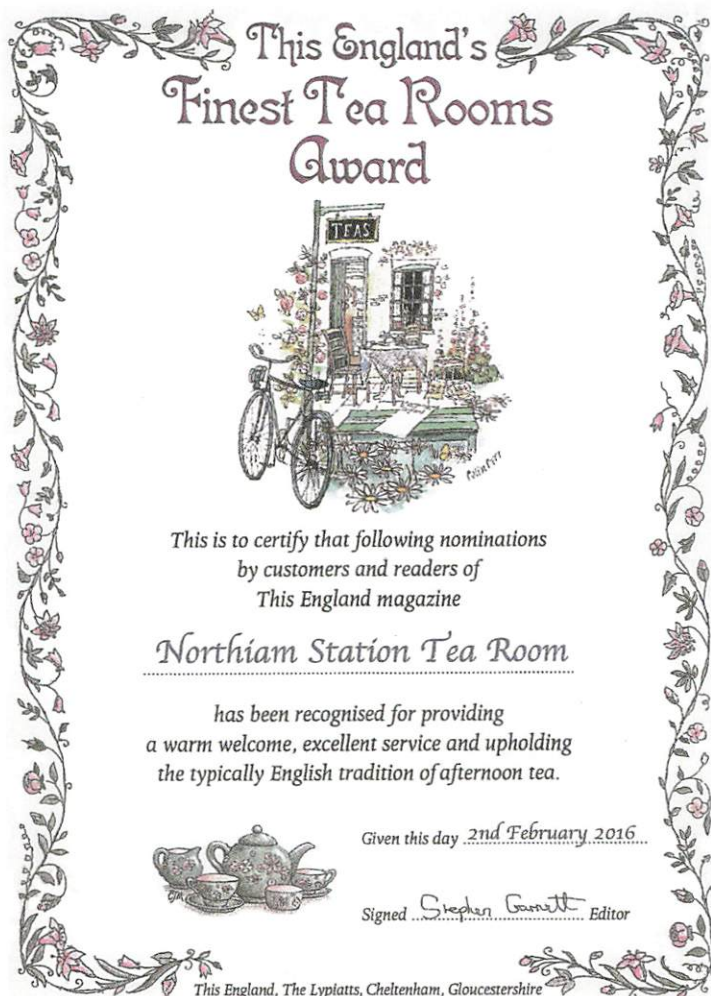
"John Wickham, who lives in Ramsgate, Kent, contacted us about 'a very special tea room'. Northiam Station Tea Room, Kent & East Sussex Railway, sounds just like the sort of place to set you off on the right track – and the perfect location for a 'brief encounter'. [It is] housed in the former station goods office, built more than

100 years ago. John points out: 'Although part of a major heritage attraction, visitors can relax and enjoy delicious teas, cakes, ice creams in this cosy, 'away from it all' tea room.'

"John says that he hopes the tea room appeals to us and other readers too. Well, we can't resist the charm of steam railways and tea, so a certificate will be on its way to Northiam Station – by express train, of course."

(Reproduced with the permission of *This England* magazine; www.thisengland.co.uk)

Well done Northiam Station – and here is the certificate.



FLASH! BANG! WALLOP! WHAT A PICTURE!

"A picture sells a thousand words." Unless it is a national newspaper or high-circulation magazine, it's quite impossible to sell anything to a publication without supporting images – which invariably have to be provided by the author. When I first started writing for a living more than 20 years ago, it was a golden rule I soon learnt.

For me it was no great hardship; I was a keen amateur photographer anyway – and had a rucksack of photographic gear to prove it. So, when the telephone rang one afternoon and I was asked by the railway's Commercial Manager (as the position was then known) if I would like to join a group of professional and semi-professional photographers on a photo shoot, I jumped at the opportunity. I had already had some success selling standalone pictures and articles about the railway, and now the horizon was to be broadened somewhat by having the opportunity to photograph the Victorian train at various locations along the line.

These days, photographers pay not inconsiderable sums of money to charter trains for photographic purposes. Some of the cost is then offset by selling photographs to railway periodicals. To be honest, I've often wondered why we don't have more charters like this on our own line. After all, one of the original light railways, bucolic countryside, locomotives full of character...

Back in 1995 it all worked rather differently. The invitation went out to half a dozen photographers to ride on the Victorian train, which would halt for photographic purposes at various locations. It was all done on a gentlemen's agreement that any photographs could be sold but would also be freely available for the railway's own use. And it seemed to work rather well. What I did not realise was that I was going to be accompanying some of the time's photographic greats, who were regular contributors to the railway press. Thus I was already out of my depth before we started.

The shoot had been arranged for a Tuesday morning in the middle of the summer holidays. As the train would be required for public service by 11.00am, I was instructed to be at Rolvenden for a 6.30am departure. "Best time of the day;

the light will be lovely," I kept telling myself – attempting to mitigate a 5.15 departure from home. It had already been a long, hot summer (as witnessed by rather too many lineside fires), with day after day of unbroken sunshine. Until, that is, the day of the photo-shoot, which dawned grey and two dimensional. Hardly the best conditions for photography.

The train, with *Norwegian* at the head, was already waiting at Rolvenden when I arrived, together with a band of hardy volunteers who would be coming with us. Their task was to act as passengers and lean out of the windows smiling and waving at the appointed time. Thus on an increasingly gloomy day we set off down the line.

We stopped at all the usual locations: alongside Newmill Channel, Wittersham Road, Hexden Bridge and the like. Which is when you appreciate exactly how difficult it is clambering down to ground level with a rucksack of photographic equipment from a vintage coach in the middle of nowhere. Having done that, there were invariably ditches, brambles and barbed-wire fences to be negotiated. And the cowpats; let's not forget the cowpats. All in the name of what I hoped were to be some epic photographs.

Unfortunately, though, the weather was not going to play ball. If anything, it just became gloomier and gloomier. "I'm managing to get 1/250th," I enthused to one of my fellow photographers as I frantically twiddled at the camera's shutter speed dial. He looked at me rather pityingly. Nevertheless the volunteers waved and cheered through the windows, and the footplate crew dutifully produced clouds of soot-black smoke when requested. A good time was had by all, and we arrived back at Tenterden in good time for the train to enter public service. Which was when I thought I could see another photo opportunity.

Being quite tall, the up home and distant signal (which you can easily see from the platform at Tenterden) would, I figured, make a fine vantage point for some pictures. Better still, there was a platform at the top on which I could stand. I mentioned it to the Commercial Manager, and we squared it with the signaller. "I'll pull the signal off gently," he said, reassuringly. At the time, this

struck me as rather strange: I was hardly likely to be standing astride the signal arm, I thought.

So it was that I trekked down the line. When you're standing at its base, the signal suddenly seems quite formidably tall; too tall, for sure, to get myself and a rucksack of photographic gear safely to the top. Hence that was left at the signal's base. With camera round my neck and spare lens stuffed in my pocket, I gingerly clambered to the top. I seem to recall that actually getting from the ladder onto the signal platform was the difficult bit, but I eventually met with success. At least, I thought that was the difficult bit. I'm usually OK-ish with heights, but the *really* difficult bit was keeping steady at the top, and holding the camera with both hands while looking through the viewfinder. In other words, not holding onto anything. And for good measure, the signal gave the impression of swaying somewhat. This, I reasoned, was quite normal; things just seemed slightly more exaggerated at the top. I also came to appreciate the signalman's earlier remark. A violent pulling of the signal would probably have startled me, with possibly catastrophic consequences.

I did, however, take some good images. The only downside was that the entire approach to the signal appeared as if it had been subjected to some sort of crash-and-burn episode. Lineside fires during the dry summer had taken their toll; it was hardly verdantly green and photogenic. Nevertheless I had a couple of pictures published from the day and, within the terms of the gentleman's agreement, one appeared in the following year's timetable. It was certainly worth the early start, and one of

those pictures did indeed sell a thousand words.

That same year I suggested to the editor of a well-known railway magazine that he might like to carry a photo-feature titled 'Behind the Scenes on the Wealden Pullman'. He agreed to take a look at the piece 'on spec'. If he liked it and it fitted in with the magazine's plans, then he'd take it; if not, it's thank you and goodbye.

I made arrangements with the Commercial Manager to ride on an evening train – again on the understanding that the railway would have free access to my pictures. The plan was to tell the story of a typical Pullman service: the preparation beforehand, the guests' arrival, the journey and the final goodbyes. Some of this was more difficult than I initially envisaged: for example, there are only so many ways you can make peeling a potato look interesting.

Once the guests started to arrive, it all became rather more entertaining. It was a balmy evening, and they were dressed in their summer finest – the ladies particularly so. I asked some if they would mind posing as they boarded the train – which they happily did. In particular I recall one lady shrieking incessantly with laughter. I wasn't entirely certain why. To the best of my knowledge my apparel was fastened in the prescribed way, but the mirth was compounded by the fact that my flash was prone to malfunction (the story of my photographic life). Hence this dear lady was poised, one foot on the running the board, the other dangling mid-air *à la* Larry Grayson for some considerable time while I tried to get the flash gun working. The picture couldn't have looked more posed if I'd tried.



Serious photographers rise early... John Titlow's photographic charter on 1st May 1993 departed from Northiam at 7am. Terrier 32650 is seen through the morning mist at Hexden Bridge. (Geoff Silcock)

No thanks to me, an on-time departure was made with *Norwegian* at the head, and we set off down the line to Northiam which, at that time, was as far as it went. The crew kindly gave me a staff meal there, after which I took some more posed pictures at the platform, including one of *Norwegian* with its headlight illuminated – a rare sight indeed. A stop was also made at Wittersham Road, where I had arranged for the platform oil lamps to be illuminated. The theory was that these would add atmosphere; the reality was that they were like a candle in a jam jar – a very large jam jar – and contributed nothing. Nonetheless I disembarked and set up my tripod and attached recalcitrant flash gun to the camera.

So it was with Wittersham Road being *very* dark indeed that I ended up with several shots of Stygian gloom through which you might just be able to make out a train. Eventually, though, the flash fired with an almighty 'whump' – much to the delight of some of the younger members of the crew. There were no lithium batteries in those days; the power came from six AA batteries. Or rather, after that, very little power came from six AA batteries. Fortunately I had brought a spare set.

Eventually we set off towards Tenterden at a gentle pace, at which point the conductor announced that a photographer would be coming through the train to take some pictures. This caused no great concern, except to one couple who were demonstrably unenthusiastic. To a degree, I can't say I blamed them: you come out for a quiet evening meal with the wife, only to have to endure some bright spark trying to take pictures. Only then did it occur to me that the idea might be even less appealing if perchance you had come out for a quiet evening meal with *somebody else's* wife... I was probably quite wrong, but discretion being the better part of valour I made sure I gave them a wide berth.

My efforts, though, were all in vain: the magazine declined to take the photo feature. Perhaps the idea didn't fit in with its long-term plans. More likely, the photos were just rubbish. I'm not even sure that the Railway used any. It was, nevertheless, a memorable evening: an evening that left me appreciating what a tremendous product the Pullman is, and what fine ambassadors the team were for our railway. And that's every bit as true now as it was 20 years ago.

Chris Fautley

BOOK REVIEW

The Hawkhurst Branch Line

by Peter A Harding

232pp, A5 portrait, 53 b&w photographs, eight maps and diagrams, softback.

Peter A Harding, Mossgiel, Bagshot Road, Knaphill, Woking GU21 2SG. £4.
2014, ISBN 978 0 9523458 3 1

Peter Harding commenced his very notable series of self-published branch line booklets (now running to at least 23) with his 1982 work on his favourite railway, of which this is a very welcome reprint.

The line itself is of great interest. Belatedly built late in Victorian times to penetrate the difficult High Weald country it was bedevilled by uncertainty as to whether it should end at Cranbrook town, Hawkhurst or beyond; and it showed.

This gave it a reputation – which was not really justified – that has echoed down the years for uniquely inconvenient stations, though in truth it was no worse than most other rural lines.

The Hawkhurst Branch Line



Peter A. Harding

The branch served its part of Kent, particularly the farming communities, well – until road transport took over.

Notably from our railway's point of view it was the cause of previously urban-reared Holman Stephens coming to Kent. Recruited, possibly through his father's influence, to be resident engineer to the line in 1890 at the tender age of 22, he stayed and within four years was involved in plans for both our line and the Rye and Camber Tramway.

Many of the features characteristic of Stephens' lines, like his station buildings, find their origin in this line. Many of us miss it still – including the author, who remembers the line from when he lived in Goudhurst as a young child.

It remained his favourite railway and promoted his whole interest in branch lines and light railways. Closed for 55 years, and now just a dreamy memory of times gone by in the most beautiful countryside, the line still has the power to fascinate.

Peter's booklets have received high praise over the years and this one – now with corrected text and recently discovered additional photographs – set, and still maintains, the standard. This reviewer cannot fault this succinct and handy work.

If you have any interest in the subject and do not have an early edition, buy one now. Even if you have one you will still find a copy, at this modest price, useful.

Brian Janes

KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

January 2016

1st	Ian Cook	No.071	£70.00
2nd	Lionel Marchant	No.304	£60.00
3rd	Dave Strivens	No.231	£50.00
4th	P A Hobbs	No.043	£40.00
5th	Roger Chaplin	No.566	£35.00
6th	Andre Freeman	No.222	£30.00
7th	Paul Tanton-Brown	No.603	£25.00
8th	R & S Jacques-Bartlet	No.774	£20.00
9th	Ross Shimmon	No.221	£15.00
10th	Robert E C Jones	No.400	£10.00

March 2016

1st	Brian Heyes	No.152	£90.00
2nd	Dr Ian Cullis	No.255	£80.00
3rd	Lionel Marchant	No.604	£70.00
4th	Kent Evenden	No.274	£60.00
5th	Chris McNaughton	No.288	£50.00
6th	Roger Diamond	No.084	£40.00
7th	Mr E Stockdale	No.663	£35.00
8th	Ian Legg	No.208	£30.00
9th	Richard Maxwell	No.401	£20.00
10th	Christopher John	No.361	£15.00
11th	R J Delves	No.585	£10.00

February 2016

1st	John E Denby	No.725	£70.00
2nd	Mr C J Scrase	No.615	£60.00
3rd	Miss D L Cloke	No.713	£50.00
4th	Mr P G Trapp	No.759	£40.00
5th	Mrs Sylvia Furney	No.635	£35.00
6th	Kent Evenden	No.130	£30.00
7th	Roger Diamond	No.295	£25.00
8th	Nigel & Kathy Moxom	No.595	£20.00
9th	Martin Casterton	No.346	£15.00
10th	Mr E Stockdale	No.067	£10.00

April 2016

1st	J Laslett	No.215	£70.00
2nd	Tony Hutchins	No.505	£60.00
3rd	Lionel Marchant	No.103	£50.00
4th	Meg Gooch	No.239	£40.00
5th	Ron Dawes	No.034	£35.00
6th	Richard Brice	No.459	£30.00
7th	J Bignell	No.397	£25.00
8th	John L Gardener	No.224	£20.00
9th	J M Whitcombe	No.575	£15.00
10th	Mrs S R Adlington	No.376	£10.00

To join the K&ESR 300 Club or for more information phone Brian Heyes on 01622 744509 or Chris Garman on 01424 441643.



*On 28th April the Ford was used to transfer the Vintage carriages to Tenterden Town and it was later recorded in No.3 Carriage Siding with the 03 and 08 diesels. The DMMU is in No.2 Siding while Vintage carriages stand in the Loop.
(Phil Edwards)*

*On 2nd May the engine worked the 12.15 and 2.30 services to Bodiam. On the first trip, tokens are exchanged at Rolvenden.
(Phil Edwards)*





On 30th May the Ford and the Class 14 shared the duty, with the DMMU utilised as coaching stock. Before that they top-and-tailed the 11.45 from Rolvenden, seen on the reverse curves east of Cranbrook Road. (Jon Edwards)

Later that day the Ford was recorded at Northiam with the 2.30 from Tenterden Town, passing Terrier 32678 working the 2.43 ex-Bodiam. (Phil Edwards)



PEOPLE IN PROFILE:

Paul Jessett

Chris Fautley interviews Paul Jessett, who joined the Kent & East Sussex Railway in 2012. He has since variously worked as a guard, Basic Railway Safety Course facilitator, Carriage & Wagon general hand and Permanent Way Department operative. He was appointed a trustee and Safety Director in 2015.

Paul retired from London Underground in 2010 after 38 years service, his most recent post being Train Operations Manager on the Metropolitan Line. Married, with two daughters, he lives in Faversham – where he is also Chairman of the Friends of Oare Gunpowder Works.

CF *What drew you to become a trustee?*

Paul I am a relative newcomer to the K&ESR and was keen to get involved in the governance of the railway, as well as getting my hands dirty. I had visited all the local preserved lines and was impressed by a certain Station Master who was very cheerful, helpful and a big ambassador for our railway.

CF *What attracted you to the role of Safety Director?*

Paul Through talking to various directors I was aware that Derek Dunlavy was retiring from the role and, as I have a background working in railway-related Health and Safety, I thought I might be able to help out in this area with some big challenges on the horizon.

CF *What exactly does it entail?*

Paul The role is an executive role on the Board. This means that I am accountable to ensure that the board of trustees fulfils its commitment under current legislation to conform to the law. In simple terms it is trying to ensure that the railway operates within the current rules and regulation for the operation of a heritage railway. The rules for heritage railways are contained in, amongst other documents, the ROGS (Railways and other Guided Transport Systems), issued by the ORR (Office of Road and Rail). The easiest way to explain the way they require us to lay out our commitment to Health and Safety is to “Say what we do and do what we say.”

CF *You have a ‘safety’ background on London Underground. What special challenges do you face in performing your role in a largely volunteer environment?*

Paul Unfortunately the law does not differentiate between paid employees and

volunteers. The challenge is to get people who essentially come to the K&ESR to enjoy themselves, to do just that – but in a safe manner. Thus when someone is carrying out a task, they have the training, help, coaching and knowledge they need to do it safely. Because we are a heritage railway it does not exempt us from the law.

CF *“Safety is our prime concern.” We hear that so frequently wherever we go that it feels as if it has almost become a cliché. Has it?*

Paul People have for years mocked ‘elf and safety’ and I have heard it said that it is only there to slow things down. However I believe that by having a robust safety system and culture, this will lead to the K&ESR being a better place to come and enjoy yourself as a volunteer. After all everyone wants to feel valued, safe and have pride in our railway – don’t they? If your family come to visit you want them safe, and certainly our customers demand it.

CF *Is there anything we need to address as a matter of urgency?*

Paul If you look at successful safe places of work, they are tidy. We must tidy up our railway: having piles of equipment, materials and components lying around the place advertises to the world that we are not safety conscious. It advertises to others that they can do the same and the situation breeds. I am encouraged to see that the Board has at last realised this and, led by our chairman, is actively encouraging clear-ups. We must continue this, as having these materials around the place haphazardly increases the risk of accidents and has a negative impact on our customers and future supporters.

CF *If you could achieve just one thing in your role, what would it be?*



Paul I am a realist, and just to reduce the number of silly slip, trip and fall accidents will be an achievement. But soon we will be extending to Robertsbridge, and that too brings additional challenges. We will all be doing things we are unfamiliar with and that brings additional risks, so we will have to ensure that our training is robust.

CF *Are we in danger of sinking in an ocean of rules, requirements and legislation?*

Paul The simple answer is no, as long as we “say what we do and do what we say.” We have an excellent rule book, and the RRWG (Rules Review Working Group) do a super job in keeping the K&ESR a safe railway (operationally). We are not Network Rail and do not need the ocean of rules you refer to. However we must comply with legislation, so things like safety-critical activities do have to be assessed, and changes in Health and Safety regulations do have to be updated. We have some ICPs (Independent Competent Persons) who are recognised as experts in their field, who audit and carry out inspections as volunteers, so I believe the system is very robust, and not sinking.

CF *I came across this (unattributed) quotation: “Any fool can make a rule, every fool will break one.” Any thoughts from a safety perspective?*

Paul Safety rules are there to prevent people getting hurt. If you break them, as with any bad behaviour, there is a consequence. We must remember that we are a part of the heritage railway network and, if we fail, this will reflect on all heritage railways.

CF *In a worst case scenario, would you prefer our staff use common sense and initiative, or follow the rule book to the letter?*

Paul The rules are there to protect us all. Some of our people have worked or do work on the big railway or in engineering, others may only visit us a couple of times a year. If we all work to the same set of standards we all know what the other person is doing, and we do not have to second-guess someone else’s actions. That is what ‘safety critical’ means. Outside of the safety critical environment I fully support empowerment, initiative and common sense.

CF *The minutes of December 2015’s Board meeting record you as saying that “...there was not enough emphasis on Health & Safety.” That’s quite an alarming statement. They also record that, with regard to safety, you thought “...Trustees should be more involved and active.” Do you feel that they should/could do more?*

Paul The item on the agenda to which you refer is regarding ‘Board Housekeeping’ and refers to a paper presented by another trustee. The matter was that the Board is a non-executive committee; this means that you do not have to have any prior knowledge or experience within the wider railway industry to sit on the Board of the K&ESR. The only roles that are executive positions are that of the Finance Director and the Safety Director. I was concerned that some items were not fully understood and therefore expressed my concern; this was taken into consideration in the final document.

It is my job to ensure that the correct emphasis on safety-related items is brought to the attention of the Board. For example, that full and thorough investigations are undertaken if necessary. All safety-related issues are not necessarily spoken about at a Board meeting. I chair a quarterly Safety Review Group meeting; this is attended by department heads and the General Manager plus one other Board member and an independent outside railway professional. We are looking for volunteers to join this group – if you are interested please let me know.

CF *What are your aims for the coming year?*

Paul First things first, I have started to look at our safety rules and procedures to establish if they indeed “say what we do”. This involves going back to basics and reviewing all of our documents. I plan to finish that this year, and then build on these to provide a robust set of company policies and instructions. I have been encouraged by the work being done by department managers to refresh the competence management systems in their areas. We have seen, for example, Carriage & Wagon staff attend training courses on maintaining door locks.

CF *And in the longer term?*

Paul I want to promote a positive safety culture. But what, I hear you ask, does that mean? Well, it is an environment where safety is top of everyone’s agenda, faults are reported and actioned, and everyone is involved in the safe running of the organisation.

Also, as we are an educational charity, I would like to see us training people and getting them accredited, giving people transferable skills to aid their own development and give something back for the hard work they do for us.

CF *Paul, thank you for your time.*

The Baie de Somme Railway Tenth Steam Festival

After months of meticulous planning and organisation, the tenth Steam Festival of The Baie de Somme Railway (CFBS) was held on 15–17th April. The festival has become the biggest railway event in France and attracts visitors from far and wide, including a large contingent from the UK, the number of UK-registered coaches seen over the weekend bearing testament to the presence of organised groups from British railway clubs and societies. Each of the previous festivals being rated more successful and interesting than its predecessor meant that there was great expectation of the 2016 event – and those who attended were not disappointed.

Although the festival only lasts three days there is much activity beforehand with the arrival, unloading, trial running and crew familiarisation of the various visiting locomotives. With information about this widely available via the Internet, many railway enthusiasts were attracted during the preceding week to take photographs in advance of the expected crowds. As in 2013 CFBS once again produced a very useful *Guide du Spotter*, priced at €5, which provided information about the trains, timetables and pathing diagrams. One-, two- and three-day passes were available for advance purchase.

On the standard gauge there were four visiting steam locomotives. One of the earliest arrivals was our own 2-6-0 No.376 *Norwegian*, which was

collected from Wittersham Road on 5th April and delivered to CFBS the following day. The transport cost, to and from the festival, was paid for by our French friends. Following a successful boiler test No.376 was ready for action. From Wednesday 13th the loco was in the hands of K&ESR crew of John Ascher, Chris Garman, Pete Hubbard and David Brailsford, David having handled all the technical matters and documentation during the months beforehand. The engine undertook a number of trial runs on the Wednesday and Thursday before taking part in the festival’s timetabled services.

Another long-distance arrival was the 4-6-0 du Bousquet compound locomotive 230D9, from the Cité du Train (National Railway Museum) at Mulhouse on the Swiss border. The loco, which is not in operational condition, arrived by rail having been towed across the full width of France – something that would be unimaginable in the UK. *Norwegian* and 230D9 joined another main line standard-gauge locomotive at the festival, the ex PLM Pacific 231K8. This had been resident at the Baie de Somme Railway since its failure on a main line special on 9th October 2015, when it was towed to CFBS’s workshops for repair. The final standard-gauge loco was the 0-4-0T Avonside 1925-built tank engine *Fred* from the Maldegem Railway Centre in Belgium. This operated a top and tail train, with our *Norwegian*, over the weekend.



Norwegian double heading PLM K Class Pacific No.231K8 at St Valéry Canal on 17th April 2016.
(Dave Brailsford)

In addition to the visiting standard-gauge steam locomotives there was a welcome return to the festival by the ex-Paris Metro Sprague (diesel powered) unit, now strengthened to four coaches, from the ADEMAs organisation. An SNCF class 73500 diesel railcar was taken down the branch line for display on the quayside at St Valéry.

The main activity of the festival was of course on the metre gauge. Six rakes of CFBS coaches were hauled by nine locomotives. Their own locos, 4-6-0T ex-Reseau Breton No.E332, 2-6-0T Haine St Pierre No.15, 2-6-0T Corpet Louvet No.1, 2-6-0T Cail No.2, 0-6-0T Pinguely No.101 and 0-4-0T Corpet Louvet No.25 were joined by the 600hp 2-6-2T Harz Railway's No.99 6001, Chamby Blonay railway's 0-6-0T No.JS909 and MTVS's ex-TIV 0-6-0T No.75. In addition to the steam engines, two metre-gauge railcars were also in action: ex Blanc Argent Railway Verney-built railcar X212 and from the Belgian tramway museum at Lobbes the 1934 Vicinal AR86. Two four-wheel *draisines* (hand-carts) were also in action.

Following the success of the 2013 event, the Friday was included in the official activities with a day for railway enthusiasts, the 'Festival Off'. The morning was devoted to standard gauge and the afternoon to metre, allowing spectators and photographers to position themselves on the sections of the line involved. After positioning

moves, a standard-gauge cavalcade started from St Valéry over the dual-gauge track section to Noyelles. This involved five stock movements in an hour – an event probably never seen since the standard gauge was laid in 1858. Starting the procession was the ex-Paris Metro set which trundled up the line, with a handful of ADEMAs volunteers on board. About 30 minutes later the ex-PLM Pacific 231K8 hauled two coaches from the AAATV organisation at Orleans. These two coaches were used on the Saturday and Sunday topped and tailed by *Norwegian* (at the Noyelles end) and *Fred* (at the St Valéry end).

Ten minutes later came the magnificent sight of No.376 propelling the 'dead' 230D9 to Noyelles, where it was on static display during the weekend. The two locomotives were followed, after five



German metre-gauge superpower! No.99 6001 visiting from the Harz Railway. (Michael Bunn)

minutes, by the rather bizarre sight of *Fred*, working bunker first, hauling one of the brightly coloured Cité du Train (CdT) exhibition coaches.

A surprising addition to the cavalcade, bringing up the rear, was SNCF AKIEM (leasing division) Bo-Bo diesel locomotive No.75024 sporting an attractive Fête de la Vapeur livery, hauling another CdT coach. The two CdT coaches were berthed at Noyelles station and (with 230D9) used as barrier vehicles. After the festival they went to the former SNCF depot at La Chapelle, Paris where a temporary railway exhibition is being held until the autumn.

After all this excitement there was a mass exodus to the local restaurants. However during lunch many would have missed a return working from St Valery Port to Le Crotoy of the diminutive Vicinal railcar AR86, which seemed to be carrying three or four times the safe number of passengers. The metre-gauge locomotives were positioned for one of the big events of the festival, the cavalcade up the incline (*The Alps*) to the south of St Valery. Photographers had taken up position alongside the track at the overbridge leading to the *dechetterie* (council recycling site) and at the summit level crossing. One by one, at intervals of a few minutes, the nine metre-gauge locomotives processed to the top where they coupled up for the descent in a return convoy with the tiny 0-4-0T Corpet Louvet leading and the enormous Harz 2-6-2T at the rear. It appeared that the Harz locomotive was shoving the whole lot up on its own – which it was probably capable of doing!

The locos dispersed and a number of scheduled metre-gauge services followed during the afternoon. The photographers then all headed off to the intermediate station of Lanchères-Pendé, on the Cayeux branch, where there were three scheduled departures in 15 minutes. It was also a chance to see trains using the re-laid loop

line where the joint CFBS-K&ESR working party lifted the old track in November 2014. Once the trains had departed everyone headed off to Cayeux for their arrival and turn round.

In keeping with tradition the main two days of the festival served up the full range of Picardie weather, with cloud and outbursts of rain on the Saturday and beautiful sunshine with a brisk chilly wind on Sunday. At Noyelles, the main centre for the festival, there were static displays of standard-gauge stock including 230D9 and 231K8 (in light steam) along with the SNCF diesel loco 75024. The two standard-gauge service trains used separate tracks, with the Sprague Metro set using the former loading dock, below the observation mound, with boards placed across the gap between its edge and the coaches. The top-and-tail set of *Norwegian* and *Fred* used the track along the back of the site. During the layover between workings there was much interest in No.376, with the public invited to visit the footplate and blow the whistle.

Also on a display was a collection of classic cars and a 40cm tram car from the Côtes du Nord Railway Museum in Brittany. The track was placed right across the main public footway from the area in front of Noyelles SNCF station leading to the exhibition marquee – a prime example of the French *laissez-faire* attitude towards health & safety. Surely someone would trip over this – they did, the writer! A large marquee housed trade and railway society stalls including the K&ESR display stand. Many exhibitors expressed great satisfaction at the number of visitors who had come in to see the stands and the record takings that they had made – no doubt helped by the bad weather on the Saturday!

On both days an intensive metre-gauge hourly service ran in both directions from Le Crotoy to Cayeux, with an intermediate hourly service from Le Crotoy to St Valery and St Valery to Cayeux. For a quick turn round at Noyelles, a light engine was brought to the train due to depart while the arriving loco was released and turned. An hourly service was slotted in over the dual-gauge section operated alternately by the top-and-tailed set of *Norwegian*, *Fred* and the two AAATV coaches and the ex-Paris Metro set, each train making four return journeys. In 2009 and 2013 the standard-gauge train had consisted of a single steam-hauled coach but for 2016 and future events CFBS requires all trains operating between St Valery and Noyelles to carry a



Cail No. 2 at Le Crotoy

(Ian Scarlett)



Norwegian propelling Nord 4-6-0 No. 230D9

(Michael Bunn)

minimum of 100 passengers, hence two bogie coaches. At St Valery Port the A86 railcar provided a shuttle service to and from St Valery Ville, carefully timed to operate between the comings and goings of the steam-hauled top-and-tail set and the Paris Metro vehicles. On the adjacent SNCF main line a special train, hauled by the 2-8-2 tank engine 141TD424, arrived (late) from Sotteville, Rouen with supporters and guests of the Pacific Vapeur Club.

This was not only the tenth Baie de Somme Railway Steam Festival but the 20th anniversary of the twinning with the K&ESR. To mark the latter a commemorative ceremony was held at Noyelles at 2pm on the Saturday. Due to be held on a presentation dais in the main activity area, the ceremony had to be moved at the last moment, because of the rain, into the rather cramped space of CFBS's main festival reception marquee. Nevertheless a fair crowd gathered to listen to speeches from the various representatives of the sponsoring and twinning organisations. By French standards this was a fairly short affair. CFBS President Maurice Testu had declared beforehand that each speech should last no more than five minutes, which was adhered to by most of the contributors.

The Mayor of Noyelles officially opened the festival, followed by Maurice who reflected upon how the festival had become not only one of the main railway events in France but in Europe. He also acknowledged the great benefits accrued from CFBS's twinning with K&ESR, in terms of Interreg financing, technical expertise shared by the two railways, work exchange groups and the friendships that had developed. Norman Brice,

on behalf of K&ESR, replied in French, congratulating CFBS on yet another wonderful steam festival and echoing the CFBS Chairman's comments about the benefits of the twinning and Interreg programme that had been brought to the two railways. He concluded by thanking CFBS for their outstanding generosity in enabling the K&ESR to operate one of its steam engines at the festival.

Next on stage was Councillor George Koowaree, Deputy Mayor of Ashford Borough Council, who was present at the inaugural twinning ceremony back in 1996. His speech, given in English and French, congratulated the two organisations on their 20 years of twinning and emphasised how important railways were to Ashford which once had major workshops, creating employment and wealth for the town. He noted that the K&ESR was now one of the most important local tourist attractions. The speeches, which were made against a cacophony of locomotive whistles in the background, were concluded by a representative from the local tourist authority who acknowledged the enormous contribution that CFBS indirectly makes to the local economy. Geoffrey Nickson, when required, gave a translation of the various speeches in English. Following the ceremony an exchange of gifts was made between Maurice Testu of CFBS and Geoffrey Crouch of K&ESR.

While all this was going on at Noyelles, down at the quieter western CFBS terminus of Cayeux a *draisine* was shuttling up and down in the station area; and outside, one of the two Paris buses was taking passengers around the town. In the avenue Paul Doumer, opposite the CFBS station,

Decauville locomotive No.5, from the Froissy Dompierre railway, was operating with two coaches over a couple of hundred metres of 60cm track laid in the street for the festival weekend.

The steam special from Rouen was due to head back home at about 6pm but due to problems with the support locomotive (BB 666170) did not depart from Noyelles, dragging the dead diesel, until after 8pm. Steam locomotive 141TD424 failed, with a heavily clinkered firebox, at Amiens and was withdrawn from service. By the time a rescue locomotive and driver with route knowledge were found, the special did not arrive back in Rouen until 6am next day!

On both of the main festival days an interesting addition was the use of the ex-Blanc Argent Verney railcar, which operated over the Cayeux branch, in a way recreating the final days of public service on the Somme system. One of the final vehicles to do this was actually put on display at Noyelles during the weekend – the De Dion Bouton OC1 which, if funding can be found, will be restored and returned to action. Once again the 83-strong contingent of visiting K&ESR Ashford Group members chose the right day to visit the festival. Sunday lived up to its name and everything ran smoothly for their visit – except for one member losing his passport. Over the weekend No.376 and a CFBS engine carried headboards,

constructed by Meg Gooch and John Liddell.

So as the crowds dispersed and, as the final trains ran in the early evening sunshine, another festival drew to a close. Everyone will have their own favourite memories but the two locomotives that probably attracted the most attention were the enormous Harz tank engine and our own *Norwegian*. One of CFBS's directors did ask me if we could leave it there for the summer... This was an outstanding example of months of hard work and preparation, the participation of a few hundred volunteers and paid staff from CFBS and all the societies involved, and particularly the attention to detail and expertise of Julien Rebillard and Sylvère Zaniroli. At the time of writing it is believed that about 7,500 fare-paying passengers were carried, over 18,000 visitors attended the festival, and financially the event broke even. For those just coming and watching this has to be the best free railway show on offer – *vive la vapeur!*

The Norwegian loco No.376 arrived safely back on K&ESR metals on 19th April.

Mike Bunn

The next joint K&ESR/CFBS working group weekend will be held at Tenterden on 8th & 9th October – for details please contact me on mike.bunn@tiscali.co.uk



K&ESR loco crew at the Fete de Vapeur (left to right) Dave Brailsford, Chris Garman, John Ascher and Pete Hubbard. (Michael Bunn)

Colonel Stephens' Engineering Innovations: Concrete Sleepers

Colonel Stephens was of course well known for his innovations, successful or otherwise, in steam and internal combustion railcars, and for light railway operating practices. But as a civil engineer he was also involved in other pioneering work, writes Brian Janes.

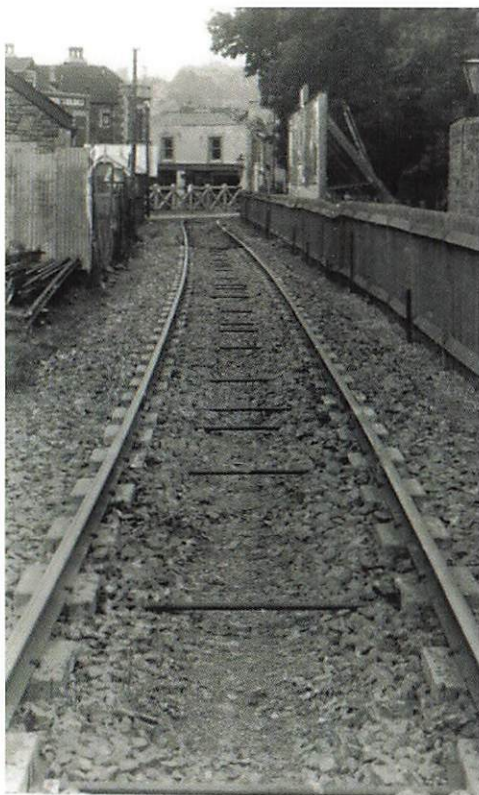
Concrete sleepers are now a universal feature of railways, but their modern use in the UK dates only from WW2 – and indeed they did not become standard on British Railways until 1964.

Many early railways used stone blocks for keeping the rails fixed in the 'permanent way', but they quickly fell out of use, largely due to their inability to keep to gauge, and cheap and reliable treated timber sleepers became universal. The effective re-invention of cement in the 1820s opened up the possibility of its use as long-lasting sleepers, but this was not to be realised for over 100 years.

Concrete has the property of being strong in compression, in that it does not crush easily under a steady load, but it is comparatively weak in tension, so it will not withstand stretching. In simple terms, the effect of applying a load to a concrete beam is to compress the top of the beam and stretch the underside, so cracks develop on the underside under comparatively small loads. The material is thus unsuitable for sleepers without reinforcement such as steel rods. This was little understood for many years; nevertheless the benefit of longevity attracted interest, and concrete's first railway use is thought to have been on the tiny, and ironically very short lived, Sutton and Alford Railway in 1884.

Further experiments seem to have been made in 1910 on the LNWR and 1912 on the SECR, but these sleepers shattered after only five years. During the Great War timber was in short supply and the LSWR carried out limited experiments with concrete pot sleepers (with light reinforcement at the bottom) and tie bars in 1917.

These may have caught the attention of Colonel Stephens, for shortly afterwards he tried out the idea on the Weston Clevedon and Portishead Railway; and by autumn 1919 he was confident enough to publicise his efforts. Illustrated articles appeared in the influential *Concrete and Construction Engineering Magazine* and the *Railway Gazette* in August 1919.



Track at Clevedon on the Weston Clevedon & Portishead Railway.

(Colonel Stephens Railway Museum Archive)

The reports, clearly based on details provided by Stephens, stated:

"The type of sleeper adopted by Col. Stephens is that of a pair of concrete blocks tied by a metal bar, which is in this case a length of signal rod. The tie-bar is not used with every pair of blocks, but four or more, according to curvature and other circumstances, are produced for each 30ft rail...The blocks themselves, when supporting 65lb flat-bottomed rails, are 20in by 12in by 6in, and are spaced 2ft 2in apart.

When employed for 80lb rails two additional blocks are used for each 30ft length. The maximum load per axle provided for is 14 tons for the 65lb rails and 18 tons for the 80lb rails. No chairs are used, but holes are cast in the block in which trenails are fitted for the reception of dogs or fang-bolts. The blocks are not reinforced, and the moulds in which they are cast are very simply constructed. Unskilled labour with skilled supervision can be employed in the operation of concreting, which, we are informed by Col. Stephens, is confined to days when, owing to climate conditions, outside work is not possible. We learn that 1 ton of cement will make 86 blocks of this size in use on this railway."

These sleepers, or more accurately pots, became used widely on the WC&P although the signal

rods specified for the first installation were discarded and ordinary sleepers in the ratio of one wood to two pots were used in preference. This combination was extensively used on the southern section from Clevedon to Weston, presumably as this section required more attention at the time than the more recently built northern part. The pots are prominent in photographs at Kingston Road, Ebdon Lane, Worle Town, Milton Road and Weston.

Although these concrete pots proved practical, for reasons unknown Stephens does not seem to have extended their use elsewhere in his empire. However on the WC&P they proved effective and lasted until closure. Being useless for recycling, the pots were discarded when the railway was dismantled in 1943 – and indeed a few can still be found scattered near the old track bed.



A pair of discarded WC&PR concrete pots, photographed in 2008.

(Paul Gregory, Weston Clevedon & Portishead Railway Group)

Railway Experience Days

The Howard Wallace-Sims Years

2008–2014

Nearly two years after Howard Wallace-Sims handed over the reins of the Railway Experience Department to Bradley Bottomley, Howard looks back at his seven-year spell in charge – and the many changes which happened during that time.

A number of years ago we ran a series of Railway Experience Days where four participants drove, fired, guarded and signalled in a morning and another four did the same in an afternoon. This was extremely stressful for the driver, as people were launched off from Tenterden on *Norwegian* with no previous footplate experience whatsoever. It was necessary for the fireman to actually be a driver, as it wasn't possible to supervise him from the other side of the cab – and due to the stress levels frequent breaks were needed, so it took three drivers to run the course! A number of drivers undertook one turn and refused to do any more.

After that Clive Groome ran his 'Footplate Days and Ways' courses on the K&ESR, and during that time Pete Salmon was employed as Operating Assistant with the secondary task of developing and running courses. However, successive Commercial Managers preferred the option of continuing to use Clive Groome.

In 2005 Paul Wilson took over the operation of courses and developed the basis of what became our 'Preliminary Steam Locomotive Driving Course' (Railway Experience Day, or RXD to the staff) and continued to do so until this year. Six, eventually eight, people took it in turns to drive a loco, with brake van, inside Rolvenden station limits. They also visited the signal box and had a guided tour of Rolvenden Works, and when on the footplate and not driving they were invited to fire.

These in-house RXDs, along with Advanced RXDs (two full-line trips with a train) and Steam and DMMU Footplate Tasters had been running for some time before I took over responsibility for them from Paul in 2008.

Over the years up to the end of 2014, when I stood down from running RXDs, we developed a number of new courses.

The 'Drive the Bank' involved adding about six miles to the mileage of the steam loco rostered for the day's service. This was run after the evening DMMU operated Fish and Chip train had left for Bodiam, thus utilising the fact that Tenterden and Rolvenden signal boxes were manned. The evening consisted of two trips up the bank with two people driving one trip each. Lin Batt was usually on waving duty as we passed her kitchen window just above Cranbrook Road crossing on the first trip up.

The 'Signal Box Experience Day' was a day in Rolvenden box with selected signalmen. This was sold very cheaply to start with, and we were overwhelmed with more applicants than we could handle. It settled down once we increased the price from £95 to £225. The course stopped when the Rolvenden track layout was being altered and is now run elsewhere, I believe. (The course currently runs from Northiam signal box, but this will be changed for 2017 to create a more active day for the participant. –B.B.)

The 'Intermediate Steam Locomotive Driving course' involved four people taking it in turns to drive and fire on four round trips from Rolvenden to Northiam and back. This meant taking a travelling signalsman to open and close Wittersham box (in order to get the goods train out and back in later) and Northiam box to run round. It was a bit of a rush, but worked well.

The 'Drive the Pick-up Goods' course involved two people driving and firing Rolvenden–Bodiam–Rolvenden, with a small freight train being collected from Wittersham. At Bodiam the yard was shunted to make up another train, then it returned to Rolvenden, ran round, returned to Bodiam and was shunted to make up the original train which was then dropped at Wittersham.

The 'Behind the Scenes at the K&ESR' course involved taking a party of six people round the



Howard Wallace-Sims (left) and Martin Welsford on RXD duty.

(via Howard Wallace-Sims)

railway to places most don't have a chance to visit, and it is still proving very popular.

We ran a few courses tailored to the participant's requirements. Examples include the Pick-up Goods, run with four people using a steam loco and then the next year, for the same four, with the 'Ford'; a Ffestiniog Travel party had a full line

trip on the DMMU; a gentleman had an all-day RXD on his own specifying *Norwegian* and three red vintage coaches as his train; and we ran a special RXD for a party of 16 (unfortunately 17 turned up and one of them ate my packed lunch!)

I very much enjoyed my seven years running RXDs. I was known as the 'RXD Coordinator'

and that was for two reasons – the then GM didn't want to call me a Manager because I might become pushy, and I didn't want to be called a Manager in case I had to attend the interminable Monday meetings!

With an eight-person RXD I frequently went home with the back of my neck hurting and my ribs aching, simply because I had spent so much of the day laughing. Political correctness went out of the window when you had a crowd of older, often retired men who had spent their lives in industry, and they certainly seemed to constitute a large part of our client base.

We had a number of ladies on the course and they were all very good – mainly, I think, because they listened to instructions rather than thinking they knew what they were doing, which is what some of the men were inclined to do. On one course we had a couple and the wife was better at controlling the loco than the husband, and he was really pleased. On another occasion the same happened and the husband sulked!

The finale of the RXD was buffering up to the brake van which was parked in Rolvenden platform with the brake screwed hard on. The vast majority managed this manoeuvre without hitting the van too hard, many managed it very well and quite a few stopped short because, although we were only moving at a couple of miles an hour, driving 30 tons of loco at 20 tons of brake van can seem very worrying. Sometimes we had people who were so good that we would stick a plastic cup to a van buffer with grease and challenge them to touch the cup with a loco buffer without crushing it. Some could, some couldn't...

We obviously had the odd person who wanted to show me how much they knew, and a few who made it quite clear that I couldn't teach them anything. The best solution that I found was to say "OK, off you go then," and stand back. They usually admitted that they needed help!

We did have a preserved tram driver who said he didn't need any instruction on the brake. Having then run three loco lengths past the stopping point he changed his mind. After that I used him as a yardstick. If somebody worried because they hadn't stopped accurately I used to tell them that the world record was three loco lengths.

Over the years my stalwart sidekick has been Martin Welsford. He covered as fireman all the 'Drive the Bank' turns with me, a lot of the RXDs, most of the Advanced RXDs, a lot of the odds

and ends and in the last couple of years almost all the 'Coordinator' turns. Coordinator could be a very stressful job. It involved lighting up at 6am and then from 8am to 5pm entertaining six to eight people when they weren't on the footplate or in the signal box, giving a safety briefing, gently reminding transgressors about safety, saying 'Ooh' and 'Ah' in the right places when told that Granddad drove *Flying Scotsman* (at least three times a week) and generally being pleasant – sometimes to people who could be quite difficult – day after day at busy times.

One evening we only had one 'Drive the Bank' participant so I invited the then GM to come and see what it was all about. Unfortunately he came over all managerial on Martin's side of the footplate until, that is, I heard this voice say something like "Listen Mush, I'm in charge over this side!" For months after that, if ever Martin's name came up, the GM would say in a dazed voice "He called me *Mush*."

When we introduced the 'Intermediate Steam Locomotive Driving Course' we only had two participants booked for the first one so we invited BBC South East to send a reporter and cameraman, and the Civil Service Motoring Association to send a reporter. The news team enjoyed themselves very much and we had a very welcome few minutes on the 6.30 News that evening. The CSMA reporter turned out to be a very lovely young lady who threw herself into the course with great gusto. She drove and fired and ended up rather dirty and somewhat burned. Unfortunately her piece mentioned Martin puffing on his pipe so the GM instructed me to give him a rocket for smoking on the footplate!

A really good fireman will give the impression that he is doing very little while managing the fire, keeping the footplate clean and keeping a lookout so Martin was gratified when the young CSMA reporter commented at lunch "Martin doesn't seem to do a lot." I have a feeling that she may have been correct, but it made Martin happy!

Martin did nearly lose his cool one day when a gentleman demanded to know which shed was represented by the pannier tank's smoke box door shedcode plate. Martin didn't know, and said gentlemen threatened to report him to the GM. Unfortunately Martin's approach to the shed staff for assistance with the matter resulted in some very unhelpful suggestions, some of which were physically impossible.

The Novice's Coal Dance, when a raw beginner attempts to fire, was always fun to watch. Fill the shovel with coal, dance round in a 20-point turn, spill most of the coal as the shovel approaches the firebox door and then drop one lump just below the door. Repeat the sequence a number of times and always drop the coal under the door, no matter where the fireman asks for it to be put. As the door is open all this time boiler management is somewhat difficult.

For a number of years we ran the RXDs from the Permanent Way Department's mess coach, which we parked at the level crossing end of Rolvenden station for the day. This was very handy as everything we needed – tea, coffee, boiler suits etc. – was all on board. Apart from a toilet that is. The 'Person in Charge' at the shed had to be asked to open the main gate into the yard so that the shed staff toilet could be accessed. Sometimes the Coordinator had to go into the yard with a shovel to clear a path through the coal lying behind the gate so that people wouldn't trip. Participants were not allowed off the platform (except at the level crossing end) unless accompanied by a staff member. Eventually the condition of the coach deteriorated and a second- (or maybe third- or fourth-) hand portacabin was bought and placed behind the 'Palace' at Rolvenden. This brought problems in that we now had all the facilities

on the wrong side of the line from the platform, and participants had to cross the line first thing in the morning by themselves. The rule 'only cross the line when the loco is stationary, moving away or out of sight' applied during the day, and we solved the problem in the morning by prohibiting any movement of trains through Rolvenden platform before 9am on RXD days.

At the age of 70 I decide that turning out in the dark at some ungodly hour to crawl under a hot, dirty steam loco that dripped boiling water all over me, sometimes spat at me and frequently burned me was becoming less attractive so in December 2014 I drove my last rostered steam turn – on a Santa Special – 6619 in the morning and Norwegian in the afternoon. Over the years I drove the vast majority of RXDs and as I would no longer be available to drive them I felt that it would be better if someone else took over their management. I handed over the reins to Bradley Bottomley in late December 2014, and he seems to be doing a pretty good job!

I'd like to thank all the Operating Department volunteers, catering staff and the 'Ladies in the Office' who helped me run RXDs during my seven years in charge – you know who you are. We brought in an income (before costs) of quite a bit over £500,000: not bad for a fairly small group of people.

Martin Welsford's Railway Experience Days 2005–2016

When you think about RXDs on our railway, for some reason Martin always springs to mind. The longest-serving member of our RXD staff has worked under three managers and looked after hundreds of happy customers. Not to mention being Howard's right and left handed assistant!

I finally passed my firing test in May 2005 and in June, after one turn without footplate passengers, was told that next time it would be something called an RXD. Little knowing what awaited me – and having not slept due to a mix of fear and anticipation – we moved into the platform and the first couple came aboard.

With an RXD one customer drives whilst the other is offered the shovel. It seemed that this man did indeed want to shovel, and to do it properly. Happily he did not ask how long I had been a fireman; so there I was – a raw amateur – instructing him in how a fireman makes up the

fire. We shook hands at the end and he thanked me for my professional training!

The day progressed, customers came and went, and though the pressure was a bit up and down that day we had enough steam – just. If you have just read my friend Howard's reminiscences you will know about what we call the Novice's Dance when a beginner attempts to put a shovel of coal into the fire. This was the first time I had seen this, and became very anxious about the time the fire door was open with all the cold air entering. I realised that a method of dealing with this was required and decided to make up 8/9ths of the



Bradley Bottomley showing RXD participants round Rolvenden Shed.

(Alan Crotty)

fire before the next couple came aboard. This meant we would have enough steam but it still left one place where coal should be added. In 11 years of RXDs I have yet to see a customer put his 'shovelfull' in the place I left for him.

This day was to be heavy on learning for me, as the penultimate customer in Exercise One felt the need to open the regulator to its fullest extent and to oppose all efforts to close it. The driver and I were both trying to close it, but he was strong and resisted. Harsh words were offered and the regulator was closed after about six seconds of this nonsense. I assessed my situation and found that in that short time we had lost 30 lbs of pressure and there was a large hole in the middle of my fire. Driving home that night I reflected that I should not expect customers to behave as my mates who had taught me, and that I needed to develop ways to deal with the curious working methods customers adopted.

I was also introduced that day to 'engine stories'. In this conversation the customer mentions in a confidential manner that they had/have a relation

who lived by a railway line. They then pause, inviting some comment from me, and disclose that the driver would make smoke as the train passed so as to dirty the washing in the garden, stop out of course to receive a cup of tea, stop and drop off a bucket of coal for the living room fire, etc. etc. The principal variant of this tale is that the relative used to drive a particular engine: yes, it's always 4472. Never did an engine have so many drivers. The generous view is that they confuse 4472 with the 10am departure from King's Cross bearing the same name. After the 1,000th telling of this story it is often hard to make an appropriate comment, but comment one must, as they themselves are not railwaymen.

There have been times when I have sought the sanctuary of the messroom – only to find another of my colleagues confidentially telling me that their granddad used to... They invariably find this of the greatest amusement.

After five or six of these turns I was asked to co-ordinate RXDs. "It's a very easy job, Martin, even you can do it." Operational practice has

changed over the years but, in essence, the job involves doing everything that nobody else wants to do like collecting breakfasts and fish & chips, trying to get a group touring the yard and workshop to stay together and arranging for everyone to be engaged in an activity during the day. In practice it's a long hard day that starts at 5.50am and finishes around 5.15pm. It does, however, have its moments – like the time I collected breakfast from the Whistle Stop Café and spied a traffic warden hiding behind the toilets in an effort to catch an unwary motorist. I padded up behind him and shouted "Boo". He somehow failed to see the humour, but I didn't.

I became friendly with the new owner of the Whistle Stop but had the lapse of judgement to disclose to a friend that I liked a part of her person. This despicable nurk must have told the lady, judging from the questions she asked when I next went up there. Fortunately she took it as a compliment and put an extra egg in my roll.

With any job that one performs over a period of time a routine develops. I am grateful to our Buffet Supervisor, Kim, for prompting me when I forgot where I was in the H&S briefing and for marrying the right size overalls to our customers. She and others in Catering have added much to the day, although I found that several customers wished, with me, that we had eaten a slightly smaller lunch when 2pm comes round and all we want is to rest the eyes for a moment. However I have always looked forward to 11am, as at that time I have been able to arrange that all our eight customers are occupied and I can sit down and natter with her for ten minutes. Believe me, it's the only time during the day when that is possible.

I might mention some interesting 'facts' I have learned doing this job:

- 4472 was built at Swindon
- Stephenson invented the broad gauge
- Tornado's valve gear is Stephenson-Howe
- William Stroudley was Irish
- The *Flying Hamburger* holds the World Steam Record (even though it was a diesel).

I am also grateful to Len Goodman as his mispronunciation of the number 7 lasted me over two seasons during the buffering up exercise. I should also apologise to Tommy Cooper for the way in which I have told his jokes. One always knows what the group will be like – if they titter during H&S then we will be OK, but if they do not then it's sure going to be a long day.

Much of the success of this day depends upon our driver, and I have worked with many on this turn both as fireman and as Coordinator. Some have been strict disciplinarians, unwilling to respond to my structure for the day, intensely critical of firing performance and a pain in the neck. Others have been more relaxed while ensuring that safety is paramount, some have told of their exploits on the seven seas (yet again) and some have even told jokes at rest times. But the prize goes to my old friend who worked two seasons as the regular RXD driver and would burst into song after we passed the signal box. The words to these songs were highly amusing but, in these PC days, it is perhaps as well he no longer drives these turns. I miss him though.

I have always encouraged questions during the day. It's risky, but one can have quite a bit of fun if you choose your customer. My previous manager told me not to 'make it up', so that put paid to using the handbrake as a steering wheel etc. Some questions are bankers – you know they will come:

- How long does it take to get steam up?
- How do you light the fire?
- How much coal/water do you use?
- How much is the engine worth?
- Why don't you cook breakfast on the shovel – H&S?

The trick is to tell them that they may only ask questions to which Martin knows the answer. Many groups respond well to this, and a game ensues in which they try to catch me out – and the wise Coordinator lets them win that one.

So with 11 years of coordinating there have obviously been groups when I just could not wait to hand out the goodie bags and wave a cheery farewell. But these have been few, and the great majority of our customers both see and appreciate the efforts we have made, the arrangements for their safety and the cheerful way we have delivered the day.

This year sees a major format change and the shape of the experience is quite different, but change is part of life and commercially desirable for many reasons, so I have had to learn the new structure and adapt to presenting it to the best of my ability. We also have new members taking on roles under Bradley's leadership, so the RXD group is expanding. This in itself presents challenges, but I have a fondness, if not love, for these days and as long as I still have the mental and physical ability to present the experience I intend to continue for a while yet.

Reading Between the Lines

David Penn investigates the story behind the minutes of the Rother Valley (Light) Railway Company directors meetings between 1897 and 1899.

The Spring 2008 *Terrier* included an article 'Building the K&ESR' by Brian Janes describing how the railway was financed and constructed, and highlighting its early financial problems. Brian links these to the enigmatic Mr John Barrett Lennard and his London and Scottish Contracts Corporation (LSCC). I have been exploring the minutes of the Rother Valley (Light) Railway (RVR) directors meetings, census and company records, newspaper archives and railway histories to see what more can be learnt about these problems. Direct quotes from the minutes are shown in *italics*.

In 1897, following the passing of the Light Railway Act, 30 proposed light railways were approved, yet few of these lines were built. The Act empowered the Treasury to make grants, and local councils to invest in light railways. Only a handful, mostly in remote rural areas, benefited from this provision. The RVR decided to use a 'company promoter' to arrange finance and build the line as, without government support, wealthy local sponsors or the backing of a main line railway company it would be very difficult for the RVR to raise capital. Company promoters – controversial figures in the financial world of the time – linked potential investors to businesses looking for capital. A few promoters made a fortune; some ended up in prison. Using a company promoter was risky and unconventional for a railway company.

The RVR chose 34-year-old John Barrett Lennard, a company promoter with useful upper-class connections and an expensive lifestyle. Whitehall Court, his address in 1897, was home to leading political and military figures. He was a member of the Badminton Club for gentlemen who engaged in the fashionable and costly sport of coach driving.

Under the contract between Barrett Lennard's LSCC and the RVR dated 13th October 1897, the LSCC was responsible for *'delivery to the Company of the single line completed and equipped by February 1899 for the sum of £76,000'*.

A key task for the company promoter was to attract some well-known 'names' to serve as directors, often by making payments to prospective individuals. At the RVR's inaugural

General Meeting on the 14th October 1897 four founding Directors were appointed, none with local connections: Mr Henry Tugwell (62) a retired banker and company financier from Bath; Mr Charles Head (59), director of the engineering company Head Wrightson of Stockton-on-Tees; Sir Myles Fenton (67), former General Manager of the South Eastern Railway (SER), who had retired the previous year; and Sir Roger Goldsworthy (58), career soldier and colonial administrator, who had retired as Governor of the Falkland Islands earlier in the year.

This was quite a line-up for a modest rural railway company, and 'names' like Tugwell and Goldsworthy were clearly intended to impress prospective investors. The share prospectus, published in local and national newspapers on Monday 18th October, offered an unrealistically attractive 7.5% interest on ordinary shares.

Three directors and four others 'in attendance' were present at the first directors meeting on 25th October 1897. Mr Stevenson represented company solicitors Ashurst, Morris, Crisp and Co, the leading City firm for company promotion. Mr Peat of W.B. Peat & Co attended as company auditor. Barrett Leonard represented the LSCC and his associate Mr O.G. Stoer acted as company secretary (pro-tem). A young man of German origin, Oscar Stoer had close business connections with Barrett Lennard and also acted as Secretary for Barrett Lennard's short-lived Indian and Ceylon Tea Trust Company. The LSCC, the Tea Trust Company and the RVR, all launched in 1897, were interlinked through mutual shareholdings and working contracts.

At this first meeting the allocation of shares was approved. It was the LSCC's responsibility to procure share applications and, if there were insufficient applications, to take shares it.

The LSCC's request for a cash payment of £20,000 on account from the £76,000 contract price was agreed. The payment related to expenses incurred by the LSCC in promoting the RVR and getting its Act through parliament, against opposition from the Tenterden Railway Co. The RVR had no resources of its own it and had to take out an overdraft to pay the LSCC. The borrowing was

conditional on the LSCC paying the interest on the overdraft and accepting liability. The remaining £56,000 was to be paid to the LSCC on the authority of the Engineer for land purchased and miles of railway built, making the estimated construction cost per mile around £5,000. The LSCC was to receive payment partly in cash and the balance in RVR 4% debenture stocks. The interest payments on these debentures, a form of mortgage on the assets of the company, were a burden which, along with further debts, eventually forced the K&ESR into receivership.

The actual work of constructing the line was subcontracted to Messrs Godfrey and Liddelow. In 1895 the firm of Eckersley, Godfrey and Liddelow was declared bankrupt, the Greek government claiming that the contractors had abandoned their 1889 contract to build the Piraeus and Larissa Railway. Godfrey and Liddelow may have been chosen by Barrett Lennard because of their financial difficulties and willingness to take on a contract at a low price. The contract to build and equip a railway for £5,000 per mile was optimistic, and may have been a factor in the subsequent failure of the LSCC and its subcontractor. The cost per mile of the K&ESR's Headcorn extension was £13,447.

Barrett Lennard seems to have modelled his company promotion activities on those of the 'king' of company promoters, Henry Osborne O'Hagan. However, unlike O'Hagan, Barrett Lennard had no previous involvement in the promotion of light railways or tramways. The LSCC set up by Barrett Lennard in April 1897 was a close copy of O'Hagan's City of London Contracts Corporation (CLCC). These corporations were intermediary companies set up to buy, sell and promote a portfolio of new and established businesses. O'Hagan was a leading client and close friend of the wealthy Sir Frank Crisp of Ashurst, Morris, Crisp and Co., the solicitors appointed by the RVR.

The dangers inherent in the choice of Barrett Lennard and the LSCC very soon became evident. The first signs came at the directors' meeting on 1st June 1898. Mr Peterson, the Staplehurst solicitor engaged to oversee the purchase of land, tried to reassure Sir Myles Fenton that *"There is nothing whatever for the Chairman to be anxious about, the land purchases are going on with all possible expedition."*

At this same meeting Barrett Lennard on behalf of the LSCC said in a letter to the Directors:

"I have the pleasure to inform you that I have now agreed the terms for the construction of the Rother Valley (Light) Railway with Messrs Godfrey & Liddelow and the work will be immediately proceeded with. This is a firm of good standing and we ought to have a nice little line in a very few months."

This was rather misleading in view of Godfrey and Liddelow's recent bankruptcy.

It seems that the Chairman was not reassured by Barrett Lennard's promises. At the next meeting of the directors (on 3rd August 1898) *"It was resolved that the secretary inform the London and Scottish Contracts Corporation that the Directors are extremely anxious that the works should be proceeded with as rapidly as possible asking them when they will be commenced."* *'Confirmed by R. T. Goldsworthy'.*

Despite their misgivings the directors continued to engage with the LSCC and at their 23rd November 1898 meeting they were planning to contract with the LSCC for a *"proposed extension from Cranbrook to Tenterden and Ashford"*.

By early 1899 it was clear that the RVR's situation was critical. The decision to disengage the LSCC must have been taken in the first months of 1899, but could not be put into effect before alternative arrangements were in place.

Until the line was built debts would mount up with no revenue to offset them. To bridge the gap the directors agreed, on 1st February 1899, to take out an additional bank loan, of £2,500. At the 2nd May meeting H.F. Stephens was appointed General Manager. During the 11th July meeting the advice of the company solicitors was sought, as the Directors were concerned about share transactions between the LSCC and Barrett Lennard. At a special meeting of shareholders on 28th July the issue of debentures was approved, enabling the RVR to obtain additional capital. But debentures, secured against the assets of the company, made shareholders' investments even less secure.

At their 28th July meeting the directors were 'informed' of a *"transaction with Henderson's Transvaal Estates for the loan of £5,000 against £10,000 debentures and the relative position of the company and the LSCC with regard to the loan..."* This emergency rescue was probably arranged by Ashurst, Morris, Crisp & Co, as J.C.A. Henderson, the financier behind the gold mining and land company Henderson's Transvaal, was a major client of theirs.



CHAPTER lxvi.

An Act for making a Light Railway between Salehurst in the county of Sussex and Tenterden in the county of Kent and for other purposes. A.D. 1896.
[2nd July 1896.]

WHEREAS the making and maintaining of the railways herein-after described would be of public and local advantage:

And whereas it is expedient that the said railways should be constructed and worked as light railways subject to the provisions of this Act and the Regulation of Railways Act 1868:

And whereas the persons in this Act named with others are willing to carry the undertaking into execution on being incorporated into a company (herein-after referred to as "the Company") for the purpose and having the powers herein-after contained conferred upon them:

And whereas it is expedient that the Company and any company or persons for the time being working and using the railways of the Company be empowered to run over and use the portion of the South Eastern Railway herein-after described:

And whereas it is expedient to authorise the working and other

The LSCC was made liable for the loan and given two months to redeem it. On 29th August the directors issued an ultimatum to the LSCC giving notice that, if the loan was not redeemed by 14th September, "*proceedings would be commenced against the Corporation and its nominees to compel the fulfilment of their obligations*".

In a series of meetings from the 19th to the 28th September terms were agreed for the RVR to take direct control. Unusually Sir Frank Crisp, a famously busy man, attended the 19th September meeting in person. The meeting reconvened on the 21st, with Barrett Lennard and his solicitor Mr B.A. Elkin present, when the 'terms upon

which this company should take over the Contract from the Contract Corporation was discussed and it was agreed that Mr Crisp and Mr Elkin should meet and settle an agreement upon the term arranged'.

The directors had secured the railway's immediate future, and extricated it from its contract with the LSCC, but the company was still in danger due to its debts and the lack of progress in bringing the line into operation. The directors looked to the SER for help. Minute 7 of the 19th September meeting records that the 'Chairman reported that he had had an interview with Mr Willis the General Manager of the SER as to an agreement proposed between the companies:-

they had agreed to postpone the settlement (of the agreement) until after the line had been opened for a period of 6 months.'

As former General Manager of the SER the Chairman, Myles Fenton, had connections and influence with the SER at the highest level. The history of the SER's involvement in the provision of a railway to Tenterden was long and fraught. Fenton had been approached by the RVR's rival, the Tenterden Railway Co., to join their board in 1896. He declined the invitation but talks between the SER and the Tenterden Company continued for some time thereafter. The RVR's precarious financial situation in 1899 may have precipitated the SER into looking for an agreement with the RVR that would enable them to fulfil their commitment to provide Tenterden with a rail connection. The SER agreed to finance the Headcorn extension and thereby secured the railway's future.

The directors also had to think about rolling stock, and a letter discussed at the 24th September meeting reveals that this task was placed in the hands of RVR director Charles Head, Managing Director of Head Wrightson. He had connections with fellow engineering companies in the north east including Hawthorn Leslie. A contract for rolling stock was made with Mr William Ridley Makepeace, company secretary of Head Wrightson. It might not have been appropriate for the contract to be made directly with Head Wrightson.

Head had important connections in the City; his elder brother Henry founded the City insurance and underwriting firm Messrs Head and his nephew Christopher Head worked with Cuthbert Heath to revolutionise the insurance industry. Heath's Excess Insurance Company later became the principal creditor of the K&ESR. Charles Head's links to the insurance industry, his involvement with the SER in building St Leonards' pier in the 1890s and his association with Wm Peat, auditors to the RVR, made him a key member of the RVR board.

Barrett Lennard had no further connection with the RVR. He served in the 2nd Boer War, attached to the Army Service Corps, returning to England at the end of 1900. After distinguished service in World War I he became a leading figure in Britain's newly emerging aircraft industry, ending his career as a director of Imperial Airways.

Company secretary Oscar Stoer, whose close

links with Barrett Lennard must have been a concern, was replaced from 21st October 1899 by Francis Lancelot Beard, who was also Secretary to the Isle of Wight Central Railway.

By the 21st November 1899 meeting most of the new arrangements were in place, summarised in the following minutes:

6. Agreement between Mr William Ridley Makepeace and this company with reference to rolling stock – was sealed and signed.

7. Agreement between SER and this company in connection with the extension of the line shall be sealed.

9. Mr Francis Lancelot Beard of 3, Lothbury be and is hereby appointed Secretary to this company.

10. Mr Stevenson and Mr Stephens be empowered to make such arrangements with the contractors and sub contractors for the completion of the works as they may determine upon.

Henderson's Transvaal agreed to await the opening of the line before being repaid. Sir Roger Goldsworthy died on the 5th May 1900 and H.F. Stephens was elected in his place. In 1903 the SER's investment in the K&ESR was recognised with the appointment of Alfred Gathorne Hardy as its representative.

In 1900 Godfrey and Liddelow were again declared bankrupt. The Robertsbridge to Tenterden section had to be rebuilt in 1903, at a cost of £31,250.

Two of the three companies promoted by Barrett Lennard in 1897, the LSCC and the Indian and Ceylon Tea Trust, went into liquidation in 1900, and Mr Stoer was appointed liquidator. Had it not been for the connections and determination of the RVR's directors and of chairman Myles Fenton in particular, the RVR would almost certainly have suffered a similar fate.

In retrospect the RVR was ill-advised to engage Barrett Lennard. He lacked relevant experience and was involved in a complex network of other companies, all of which went into liquidation in 1900. However it is unlikely that the railway would have been able to attract sufficient capital without some form of company promotion, and would therefore not have been built at all. There were further difficult times ahead, but the railway ended 1899 in a much stronger position than it was in at the beginning of the year thanks to the determination, knowledge and experience of its directors and of manager H.F. Stephens.

Early Memories of the K&ESR

Barney Humphris was recently sorting out his old railway photos when he came across some he took of the K&ESR in the mid-1960s. We present a selection which capture those informal days; first Barney gives us a little background.

I was born in Uckfield during World War II and was brought up there by my grandparents. I inherited my love of railways from my grandfather. When, at the end of the war, a little petrol became available the laid-up Morris 8 was recommissioned and 'runs out' were introduced.

One of his favourites was to drive to Tenterden, the purpose being twofold. Firstly, we would stop at Rolvenden to see what was going on at the railway (sadly given my tender years my recollections are somewhat hazy of what we actually saw). Then other reason for his visit was to call at The Cellars pub, allegedly never cleaned, and full of business cards covered in cobwebs. *(Fondly remembered from early volunteering days and sadly now a coffee bar -Ed.)* I used to peep round the door – no doubt in due course I inherited my love of real ale from my grandfather!

By the early 1960s I had my own Ford Popular and my then fiancée and I visited various

locations on the railway on a number of occasions. This is of course when the photographs were taken. No-one seemed to mind (then) if we climbed on the locos and generally wandered about. Of course this relaxed attitude had a down side; I note that in December 1979 the then Secretary of the K&ESR reported in Railway Magazine that much had been stolen from the railway and items vandalised – perhaps a sign of changing times and attitudes. *(And perhaps also of the gulf between the laid-back 60s and the cynical 70s -Grumpy Old Ed.)*

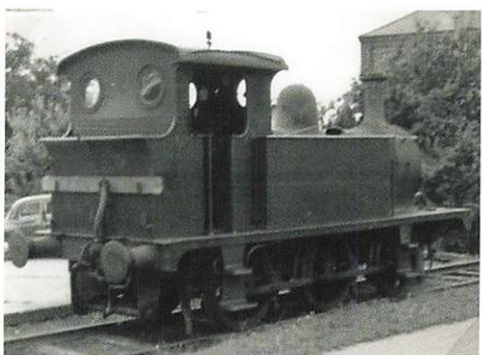
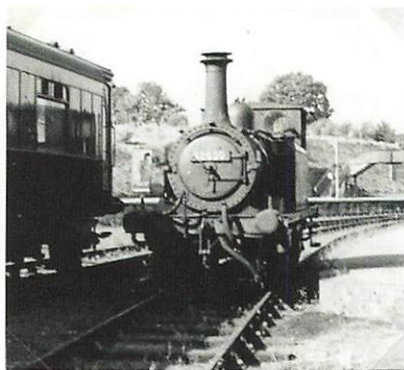
Despite having lived and worked abroad for many years we have tried to visit the K&ESR at least one a year, and I have continued to be impressed by its steady development. In 1998 I supported the Bodiam extension bond issue. We have subsequently become life members, and it is my hope to live long enough to travel to Robertsbridge.



Above, Terrier No.32670 (Bodiam) and No.32650 (Whitechapel/Sutton).

Below, Marcia and cab of Gervase.





(Clockwise from bottom left): A rare colour view of Hunslet 0-6-0ST Hastings; two views of Bodiam Station; 32650 with a Pullman Car in Robertsbridge Yard; 32650 again; the P Class at Hodson's Mill with a Rover P4 in the background.

The Editor comments: It's always amazing how casual 'snaps' like these can conjure up the atmosphere of a past era even more effectively than a professional photograph. No dates are given, but these have the 'feel' of the run-up to the refusal of the first application for a Light Railway Transfer Order in 1967. It hardly needs to be said, but in half a century things have moved on – although 32670 remained outwardly the same when recently withdrawn for her ten-yearly overhaul.

Bodiam Station is now of course a restored and much admired gem of the K&ESR, but Hodson's Mill is no more having been demolished not long ago in readiness for the redevelopment of the site. The P Class is an established part of the K&ESR fleet and some years back *Hastings* moved to Mangapps Farm where restoration is well under way. As for the loss of the casual attitude and easy access, well that's part of the price we have to pay to enjoy an operational heritage railway.

Notes for contributors

With the coming of the electronic age our printers are set up to receive largely digital text, and this is an advantage to us as it keeps the cost down. This is increasingly important, so please try to follow the guidelines set out below.

Content

The *Tenterden Terrier* will continue to major on K&ESR news, features on aspects of the current K&ESR, and historical articles on Colonel Stephens' and other light railways, particularly those of the South East.

There is only one criterion here, and that is pre-digital: any written or photographic contribution must be interesting to the reader, not just to the writer. It should only exceed 2,500 words if you trust the Editor to do his worst to shorten it – or put in a special plea for a two-parter.

Text

Copy should be sent in electronic form in word-processor format (Word is best). No need to worry about the typeface or size, but please keep it simple and do not include page numbers. Sending by e-mail attachment is the simplest method, but you can send by CD, if carefully packed. Floppy discs are now obsolete.

Typewritten copy can be scanned to extract the words for printing, so can be accepted; but the Editor's task will be easier if you ask a friend to turn it into digital form. Please do not embed photos within text – submit photos separately.

Photos

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

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

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

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

The Kent & East Sussex Railway Company Limited

Registered Charity 262481

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Registered Office:

Tenterden Town Station, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6HE

Telephone: 01580 765155 Fax: 01580 765654

E-mail: enquiries@kesr.org.uk

Websites: Railway www.kesr.org.uk

Museum www.hfstephens-museum.org.uk

Patron

Christopher Awdry

President

Vacant

Vice President

Vacant

Directors

Jamie Douglas (*Chairman*);
Geoff Crouch, David Hazeldine,
Paul Hutchinson, Brian Janes,
Paul Jessett, Ian Legg, Carol Mitchell,
Stuart Phillips, Philip Shaw

COLONEL STEPHENS RAILWAY ENTERPRISES LIMITED

(A wholly owned subsidiary)

Directors

Jamie Douglas (*Chairman*);
Kevin Bulled, Geoff Crouch, Brian Janes,
Ian Legg, Philip Shaw

Company Secretary

Nick Pallant

General Manager

Shaun Dewey

Officers

Accountant

Debbie Hayes

Accounts Office

Shirley Johnson, Rosemary Geary

Sales Manager

Graham Siver

Catering Manager

André Freeman

Shop Supervisor

Craig Tyler

Customer Service Assistants

Lin Batt, Rosemary Geary, Lynn Thorogood

Stations Manager

Richard Smith

Chief Booking Clerk

Chris Baker

Chief Ticket Inspector

Brian Thompson

Chief Station Master

Harry Hickmott

Museum Curator

Brian Janes

Engineering Manager

Paul Wilson

Permanent Way

Frim Halliwell

Signals & Telecommunications

Nick Wellington

Operating Manager

Peter Salmon

Operating Assistant

Andy Hardy

Signalling Inspector

Clive Norman

Guards Inspector

Graham Williams

Consultant Civil Engineer

Peter Tobutt

Forestry & Conservation Manager

Martin Keable

Volunteer Recruitment Manager

Jim Williams

Health & Safety

Paul Jessett

Finance Committee

Geoff Crouch (*Chairman*);
Paul Hutchinson, Brian Janes, Ian Legg,
Philip Shaw

Employment Committee

Carol Mitchell (*Chairman*);
Alan Crotty, Stuart Phillips, Kim Wilkins
Colin Avey, Chris Garman

Membership Secretaries

