



JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

Tenterden Terrier



SPRING 2017
Number 132

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

ISSN 0306-2449

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Printed by
Marstan Press Limited
Princes Street, Bexleyheath
DA7 4BJ

FRONT COVER

*Sir Peter Hendy cuts the ribbon
to open the connection with
the Network at Robertsbridge
Junction on 6th December,
flanked by Gardner Crawley
(left) and Mike Hart of the
Rother Valley Railway.*

(Phil Edwards)

BACK COVER

*Misty and moody – Rolvenden
on 17th December.*

(Phil Edwards)



Claire and Mark Stuchbury on 08888 at Rolvenden on 15th December. (Alan Crotty)

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Editorial

Optimism All Round

A major event which we have pleasure in celebrating in this issue of the *Terrier* is the official opening of the connection between Network Rail and the Rother Valley Railway at Robertsbridge on 6th December 2016. As has been mentioned to your Editor, not only was this the reinstatement of a physical link broken in the early 1970s but it repeated the creation of a junction first established about 117 years ago. Appropriate coverage of this milestone is to be found in and around our centre pages.

We cannot mention this subject without paying tribute to the other substantial advances made in recent years by our friends and associates at the RVR. One only has to think of the rebuilding of the Junction Road and Northbridge Street

sections, the splendid platform at Robertsbridge Junction and the beginnings of the station building to be seen in the toilet block now under construction. As we go to press we hear that Rother District Council is now due to make a decision on the planning application in March, and that there is optimism about the outcome.

There is also much to be optimistic about on our own K&ESR. The Santa Season was a splendid success not only in terms of income and service provided but also of staff enthusiasm and morale. These are the very things we need to carry us into the new season, and as this is being written the February Thomas event – with a more than satisfactory level of pre-booking – is about to happen. Much of the recent upturn is no doubt due to our new customer-friendly website. So, on the strength of this upbeat mood, let's go forward into 2017 and make it one of the best years ever for the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

Nick Pallant



The Class 14 diesel after repainting, pictured at Tenterden on 2nd February.

(Mike Grimwood)

The Great Western Railcar in Focus

For just over 50 years ex-GWR Railcar No.20, or W20W as some know this vehicle, has been one of the long-standing features of the preserved Kent & East Sussex Railway.

Built at Swindon as part of the batch of the fourth type of these diesel railcars – Nos.19 to 35 – and powered by two AEC 9.6 litre six-cylinder engines, No.20 was the first to enter service on the Great Western Railway in June 1940, ahead of No.19. After 22 years' service with the GWR and latterly BR Western Region, No.20 was withdrawn from operational use in October 1962 and placed in open storage at Worcester.

Following an inspection at Worcester the Railcar was purchased by the then Kent & East Sussex Railway Preservation Society for £415 in 1964. However it was not to be until April 1966 before No.20 was finally delivered to Robertsbridge, after the successful resolution of a dispute with BR over moving it as an out-of-gauge vehicle through the narrow tunnels on the Tonbridge–Hastings line.

After its arrival on K&ESR metals, and the appropriate allocation of K&ESR stock number 20, the Railcar was treated to an extensive exterior and interior refurbishment, including repainting it in the company livery of chocolate and cream for passenger stock, and addressing various mechanical issues to get it running.

In February 1974 it secured its place in the

preservation history of the K&ESR when it formed the first scheduled passenger service train following reopening of the line, operating between Tenterden Town and Rolvenden.

The Railcar continued to be used for passenger services throughout the rest of the 1970s, although according to reports in the Tenterden Terrier for that period a considerable number of mechanical problems came to light, including the engine cylinder heads; but this did not prevent it from being used as locomotive-hauled stock while these problems were addressed. More prophetically, the Winter 1977 edition noted that bodywork repairs were needed before No.20 could be returned to service, and by the Winter 1979 edition, *Lineside News* noted that it was suffering from a severe attack of body rot, although it had performed well on the summer Saturday morning and November services.

1980 saw work begin on bodywork repairs; but this ceased, and would not start again until the late 1980s. In the interim period a draw held by the railway in the summer of 1985 raised £1,821 for the Railcar's restoration, and in the winter of 1988 agreement was reached for the vehicle to be moved from its resting place at Wittersham Road to the carriage sidings at Tenterden, as a prelude to work restarting under a new team led by Andrew Webb. I joined Andrew in 1990, following the reopening to Northiam.

As the full restoration commenced and continued throughout the 1990s, it became apparent that the Railcar required a considerable amount of attention. As far as the condition of the exterior steel body panels was concerned, all except the curved cab-roof domes had corroded beyond repair. Most of the timber framework, including substantial lengths of the cant rails, waist rails, and many of the vertical sections had suffered badly from rot or splitting caused by corrosion of the steel screws, while the majority of the metal frame brackets had rusted severely, to the point of disintegration in some cases.

The lighting circuit wiring was discovered to be in very poor condition, as evidenced by charring found in the central ceiling conduit. The large steel base plates located under each of the



W20W is delivered to Robertsbridge on 3rd April 1966. (Andrew Webb)



K&ESR No.20 at Tenterden Town Station after arrival at 12.15pm from Newmill Bridge on 25th April 1976. (Brian Stephenson)

driving cabs had also rusted badly and required replacement. In simple terms, the Railcar required a very comprehensive body rebuild. The mechanical side, however, looked much brighter, thanks in part to the work carried out during the 1970s. However there would still need to be extensive refurbishment and reconditioning work carried out to the engines, gearboxes, and control and braking systems.

Since those days, however, and thanks to the financial generosity of a number of groups and individuals, a tremendous amount of restoration work has been carried out on No.20. The wooden framework has been subject of a considerable amount of renewals, with the driving cab at the Headcorn end of the vehicle presently being the only area still to be completed.

The underframe has been cleaned by needle-gunning and then painted, with only a short length under the Headcorn driving cab still needing attention. At the time of writing a new base plate is being prepared for riveting to the underframe at this end, the Robertsbridge end cab plate having been replaced earlier on in the rebuild. Thanks in part to the generosity of a supporter, all bar a handful of the steel body panels are in stock, ready to be fitted when required.

With respect to mechanical and electrical work, much has been achieved here as well. The bogies, gearboxes, vacuum brake cylinders and one of the two AEC engines have been overhauled, and the majority of the air-pipe for the electro-pneumatic control system, around 500m in length, has been replaced. The control desks at both ends have also been reconditioned.

However, much remains to be done to complete the Railcar's rebuild; and the work will require

further financial and material resources. At present the most expensive and most urgent priority for funding is the overhaul of the second engine, at a cost of £6,000. Also needed is money for items such as glass, upholstery and batteries, plus specialist work to be carried out on the transmissions.

In straightforward terms, more money means that more resources can be made available. The sooner we can resource the necessary finance, the sooner it will back in service. The total amount needed to achieve this goal is £51,000. So if you would like to see this historic and rare railway vehicle finished, you can help in two ways.

Firstly, by donating to the GWR Railcar Fund operated by the K&ESR, using the Appeal Fund envelope accompanying this edition of the Tenterden Terrier. This is a Restricted Fund, so your donation can only be used for the Railcar's restoration. Any amount, big or small, will be gratefully received; and if you are a UK taxpayer you can Gift Aid your donation.

Secondly, by volunteering to help. New faces are always welcome, especially those with skills such as woodworking, mechanical engineering and sheet metal working. If this is your area of expertise and interest, please contact us.

The restoration of the Railcar has been a challenging project for all those involved, and one that has taken a lot of hard work and many long years of devotion; but with your help it can be successfully concluded. Let us hope that the ambition of seeing this important piece of railway history running again on the K&ESR ceases to be a dream and becomes a reality in the not-too-distant future.

Chris Davis



The derelict Railcar at Tenterden Town in the 1990s. (Brett Scillitoe)

BOOK REVIEW

Industrial Railways and Locomotives of Kent by Robin Waywell.

Published by the Industrial Railway Society, Melton Mowbray. 458 pages. Price £35.00. ISBN 978 1 901556 92 6

The predecessor to this volume, *Industrial Locomotives of South-Eastern England*, published in 1958, devoted just 40 of its small pages to Kent. As its title suggests, this long-awaited successor expands its scope to catalogue industrial railways, not just their motive power, with detailed maps of the larger systems. Brief details are also given of systems which did not use locomotives.

The book covers the county of Kent as it existed from 1900 to 1965, thus including Medway and the London Boroughs of Bexley and Bromley. The listings follow the standard Industrial Railway Society pattern and are divided into seven sections: industrial locations; the coal industry; civil engineering contracts using locomotives; builders, repairers and dealers in locomotives; preservation and pleasure railways with a gauge of 15 inches or more; exhibitions; and non-locomotive-worked lines.

Minor railways are included in the industrial locations sections, so the locomotive stock of the original East Kent and Kent & East Sussex Railways is included. There is some inconsistency in the way temporary transfers of locomotives are shown – K&ESR *Northiam*

and *Hecate* are included in the East Kent listing but are not shown as leaving the K&ESR, for example. Similarly the War Department ex-GWR Dean Goods engines used on the K&ESR between 1941 and 1943 are mentioned, but Southern Railway engines hired to the K&ESR are not.

The listings for heritage railways do not include ex-main line locomotives, so for the K&ESR the P class is shown (presumably as it was previously owned by Hodson's Mill) but Terriers and other ex-BR steam engines are not.

Although it is never possible to say the task of compiling a work like this is complete (three previously unknown systems were identified at a late stage of production), this is certainly a valuable reference for anyone interested in the minor railways of Kent.

Three impressions I was left with are the sheer density of heavy industry that once existed in North Kent, the vast fleet of locomotives used to build the Channel Tunnel and then the high-speed rail link, and the bizarre names used by some locomotive owners – for example *Dead Horse* at Swanscombe cement works, *Baby Senior* at Holborough cement works, and the series of engines used by the contractor William Betts & Son in 1841/2 – *Ghoul*, *Spectre*, *Ghost*, *Phantom* and so on.

TGB

In Memoriam

As we were concluding this edition, we learned with regret of the deaths of three volunteer colleagues.

Brian Gooch, who was the father of Wealden Pullman chef Meg and a regular volunteer on the Pullman, passed away at William Harvey Hospital, Ashford, on 25th January.

Robin Dyce, former Chairman of the Tenterden Railway Company, died on 11th February, four

days after a triple heart bypass operation at King's College Hospital, London. He was a larger-than-life character and a leading light of the Bodiam Station Group.

Mick Hoad, former Station Master and Booking Clerk at Northiam and Bodiam.

Full obituaries for Brian, Robin and Mick are intended for the Summer issue.

Lineside News

Compiled by
Hugh Nightingale

COMMERCIAL

From the Chairman – Jamie Douglas

I am utterly convinced that 2017 is going to be a fantastic year for our railway. Only a few short weeks ago our teams managed to deliver the most successful Santa Special event we have ever achieved – exceeding visitor number and fare income targets by a healthy margin; but what was even better was being able to see a real uplift in the atmosphere around the railway – the staff and volunteers pitching in to help out with any and every task that needed doing to deliver a successful premier event. I'm sure that it'll be covered elsewhere in Lineside News and Tickets Please, but an interesting statistic relating to the delivery of this event over the nine days of Santa Specials is that very nearly 1,000 rostered duties were undertaken! I'm sure you'll agree this is quite something.

There has been a lot of 'back room' time spent looking at a great many aspects of how the business runs, with a view to making it run more efficiently. Also hire agreements – most notably we have recently spent a lot of time looking at an agreement for the new Class 08 brought to the

railway by Mark and Christopher Stuchbury – and also reviewing the hire agreements for the two Terriers; we are looking to secure the future of these locomotives with us here on the K&ESR.

I have just read an e-mail that says that with just a few days before our February Thomas™ kicks off, we are running some 37% up on Thomas bookings income and 25% up on passengers for the event, based on the same time last year. This seems to underline once again how essential it is to make it as easy as possible to make reservations, and in the modern age this tends to be via online reservations. Again I am sure this is going to be a fantastic event, and our teams will once again deliver a first class product to our guests.

Looking a little further into the future, April is going to be another exciting month as we host the Lego 'Bricks Britannia' exhibition. More about this from our Commercial Team no doubt, but for me this is a fantastic opportunity to play host to such an internationally recognisable brand, and demonstrates the team's desire to try new things.



Shelter for the replica Railmotor under construction at Tenterden on 19th January.

(Ross Shimmion)

The Lego exhibition will be followed closely by the visit of the largest locomotive yet to run on the K&ESR: Great Western Manor class No.7822 *Foxcote Manor*. This is being funded through some collaboration between railways and support groups, with a number of steaming days for the locomotive having been exchanged for surplus permanent way materials. The transport, being sponsored by the K&ESR Guest Engine Club – which is always looking for new members – is costing an eye-watering £12,500. *Foxcote Manor* will be steamed on 12 days during May and into June, so there will be plenty of opportunity for as many of you as possible to come and see her running between Tenterden Town and Bodiam.

Over the coming weeks and months visitors to Tenterden will be able to see the new Secondary Catering Outlet taking shape; by the time you read this it will probably be well on the way to completion. This will take the place of the BBQ marquee which is put in place for event weekends, and will offer a year-round opportunity to supply our guests with as much refreshment as they like.

So there is a lot to look forward to over the coming months, and I anticipate working with the teams to deliver our most successful year yet. I also intend to put in a lot more ‘back room’ time in helping to develop small-scale infrastructure projects as we become more able to invest in developing our infrastructure in order to meet the challenge of running trains to Robertsbridge.

Company Secretary – Phillip Clark-Monks

2016 Annual General Meeting: Please note that the AGM this year will again be held in **Zion Baptist Church, Tenterden High Street, during the afternoon of Saturday 18th November.** Nominations for election to the Board will close at 2.00pm on 26th August. The necessary nomination forms can be obtained from the Company Secretary. This item is for information; a formal Notice will be issued in due course.

Awards: Once again we remind members that we run two award schemes – one for 25 years’ service as a volunteer and a second for 50 years of continuous membership of the company and its predecessors. The actual awards are made at the AGM in November. I will be contacting those whom I am able to trace and appear to be eligible over the next couple of months, but it would be of great assistance if anyone who thinks they have a claim to either award would write to me at Tenterden Town Station.

Commercial Manager – André Freeman

The last quarter of 2016 witnessed some significant changes to the structure of the Commercial Department. As far as train services go we operate a business with wildly varying demands, but the workload behind the scenes is fairly constant (i.e. full on!) and merely changes focus, such as in the run up to, and delivery of, our record-breaking Santa Specials.

As our customers’ buying patterns change, so must we. Our website, its online booking facility and our social media pages are at their busiest on weekday evenings; we must be prepared and ready to engage with our customers when they wish, not just when it suits us.

Our 2017 timetable leaflet was ready for our Santa Special visitors to collect, and has been simplified to make it easier to read and to align with the website. While having an important role to play, the demand for physical leaflets is without doubt in decline: recent feedback showed that visitor awareness attributable to leaflets amounted to just a single-digit percentage.

At the time of writing, bookings for the February ‘Day Out with Thomas’ event are at their highest level for three years; and this has been achieved without the customary leaflet. So what has replaced the more traditional advertising routes? Without doubt social media and personal recommendation are high on the list, but personalised e-mails to our customer database have been particularly success. We have in excess of 20,000 subscribers to the various lists: Santa, Wealden Pullman, Day Out with Thomas, group visits etc. and we are now making good use of this facility. This is also the means by which our visitor newsletters are distributed – view or sign up at www.kesr.org.uk/news

It’s essential to remember that today’s K&ESR is founded on our rich heritage – but although that history defines our line, our focus must be on the future. For too long we have looked back, rather than forward to how we can together shape the future of *our* railway.

Product and Reservations – Helen Douglas

So much has happened since our last communication, in terms of both activities and lessons learned. We have lived through the busiest period at the railway and it has been a pleasure to have the opportunity to learn so very much in a short space of time. The design and

production of our 2017 working timetable was a steep learning curve and we quickly realised how important an image library reflecting the current products will be, and more importantly showing people 'doing things' with us.

It will therefore be one of my missions this year to build up an extensive image library of people enjoying themselves, to make the production of the 2018 public timetable a much more straightforward process.

Alongside designing the timetable and marketing the Santa product, making the preparations for Santa and getting the wheels in motion for the Thomas event, it was great to see the Secondary Catering Outlet taking shape in the yard at Tenterden.

Santa Specials 2016

The record-breaking Santas were a personal highlight for me in that it was my absolute pleasure to see so many volunteers working together to deliver exceptional service to our customers. In summary:

- Number of passengers: +8.7% (see page 20)
- Passenger revenue: exceeded budget by 10%
- Revenue: exceeded budget by 21%

Of the total number of advance bookings (2,524), 1,297 (51.4%) were made online.

It is an objective of our team to record e-mail addresses for as many customers as possible when booking, and we certainly saw the benefits of this. For the first time we sent out a message to all customers with an e-mail address ahead of their visit, to remind them to allow plenty of time for Christmas traffic and parking, to provide their booking reference, and to advise what facilities we had on site. This received a very positive reaction in general, with fewer last-minute calls to the booking office and late arrivals.

Following the event a full customer survey was sent to customers by e-mail to get feedback. Of the 1,800 e-mails issued we received a return rate of 78% – much higher than anticipated and a testament to everyone's efforts. Some headline statistics from this were:

a) Have you travelled on Santa Specials before?

First visit: 54%

Visited previously: 46%

b) How did you hear about us?

Social media: 42%

Personal recommendation: 35%

Leaflet: 17%

Press: 3%

Roadside sign: 3%

c) How did you book your tickets?:

Online: 61%

By telephone: 38%

In person: 1%

Feedback received was all of a constructive nature, saying that the K&ESR Santa Specials are of good quality and value. Many of those who have visited previously stated that they have become an essential family activity each year. A frequently expressed opinion was "Don't try to fix what isn't broken."

Day Out With Thomas

This February we are returning to a format of allocated trains for passengers, in an attempt to spread the load on site at any one time. It has been our past experience that this has a directly positive impact on catering and retail sales in the colder weather when the days are still short. We are also including some 'scenarios' within the schedule to provide further loco-related entertainment for the customers.

At the time of writing there are three days to go before the first weekend of the February, event and we are running six days ahead of sales on this time in 2015. (2016 sales were adversely affected by weather conditions in the lead-up to the event.) I hope that staff and customers alike will enjoy themselves, and that we can exceed budget by the end of the final day.

Lego

We are delighted that to complement our educational charity status we will be hosting 'Bricks Britannia – A History of Britain' consisting of more than 30 iconic models of British history from Stonehenge, to Beatrix Potter, to Concorde, made entirely from Lego bricks. The centrepiece for the exhibition will be an 8m long model of *Flying Scotsman* and two Pullman coaches, which we fully intend to utilise to raise awareness of our products ('Wealden Pullman') and projects (*Aries*).

We are excited to be the first venue for this exhibition, with Lego being popular across the age range; and are very confident that this will bring in an entirely new audience to our railway. We plan to work with our local communities and schools to maximise public awareness.

Marketing and Social Media

The world has evolved significantly in the past ten years. Specifically there has been a significant rise in digital media – Google, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc. This is an excellent addition to our arsenal for advertising and puts us in front of our customers at a time and in a location convenient to them. This also means we can reach a significantly larger audience. It is important to ensure we understand our target audience for each product or event, and arrange our marketing and advertising strategy accordingly.

Since 1st August 2016 we have more than doubled the number of people who 'like' and 'follow' our Facebook page, and in the coming months we will be further analysing the extensive data available to us. This will allow us to maximise the benefit of free advertising to our followers and encourage those people who are not already aware of our brand and products to learn more.

Alongside this we have access to data from our website for who/where/when our customers are using this and what they are searching for, including what information is most relevant to them. We can use this data to make amendments and changes to the website.

We are working hard to establish, and rebuild where necessary, relationships within our local community and beyond to promote goodwill and secure a good reputation. Among the many benefits of doing this we hope to encourage a new generation of volunteers to safeguard the future of the railway.

Shop – Craig Tyler

With the 2016 running season behind us, now is a good time for reflection on the past year's activities. Firstly, I'd like to thank the shop team for their hard work, dedication and determination to ensure the shop continues to grow, both financially and as an integral part of the railway. We've had many positives (new and exciting product ranges, exceeding targets and new members) and I hope that this will continue into 2017 and beyond.

Our 2016 Santa Specials proved to be a challenge for the shop, which saw a slight decrease in revenue compared with the previous year. In contrast I am happy to report that 2016 saw an increase of over 10% in revenue compared with 2015, which I consider to be a huge positive given the current financial climate.

Following feedback from the Santa Specials, we will further increase our range of bespoke railway items – come and visit us soon for the new editions. 2017 will also see the return of our online shop, featuring even more goods than previously advertised – get ready to purchase your next Terrier using our new online interface.

The increasing number of events planned for the year ahead all look excitingly filled with fun. The shop will be open more days than last year, and help is always appreciated: if you can spare any time, please get in contact: ctyler@kesr.org.uk

Wealden Pullman – Meg Gooch

What a year we had on the Wealden Pullman! We finished the end of the year on a high, culminating in a lunch train on Christmas Day and a New Year's Eve dinner train. Christmas Day was a first for us, with a five course traditional lunch which went down exceptionally well with our passengers. The feedback via e-mail, phone calls and hand-written letters is testament to that. But without the staff, be that onboard or along the line, we couldn't have done it, so thank you.

For the traditional New Year's Eve celebration, 2017 was welcomed at Bodiam with a splendid display of fireworks and local sparkling wine. Once the train was back at Tenterden and our guests had drifted off into the night, the staff sat down to a full English breakfast. This goes down rather well at 3am, I can assure you.

As reported elsewhere, *Aries* will be going into the shed shortly. Donations are still arriving and the Christmas Day service in particular resulted in a substantial boost. Mention must also be made of the 4253 team who were very successful in raising funds for *Aries* during the Santa Specials with the sale of hot punch and roast chestnuts. There is much in common between the two projects, and we are working jointly on the production of castings.

At the time of writing both *Barbara* and *Diana* are in the C&W shed. *Barbara* has had a paint touch-up, and I will be going in to signwrite her name etc. *Diana* is having her life-expired kitchen ceiling replaced and her extractor fans overhauled.

The 2017 season is off and running from Mothering Sunday on 26th March and then properly from the beginning of April. As always I'm looking for help – both front and back of house – so if anybody fancies trying something different, please get in touch: 01580 761166 or meg@kesr.org.uk

Bodiam Group

On 2nd February, nine days before he died, Robin Dyce submitted his usual enthusiastic and abundant missive about the activities of the Bodiam Group. In his cover note he mentioned that he was waiting to hear if a bed would be available the following week for his planned heart operation, expressed a hope that his report made sense, and that if I considered changes were required "then please just press ahead and I'll enjoy reading the published version!"

Sadly, so very sadly, we know that this cannot be the case, at least in this world. So here is his last Bodiam Group report in full (with just minor edits), which is dedicated to his memory. HN

During November the Cavell Van was moved into the C&W shed at Tenterden and, after an inspection by C&W staff, Malcolm Burgess and Paul Randall moved in to paint the roof. This was completed just before Christmas and we await the van's return to Bodiam in April.

Other members of the Bodiam Group noted at Tenterden over the Christmas period were Vic Grigg undertaking platform and washing up duties, Malcolm Burgess working in the 4253 marquee, and yours truly trying to maintain peace and calm in the car park. Vic is also training to become a Station Master, and has passed out as a Level Crossing Keeper at Northiam. As Chief Station Master Charles Lucas said: "It seems impossible to hold him back!"

Meanwhile, back at Bodiam, major clearance of the fence line between the yard and the car park field has been led by Freddy Soper with help from just about everybody else. The trees (which are a mix of hawthorn and blackthorn) had a lot of ivy growing up them and despite, for a number of reasons, being attractive to birds, the ivy had to be removed or we ran the risk of trees blowing down in high winds. A huge amount of brambles, ivy and general undergrowth were extracted, and several bits of metal and concrete were recovered and duly disposed of. A considerable length of old twisted strand metal hop pole tensioning cable was also removed, but this was found to be beyond re-use.

Over the past few winters, when trees have blown down and the trunks and boughs used for firewood, stumps have been left in the ground.

We are currently working on removing one stump, with the others to follow later. Many daffodil bulbs have been planted and are already showing growth above ground.

As many of you will know the hop garden at Bodiam is sited very near the south fence of the site, making it impossible to install correctly angled straining wires; with the result that all the hop poles have been steadily leaning more and more away from the fence line. To provide clearance for strainers it has been necessary to move the whole hop garden away from the fence and at the same time to replace all the poles, which had rotted beneath the surface. New (in other words, good secondhand) hop poles were located by Bill Larke, courtesy of Rother Valley Brewery and Hoad's Hops of Sandhurst.

However replacement straining wires and ground anchors have proved harder to source. The run of hop plants nearest the fence will be removed and the area turfed over. New hop plants, of a genus yet to be decided, will be planted in a new run.

It has also become necessary to replace some of the Colonel Stephens design wooden four-bar fencing that was constructed as part of the Bodiam 2000 extension project. The runners and posts have done very well, but much has now to be replaced for both safety and aesthetic reasons. The fence is being stained black, as was the original.

Malcolm Burgess, Paul Randall and Chris Wady have laid the foundation and surfacing slabs for Chris Crouch's memorial bench, ready for it to be added just before the start of the running season.

We don't have any train news, as we haven't seen one since the New Year and the Santa Specials don't get as far as the 'Wild West'; so we don't have many visitors at this time of year.

Unfortunately, because of the lack of covered accommodation, we have had to repaint many of our platform seats in the new waiting room; and both the new and old waiting rooms are being used as undercover storage to protect the recently renovated seats and trollies over the winter. John Harding has led the team working to renovate the BODIAM running-in board on the platform and one of its supporting wooden posts and finial. Unlike all other platform running-in boards on the railway 'our' board has a two-part metal faceplate fixed to a wooden frame and backing board, both of which have had to be replaced due to rot.

The station shop yard door has been causing us some concern and is now rapidly falling apart. This is on the south-facing weather side of the building, and has been patched up a number of times. We have boarded up the opening so that it is safe and secure, and quotations are being sought to replace the door.

The steel level crossing gates, although strictly under the purview of the S&T Manager, have developed bad corrosion especially on the Northiam side, where a number of holes have appeared along the bottom of the tubular structure. We are hoping to get affordable quotes from the original manufacturer so that at the least the Northiam side can be either replaced or made good, galvanised, and repainted in modern white paint. Hopefully both gates can be dealt with in the not-too-distant future.

Malcolm Burgess and Paul Randall will be repainting the corrugated iron station building roof as well as that of the toilet, both of which are painted black and looking a bit patchy and tired. It is very tempting to write 'K&ESR' at the same time in large white letters on one roof in the style of airports in pre-WW2 days, as we get many light aircraft circulating above us looking at Bodiam Castle. Any advertising will help, even for the crews of the Phantoms, Hercules and Chinooks that fly up and down the Rother Valley at low level; the last pair of Chinooks that we saw, in the course of a low speed pass, actually waved back to us.

As always in winter we have to cut off the water supply and drain down the pipe runs to the shop and toilets so that they cannot freeze. Some may question this; but although we have heaters, problems in the past have shown that is better to be safe than sorry.

Although seemingly a long way off, work has started on developing ideas for the 2017 Bodiam Hop Festival which is to be held over the weekend of 9/10th September. This year the Festival will be more biased towards attracting families, and it is also hoped that nearby attractions and neighbours will be making a contribution to a larger event. This will be the 18th annual event, so please make a note of it in your diaries, especially to help.

Welcome to Frank Wenham who has joined the Group. Frank has an interesting background, is a keen gardener and has many of his own tools. He will be put to good use.

Ashford Area Group – Ted Micklam

We started the year with an excellent and well-attended presentation on 'The Railways of Greece' by Donald Wilson. With a concentration this year of some of our most respected and popular speakers, we are encouraged to expect this trend to continue.

From April our indoor programme is:

19th April: Doug Lindsay – 'Railway Holiday in the USA' and 'Update on the *Brighton Belle* Project'

17th May: Wilf Watters – 'Vintage Railway Films' and 'Railways in the Cinema'

21st June: Michael Bunn – 'Tour de France by Train'. Inspired by his first talk to the Group, Michael takes us on a rail tour of France, alerting us to the scenery and culture of the diverse regions.

Indoor meetings are held at The Rail Staff Club, off Beaver Road, Ashford TN23 7RR. They start at 7.30pm and are planned to end by 10pm; everyone is welcome to attend. Topics are subject to availability.

We will also celebrate our success with coach trips over the years by visiting the Maldegem Steam Gala on Sunday 30th April. Please contact me on 01233 503999 or edward.micklam@tiscali.co.uk

Museum Notes

After a very successful season last year following the decision to permit free admission, and with a final total of 14,668 visitors, we are certainly becoming more widely known. Not only have we been able to enhance the experience of a good day out on the railway but have also become an attraction in our own right when visitors have insufficient time to take a railway trip.

The major visual event of the winter has been the erection of a shelter adjacent to Carriage & Wagon, in full Colonel Stephens style, for the late Colin Shutt's replica Railmotor. This is the work of Dave and Matt Stubbs, with help from roped-in passers-by and painting by the Tuesday Group. The shelter will have largely open sides and during the operating season the railmotor will clearly be seen from the platform. It should also highlight the entry route to the Museum via the cobbles (incidentally rescued from London's docklands many years ago) behind the signal box.

This should also hopefully encourage more

people to visit the 'far side' of the line to enjoy the attractive viewing area – and visit the museum by a drier and cleaner route than the often-used dusty/muddy path via the industrial estate entry road.

The event most anticipated is the arrival of the Railmotor itself. However, due to logistical difficulties and strains on the Museum's limited manpower, this had not yet occurred at the time of writing.

With the end of the running season, work got under way inside the Museum at the accelerated pace usual when we can work unimpeded while the Museum is closed. We have made a fairly major change in the internal layout. For some time we have been aware of the difficulty of seeing or photographing Gazelle to best advantage. To open up a clearer view we have swept away the cases containing the displays of passes and the Burry Port and Gwendreath Valley Railway, and their adjacent wall, thus opening up a view from the platform seat area.

The resultant reshuffle involved the moving of the contents of up to five cabinets without significant loss of exhibits. Indeed we have created space for a 'temporary exhibit' relating to Stephens' railmotors to complement the arrival of Colin Shutt's replica. The extensive structural changes involved much electrical work, and we are most grateful to Dave Brown for undertaking this, on leave of absence from the Tuesday Group.

On the exhibits front we have just bought a Tyer's No.7 single line tablet to complete our 'set' of the types of single line control methods for the Callington branch. The S&T department also managed to find us a Tyer's No.6 electric tablet machine. Victorian engineers built with cast iron designed to last, so this was moved from store with the very necessary help of three stalwart members of the Tuesday Group. This machine been has cosmetically restored to go with the set of matching tablets we have from the North Devon & Cornwall Junction.

We have also been able to acquire a very rare bone china saucer from the 'Where the Rainbow Ends' café on the Ashover Light Railway. This will complement our existing holding of a place setting of cutlery from the same building.

A feature of the Victorian room is a display on the Stephens family, and we have a file in the archive including a notable collection of

correspondence between Stephens' father and his friends and relatives. An unexpected find in a Kentish bookshop was a copy of a local history of Hammersmith by Warwick Draper, a former neighbour and tenant of Stephens' father. The copy turned out to be the one given personally in 1913 to Stephens' mother, Clara, by the author. We hope we can use this material to enhance the existing family display.

The traditional platform ticket machine issuing Edmondson tickets has proved a popular attraction since its installation last summer, not least to those seeking an exhibit they can interact with. It sold old Edmondson and/or specially printed souvenir tickets. Interestingly the only preserved examples we have seen elsewhere have been painted green but our example, when stripped back, showed that maroon was the original colour, so it has been expertly restored it in a bright maroon.

As always, work behind the scenes on sorting the archive and digitising the photos has continued and made considerable progress (something like 4,000 scanned to date) as well as plodding on with sorting the files. Meanwhile Ross Shimon has continued to organise our extensive reference library.

Further, Don Philips has been working through and analysing the piles of paperwork rescued many years ago from Biddenden station loft, which is showing real insight into the traffic the K&ESR handled. Who in present generations would guess that in Edwardian times goods and passengers would travel from Biddenden to Cranbrook via Headcorn and Paddock Wood, a long half-day journey – against a three-hour walk for a fit person (or a 15 minute journey by road today).

With sad passings, and consequent donations, more books – particularly American for those of you interested in the wider world – have been added to sales stocks. Do come and view; prices are very reasonable.

Finally, we have a vibrant museum because of the dedication of a very small band of volunteers (19 at the last count) to man the Museum on the 200-odd operating days, keep the place trim and maintain the Archive, not to mention fundraising. So you can see we are a little thin on the ground at present and just getting by, for none are getting any younger and new blood is particularly welcome.

Colonel Stephens Society – Ross Shimmion

The 150th anniversary of the birth of Holman Fred Stephens will take place next year; he was born in Hammersmith on 31st October 1868. The Colonel Stephens Society would like to see the date marked in appropriate ways.

Suggestions put forward so far include model railway exhibitions featuring layouts based on lines associated with Stephens, a special train on the K&ESR to tie in with the annual Society weekend, feature articles in the railway and model railway press (including the *Tenterden Terrier?*), and renewed efforts to have blue plaques fixed to buildings associated with the Colonel. No doubt other ideas will emerge.

The K&ESR was said to have been the Colonel's favourite line among his empire of light railways, so it would be good to celebrate his 150th birthday in style. Without him we would have no Kent & East Sussex Railway to enjoy. If you want to discover more about Stephens and his lines, the place to go is the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum at Tenterden.

Forestry & Conservation – Steve McMurdo

Since our last report our fortnightly working days have seen us actively engaged at a number of locations along the line, pruning and cutting back trees and undergrowth.

We were more than a little anxious to complete our long-running project between Rother and Hexden bridges before the end of the operating season while trains were still available to get us to and from this remote location. In addition the advance of winter means the drainage ditches tend to become waterlogged, making much of the site inaccessible. The pruning of one particularly large and tall tree was recognised by our own very able chainsaw operators as being something which should be entrusted to a professional, so we were joined one Sunday by an extremely agile tree surgeon with the necessary roping and climbing skills and an apparently spectacular head for heights. Completion of works here was finally reached by late October, with visibility and general tidiness vastly improved.

The section of line around Tenterden is bordered by residential properties on the town side of the line, and the railway correctly attaches great importance to maintaining good relations with our neighbours. An occupant of one of the houses contacted the GM expressing concern

about a large tree on our land which he felt was potentially adversely affecting his property. A member of the F&C team duly called to discuss and assess the problem, and a mutually satisfactory solution was agreed. An approach was also received from residents in Rogersmead regarding the height of the hedge between the road and our line, as a result of which an onsite discussion took place followed by cutting back to their requested height.

We have been in discussion with the Local Authority regarding the need for the (very) sympathetic pruning of various trees in the station itself. Documentation was prepared and submitted by us, resulting in the granting of permission to proceed.

New Year's Day saw us back at Wittersham Road to finish the clearance work we had started some while ago and to also witness the last trains of the 2016 operating season pass us as we worked. The opportunity was taken to burn debris remaining from the summer works, which had previously been impossible due to the dry conditions and consequent risk of the spread of fire when we were last here. The distinct lack of traffic on the roads leading to Tenterden on the morning of 1st January was reminiscent of Sunday driving in the 1970s.

A couple of visits to Bodiam, both in seemingly sub-zero conditions, enabled us to clear the banks and trackside from the station up to the RVR/K&ESR boundary. To balance things up, similar work was carried out at the other extremity of the line at Tenterden, from the Pullman dock up into the headshunt. This not only presents a tidier appearance for our visitors but also improves the sight lines for our train crews when shunting.

The section between the two foot crossings on the Cranbrook Road to Tenterden section is currently receiving our attention. Hopefully it will not be too long before we see the first green shoots of spring.

Tuesday Group – Graham Hopker

The repainting and repair of Northiam Signal Box was finally completed during the middle of October.

November saw the Group laying a concrete slab path from the A28 entrance gate to the Memorial Garden. New residents in Tenterden, living not far from the station, generously

donated these slabs. This has improved the previous ash path, which was not wheelchair user friendly (and was regularly dug up by the local rabbit population).

Before the real onset of winter a new fireplace was put into No.1 Cottage, and the chimney stack was repointed.

We put in a new wooden platform for the ground frame by the Northiam crossing gates, and took the opportunity to repaint the lever mechanism cover.

Just before Christmas we spent three Tuesdays at Tenterden and undercoated the wood for the new shelter for the replica Railcar. We also started preparing the large Carriage & Wagon Shed main doors for repainting when the weather improves.

Some of our team helped staff the Santa trains over the whole weekend in the middle of December – thanks to all for that! We also put Christmas trees in the tubs on Northiam Station platform.

Yet another very successful and productive year of the Tuesday Group's input to the Railway was finished off with our annual lunch with partners at The White Hart in Newenden.

Gardening Report – *Veronica Hopker*

Tenterden Town

We spent time at the end of summer working on the little garden by the office and the small garden by the play area. Some ideas have been put forward for making the railway more environmentally friendly, and to this end we will be planting more bee- and butterfly-friendly plants.

We already have a good bird population at Tenterden, thanks to all the fields and gardens surrounding the station. We have a friendly robin which invariably joins us when we work on the flowerbeds.

This year we will be adding bee/bug boxes to see how these are used. We also plan to introduce some wild flowers around the gardens to supplement our usual perennials and make Tenterden a little more wildlife friendly.

At the beginning of September the railway was visited by a group from Kent County Council as part of their 'group bonding' initiative. For a short while four ladies joined us to carry out deadheading and weeding.

Doug and Eve Ramsden kindly gave us a selection of plants in the autumn – Sweet Williams, Wallflowers and a few small Choisya shrubs, which were planted around the station gardens.

On 27th September two members from Tenterden's Rotary Club kindly donated a box of purple crocus bulbs as part of their celebration in helping to eradicate the awful disease of polio around the world. These have been planted in the grass by the station main entrance.

The C&W garden was tidied and plants moved prior to the construction of the shelter for the replica Railcar, and also – as a consequence of building the new food outlet – we dug up and moved other plants that we wanted to keep.

Rolvenden

The tubs lasted reasonably well on the station platform, thanks to the watering system. The little garden inside the entrance was tidied.

It is hoped to put in a few more plants, but the problem here is keeping things alive during the summer months.

Northiam

The wild flower area in the Memorial Garden was finally cut down in October. Although it was full of wild flowers, we have decided we would prefer to have smaller plants and more floriferous varieties. We will be starting over again in the spring with new seeds, and would like to produce more flowers than we had in 2016.

The trees that have been planted outside the Memorial Garden are struggling, due to the heavy yellow clay in which they are growing and the amount of water their feet have to stand in early in the year. However we hope that by feeding them they will keep going.

Liz and Nell tidied the picnic area in early December, ready to be left until their return in the spring, while the Tuesday Group kindly gave the grass a final cut to leave the station looking tidy for the winter.

Jan LeLean and I met up with Liz Brown and Nell Joint for a Christmas lunch together in The White Lion during December.

Our last day for gardening in 2016 was Tuesday, 20th December. We returned towards the end of January in order to get a few jobs completed and plans made for the year ahead.

Rolvenden MPD – Paul Wilson

32670 Bodiam was kept in light steam with 32678 during the Santa season as backup, but was formally withdrawn on 31st December following expiry of her extended boiler ticket. New springs will be required as part of the overhaul.

32678: Boiler re-tubing is necessary. A set is in stock. We will remove the old tubes, get the inspector along by the end of March and, all being well, send the tubes for swaging to make them fit the firebox tubeplate. Once they are fitted 32678 should be ready for the summer.

No.11: The P-class overhaul has been suspended.

No.14 Charwelton: Serviceable and scheduled to work during the February Thomas event.

No.19 Norwegian: Undergoing maintenance and repair. The piston rods are due back from the supplier, having been machined properly round again; hopefully, when the new cast iron packing pieces are fitted, the aggravating piston gland blows will be cured. That will help the cleaners as well, with not so much oil being blown about.

No.21: Now being reassembled. The shot blasted, lined and primed tanks are also due back from the supplier. Work is under way to lag and clad the boiler. The K&ESR Locomotive Trust have agreed that the engine may enter service as Longmoor Military Railway *Frank S Ross*

22: As 30065, the USA had a final day in traffic on New Year's Day. Undergoing maintenance as part of the laying-up procedure.

No.23 Holman F Stephens: In storage.

No.25 Northiam: Work continues on the overhaul. The boiler has been reunited with the ashpan following a steam test, and is now back in the frames.

1638 (No.30): Serviceable and scheduled to work February Thomas traffic.

6619 (No.32): Remains in storage

No.40 (Ford): Under maintenance. Issues with commutation are slowly being resolved on a piece of kit that is so old nothing is available off the shelf. A great deal of machinery work is involved.

No.41 (Ruston): Serviceable.

Engineering Staff: David Brenchley has recently been appointed as Engineering Administration

Assistant, splitting his time between Tenterden and Rolvenden. David spent some 40 years as a Marine Engineer Officer with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, serving in places as varied as the Falklands and the Gulf. David lives in Ashford with his wife Helen.

TREATS – Mike Grimwood

Class 14 D9504: The locomotive entered C&W at the beginning of November for a complete repaint, and repairs to its driving cab roof and engine starter motor. The side rods have also been burnished. The locomotive returned to traffic on Thursday 2nd February.

DMMU M50971 & M51571: Again both units have given trouble-free service for the remainder of the 2016 timetable. M50971 entered the carriage shed on the 2nd February 2017 for its five-yearly C examination. This will include the replacement of both vacuum exhausters. M51571 will also undergo a five-yearly C exam once the work has been completed on M50971.

Class 03 D2023: The locomotive is in service and has been in regular use at Tenterden, with a number of trips to Rolvenden Carriage Storage Shed with coaching stock movements.

4253 Locomotive Company – Bryan Atkins

Recently much effort has been concentrated on those activities required for the re-wheeling of the locomotive which, it is hoped, will be achieved in late spring.

The machining and trial fitting of axle boxes continues along with the machining of the under keeps. A gantry has been set up over the wheel sets to help fit the axle boxes to the journals.

Axle box lubrication units have been assembled prior to attaching to the frames; this has involved the making new brackets where necessary. New cylinder drain cock operating mechanisms have been made and the trial fitting of the drain cock pipes completed. The driver's side rear cylinder cover has been repaired with a new fitting made for the pressure relief valve.

The jockey valve components that we've just had machined have been polished and assembled, and a mounting bracket has been fabricated, to be eventually bolted on the boiler backhead. Attention has also been given to the handbrake operating mechanism, as the lower

portion of the threaded rod has been cut off from the brake shaft, along with the angled operating arm.

Work on the boiler continues. The last remnants of the copper firebox stays have been removed, while the lap seam rivets at throat plate end of firebox have been replaced and other rivets removed pending replacement. A thin steel template has been cut and rolled to match the section of the boiler barrel in front of the throat plate, which is to be replaced. A new section of boilerplate has been prepared to replace this.

Another gantry and hoist has been erected over the firebox so that the new throat plate and side wrappers can be held in position while they are prepared to fit. The gantry has already been pressed into service for the removal of the foundation ring. This was been freed off from the inner firebox and lifted down for inspection, along with removal of the broken studs which attach the ash pan. The foundation ring will eventually be put back on the firebox before the throat plate and sides are put in position.

The boiler work was always expected to be expensive and, despite having now financed and purchased all the high-cost boilerplate, the estimated cost of the stays to hold it all together is simply breathtaking.

We are pleased to announce that Mark Singleton has volunteered to become the 4253 Events Coordinator, and is busy arranging for the sales stand to attend a wide range of events over the southeast area during the year. We also intend to promote K&ESR and its products at the same time. So, if you know of events in Kent and East Sussex which might be suitable, or have always wanted to visit those steam and transport fairs, then here is your chance by volunteering and supporting the both project and your railway. To offer your much-needed services for the 2017 season, please contact Mark by e-mail: events.at.4253@gmail.com

Signalling Department – Tony Ramsey

Although there are fewer running days during the winter, there is still plenty of activity as far as the Signalling Department is concerned. We congratulate those who passed out as Crossing Keepers during the closing weeks of 2016: Peter Taylor at Cranbrook Road, Simon Marsh at Rolvenden, Victor Grigg and John Patrick at Northiam. In January we held our post-Christmas lunch, which was much enjoyed by all.

Several Signalmen are members of the Railway Rules Working Group, which is continuing with its work to review all the Sections of the Rules, Regulations and Instructions. It has recently completed its review of Section E (Signalling equipment failure) of the Rule Book and is currently reviewing Section B (Lineside safety). This will be followed by the reviews of Sections H (Working of trains) and D (Passing signals at danger). The amendments arising from these reviews will be implemented in March 2018.

Our signalling training course now runs over the twelve months from March to February, rather than trying to cram everything in before December. This winter our trainees assisted with almost all the Santa lamping turns at Wittersham Road. Our intrepid Training Officer, Joel Pearson, has been developing several other new initiatives. One of these was to invite already qualified Signalmen to attend individual sessions of the training course as “refreshers”. Unfortunately the accommodation problem (which has still not been resolved) meant that numbers had to be limited, but the idea has certainly been well received. Future plans include joint MIC sessions with the Footplate and Guards’ Departments and the development of online training/revision material.

Finally, we are sorry to have to bid farewell to two Crossing Keepers, Mike Dawes (who is moving away) and Richard Smith (who continues, fortunately, in his other roles), and we thank them for their contribution to the Department.

Rolling Stock

Carriage & Wagon – David Brailsford

The team in C&W has been busy as usual. Space in the shed is at a premium and we now find ourselves having to work on stock outside when necessary. We have started to sort out our stores area and we hope to see a proper electrical supply system installed in the shed extension this year.

Coaches

Mk 1 TSO No.64 was incorporated in the A-set in time for the Santa Specials and performed faultlessly. The standard of workmanship on this vehicle is a great credit to all those who worked on it. However it has shown up the effects of the weather on the other four vehicles in the set.

Mk 1 Buffet No.59 has been inspected and received its 18-month maintenance. The door locks have received some attention as have a

number of the sliding window top lights.

Mk 1 Disabled coach (Petros) No.75 has also received its 18-month maintenance exam and is back in service.

Mk 1 CK No.86 has received some repairs to the under-floor main steam heat pipe. External corrosion in a number of areas, particularly above the bogie wheel sets, has resulted in new pipe being required.

Mk 1 Kitchen Car (Diana) No.69 is having the kitchen fans overhauled, the ceiling lining replaced, some new lighting, and attention to the water heater units. This vehicle needs to be fully operational for the first Pullman of the season on Mothering Sunday.

Pullman Car *Barbara* is receiving some attention to the lower Tenterden platform side paintwork. Peter Bolton and Meg Gooch are working together on this project.

Maunsell NBO No.53 is under overhaul, and the work programme has been identified. Repairs to a number of the roof boards are underway. Once this is finished two coats of paint will be applied and a new roof canvas glued in place. All side panels have been removed and insulation material installed in the gaps in the wooden framework. Once all the panels have been cleaned and painted on the backs they will be refitted using mastic to stop the ingress of water. The inside of the coach will require some re-varnishing and painting.

Below the sole bar, all wheel sets will require replacing and two refurbished 22" vacuum cylinders will have to be fitted to provide the vehicle with automatic brakes.

District Coach No.100: Ken and Lesley Lee, helped by John Garner, are installing seat backs and supports in the compartments. Ron Nuttman has been busy with the door locks and grab handles, and the vehicle is now a uniform colour, even though it is white undercoat.

Goods vehicles

Pipe Wagon No.171: This vehicle has been finished in red oxide and now has a steel skinned wooden floor. All four 5-plank doors are spring-assisted for opening and closing. During the overhaul some work was required in the drag box area to combat corrosion. The wagon also received routine maintenance and is currently available for use.

Many thanks are extended to Andy Roberts, Paul Rand and Paul Jessett, and our colleagues from CFBS, for their help with this project.

Dogfish ballast hopper No.154: Various items both large and small are slowly being fitted to this vehicle. The project is somewhat complicated as the shafting and gearboxes have to line up with the doors, and they in turn have to fit snugly to the chutes.

Midland Railway box van No 153: This vehicle has been moved onto the yard through road in front of the shed to allow the construction of the shelter for the Ford Rail Motor. It is currently being used to store some of the seating from NBO 53.

Diesels and Plant

We have on two occasions during 2016 played host to a rail-milling machine from German company Strabag. This state-of-the-art machine based on a MAN lorry chassis incorporates a number of computers to ensure that the right rail profile is achieved.

Plasser & Theurer Ballast Regulator: Repairs to the brush box on this vehicle have been put on hold to enable work on other vehicles to be completed.

Pullman Car Aries – John Wheller

Operational priorities have delayed a start on the restoration of *Aries*. We are now able to advise that the vehicle is due into the C&W on or about the 18th March in time for the Members' Day.

Our first task will be to assess what requires to be repaired and replaced on the main body of the coach, commencing at the kitchen (Robertsbridge) end, which is being reconfigured to all-seating with the window positions altered to suit the proposed layout. To help achieve this hundreds of buried and probably rusted screws need to be dealt with to enable the steel sheet cladding to be removed.

This is definitely one of those tasks where 'no previous experience is necessary'; the more help we have the quicker we can get on with the repairs to the timber framing. If you would like to get involved please contact either John Wheller at john.wheller63@gmail.com or Andy Hopper at thehoppers@hotmail.com, or you are most welcome to come to the shed on any Wednesday.

Welcome to 08888/D4118

The newest locomotive on the railway arrived on 15th December, when ex-BR/EWS/DB Cargo Class 08 Diesel Shunting Locomotive No. 08888 was delivered by road transport to Wittersham Road Yard.

Purchased by father and son members Mark and Chris Stuchbury, the locomotive is to be used to fill an identified gap in diesel shunting capability at Tenterden and Rolvenden as well as hauling the heavier engineering works trains.

08888 started life as D4118, being built at BR's Horwich Works and entering service in February 1962. As one of the most travelled 08s in the remaining fleet, the loco saw considerable service with BR at Bristol Bath Road, Worcester and Gateshead, and more recently was used by EWS/DB Cargo at Doncaster, Immingham, Mossend, Cardiff Tidal, Didcot and latterly Hoo Junction.

Given the unofficial nickname 'Robbie the Robot' by shunting staff, 08888 was fitted with remote control equipment a few years ago (though this was not deemed a success). Having had a 'D' Exam in late 2015 and used regularly at Hoo Junction during 2016, the loco was seen as one of the better-condition locomotives in the final batch of 24 that DB Cargo put up for sale in September.

The loco entered the C&W shed at Tenterden in early January to have its vacuum brake equipment installed, thereby reinstating its original dual air and vacuum braking capability.



Chris at work on 08888 in the C&W Works on 16th January.
(Mark Stuchbury)

In addition other commissioning work is taking place including the removal of some of the remote control equipment which, although isolated, is being gradually removed to return the loco to its original layout. The first items to be removed were the emergency stop buttons and garish traffic lights located on the front and back.

It is anticipated that the Class 08 will become fully available by early March. A livery change from its current EWS red and yellow is expected towards the end of summer, with transformation into a livery more suited to its earlier history.

Mark Stuchbury



08888 at Wittersham Road following delivery on 15th December.

(Alan Crotty)

TICKETS PLEASE!

Chief Booking Clerk Chris Baker reports on passenger numbers and news from the booking office. Thanks are due to John Harding and Shaun Dewey for their assistance with the data.

Passenger Numbers

The following table of passenger numbers for 2016 shows comparisons with the figures published last year. The total number for 2015 was 76,291, and in 2016 this increased by a small amount to 76,670.

The numbers relate to normal service trains,

both scheduled and special services such as the evacuation day and Christmas shopping trains which do not appear on the public timetable.

The figures do not include Pullman trains, special charters (see later), platform tickets – or dogs.

The comparison is as follows:

2015			2016		Change
	Days	Passengers	Days	Passengers	
January	1	391	1	204	-47.83%
February	4	2729	7	3,614	32.43%
March	1	325	9	3,277	908.31%
April	16	5,908	15	4,027	-31.84%
May	21	10,455	21	8,253	-21.06%
June	16	6,156	22	6,610	7.37%
July	24	10,680	24	9,744	-8.76%
August	31	12,965	31	12,682	-2.18%
September	18	9,109	22	9,485	4.13%
October	14	4,576	14	4,646	1.53%
November	0	0	3	316	
December	9	12,997	9	13,812	8.70%
Totals	155	76,291	178	76,670	0.49%

Notes

January

The January numbers in each year represent New Year's Day only.

February

In 2015 there were four Thomas days. In 2016 there were four Thomas days and three half term days with a restricted service.

March

The one day in 2015 was for Mothers' Day. No other services were run, to allow for changes to the Rolvenden track layout. In 2016 there were eight scheduled public days over the Easter holiday, plus a members' day.

April

The 16 days in 2015 included Easter. In 2016 there were 15 running days, and as Easter was in March this makes comparison of the numbers look strange. However by taking the combined totals of March and April, 2016 shows an increase of 14.66% over the previous year.

May

This was a disappointing result for the month. Also included are the Evacuation Week trains – we had 865 passengers in 2015 and 696 in 2016.

June

16 days of operation in 2015; increased to 22 in our 2016 timetable.

July

Despite three days of Thomas in 2016 compared to two in 2015, somehow we were down by 936 in the month.

August

We were running flat out all month with similar numbers, just marginally down on last year.

September

Both sets of figures include the Hop Festival, Pensioners' Treat and a Thomas Weekend. In 2015 there were five days of reduced fares for Pensioners' Treat. In 2016 this was increased to nine days.

October

Another disappointing month, despite some good business for cruise ship passengers and the promotional day for local residents on 22nd.

November

The three days shown for 2016 relate to the shuttle trains for Christmas shopping.

December – Santa to the rescue!

All data refers to the Santa Specials. An increase of 8.7% is shown for the month; a tremendous effort was made by all to make this a success, ending the year on a high note. The volunteers and staff were fully stretched at times (in fact most of the time) but their efforts were rewarded by excellent customer reviews, and most trains were fully booked.

Pullmans and others

Pullman numbers totalled 3,035 in 2016, up from 2,965 in 2015. There were also private charters in 2016 with a total of 582 passengers, which included 118 for two charters relating to RVR celebrations. This compares to 233 for private charters in 2015. The figures for Pullmans and private charters are not included in the table.

Fare Structure

This has been changed for the 2017 season, and the new structure will be operational immediately after the February Thomas event. Last year the structure was simplified, and this year the structure is the same with the popular family ticket (TravelCard) being held at £38, and the special Northiam–Bodiam family ticket retained at £21. This is aimed at encouraging our target market.

Adult TravelCard tickets are increased by £1 to £18, and the equivalent Child TravelCard is increased by 50p to £12. Fares to intermediate stations are subject to a small increase of £1 or 50p depending on the length of the journey.

Ticket Issue

For a combination of reasons it has been difficult to fully staff all three ticket issuing stations in 2016, particularly in the height of summer when we are operating each day. We have had a few new volunteers coming forward, but we are still looking for more to join our band of booking clerks.

It's a good job with plenty of customer contact – it's even warm and dry in the winter months. So if any of you would like to volunteer, please contact me at the railway.

New Tickets

For the 2017 season we will be introducing new tickets which can be kept as souvenirs. The new tickets will be better looking and have the option of over-printing to promote the next event or perhaps, as an example, mentioning special offers in the buffet.

Internet Bookings

Last year I referred to the trend towards more pre-booking of tickets, and this has been increasing in 2016 – spurred on by our publicity for events, the new website and the 10% discount for those purchasing online. This means fewer customers purchase tickets on the day, but the Internet bookings still need to be validated and tickets issued. For this reason we have had two clerks on duty at Tenterden at peak times.

2017 Season

You will see from the 2017 timetable that there are 'special' events taking place in the majority of months, including some ideas being tried by our new management team. Of course the railway would not survive without Thomas and the Santa Specials, but the other events are all very popular and increase the passenger numbers, enhancing our income, and not forgetting the additional revenue derived from the shop and catering.

Where There's a Will...

Geoff Crouch, Deputy Chairman and Chair of the Finance Committee, writes about a very welcome recent development.

In early February I was able to give members of the Board some excellent news. The Kent & East Sussex Railway had been left a six-figure legacy! This bequest was from the estate of the late Lance King, who was a leading light in the Continental Railway Circle as well as being Editor of the circle's widely available published journal for many years. Needless to say he was an expert on overseas railways, although his general interests were broad enough to include membership of the K&ESR. Records indicate that he had been a member since 1965 – some four years into the preservation project. We are of course more than grateful to this gentleman for having remembered us in this way.

Although the legacy was not specified for any

particular use, the sum received has initially been paid into our Return to Robertsbridge bank account. This is a convenient Restricted Fund which 'ring fences' it away from the railway's general finances. The money also means that our reserves are now well in excess of our obligations to all our Restricted Funds. The eventual use of the bequest will be considered by the Trustees, starting at the February Board meeting.

This seems an appropriate occasion to again ask members to remember the K&ESR when writing their wills. All sums, large or small, are very welcome. There is a leaflet on this subject available from the Accounts Department at Tenterden Town Station. Details are also available from the website.



As 32670 comes to the end of her ten-year ticket let's focus on some of the latest of 'the men who have served you so long and so well' (left to right) Mark Williams, John Ascher, Ian Scarlett, Brian Remnant and Samir Oussalah.
(Hugh Nightingale)

Reconnection at Robertsbridge

By Rother Valley Railway Press Officer Mark Yonge.

After so many years of struggle and occasional setbacks, the reconnection of the missing link of the Kent & East Sussex Railway is growing ever closer. From its early days when the then Network SouthEast allowed the Rother Valley Railway access to a small piece of wasteland close at Robertsbridge, a milestone was reached when Network Rail Chairman Sir Peter Hendy CBE visited the same site on 6th December.

This visit, the second by Sir Peter, was to officially open the completed junction between the Network Rail bay platform and the RVR. The site had undergone a massive improvement with the installation of new fencing, a gate across our rails, the new point fully commissioned and the bay platform road completely re-laid with flat bottom rail and concrete sleepers.

Sir Peter arrived appropriately by train with over 100 visitors from London Underground, the Heritage Railway sector, journalists and many others. The guests assembled at the site of the new junction and our guest was introduced by RVR trustees Mike Hart and Gardner Crawley. Sir Peter then addressed the gathering, opining that his own organisation had not always appreciated the contribution that heritage companies had made to the wider railway industry.

He went on to say: "I would like to congratulate the teams here at Robertsbridge, the volunteers, London Underground and all who helped make the new connection and track a reality. This is a tremendous example of rail organisations working together for the benefit of passengers and the general public."



Out of the mists... pioneering volunteer Alan Crotty watches Nos. 66718 & 73951 negotiating the new connection.

(Phil Edwards)

Additionally it must not be forgotten that many young Kent & East Sussex Railway volunteers moulded later careers with the 'big railway' when it was British Railways, Railtrack or Network Rail. This clearly underlines the educational charitable status and impetus of the K&ESR – something that is sometimes overlooked.

Once the formalities were over the K&ESR provided a fine buffet lunch in the village hall adjacent to the station.

To enhance this special day Network Rail provided two main line diesel locomotives,

No. 73951 *Malcolm Brinded* and No. 66718, the latter appropriately named *Sir Peter Hendy CBE* and operated by GB Railfreight.

The remainder of the afternoon was spent operating the locomotives from Robertsbridge Junction Station to Northbridge Street, providing train rides with the Southern brake van for the benefit of all our visitors.

And as if by magic, a double-headed steam excursion raced through Robertsbridge at the end of the day, hauled by two Black Five locomotives. What a wonderful end to this historic occasion.



Sir Peter Hendy (carrying papers) addresses representatives of the Kent & East Sussex and Rother Valley Railways.

(Phil Edwards)



The visiting locomotives on the RVR side of the new connection.

(Phil Edwards)



Sir Peter in the cab of 'his' locomotive.

(Phil Edwards)



Robertsbridge Junction Platform. The RVR's 03 Class No. D2112 stands to the left of the visitors, and the new toilet block is under construction on the right.

(Phil Edwards)



Rolling stock from at least three eras – typical of today's heritage railways.

(Phil Edwards)



On the curve leading to Northbridge Street – and the future.

(Phil Edwards)

THE NEXT GENERATION: Angus White

Anthony Ramsey presents the latest of his articles in this series.



(Bradley Bottomley)

One area of volunteering which the *Tenterden Terrier* has occasionally featured in past issues is the Saturday Gang. Like so many good ideas, it started almost by accident (about ten years ago) when Lawrence Donaldson tried to encourage a few young volunteers who were interested in engineering by finding them jobs in the workshop, with the aim of enabling them to develop their skills while also helping the railway. Others joined them and soon they grew into a more organised group which met every Saturday at Rolvenden.

Their first main project was the restoration of *Charvelton*, but subsequently they have been involved in many other projects. Most of the original stalwarts have moved on – several to paid employment in the world of engineering – but a new generation has now taken their place. To find out more I recently went to Rolvenden to meet Angus White, who has been

a Saturday Gang volunteer for about two years.

Angus outlined the wide range of activities they cover. “Welding, fitting, machining, boiler washouts, general loco repairs, brazing (using molten brass to join two distinct metals), lugging bits of metal and generally tidying up other people’s mess! We do whatever is needed, and often it is something left over from the week or which is required in a hurry.”

Members are trained and supervised by Lawrence, ably assisted by Richard Moffatt (Moff to one and all –Ed). Angus cannot speak too highly of the encouragement they give, as well as of the overall experience. “It’s fantastic”, he said. “I’ve gained general workshop knowledge, learned new tasks (including practical stuff that isn’t taught at college), met new friends and developed many skills. In addition, I’m sure it will help me in the future.



(Bradley Bottomley)

I can't imagine it being any better, and I wouldn't change the past two years at all."

Angus, who is now 18, lives in Hawkhurst. He is studying at Sussex Coast College in Ore for an HND in Mechanical Engineering, and hopes to progress to university. Significantly he has no particular interest in trains, although he tactfully declines to describe us as 'anoraks'. "I just like machines and how they work", he explained.

"In due course, I would like to be a welder/fabricator but I'm keeping my options open." Apart from engineering, he is a keen martial arts enthusiast and has won two silver medals at the England Open. He is also knowledgeable about tanks and would love to have the opportunity to drive one (can anyone help?).

As usual I asked Angus if he had made any embarrassing mistakes. "I tend to follow the instructions to the letter," he commented. He did recall, however, an incident elsewhere when he was welding and a spark landed in a tin of white spirit, causing a pile of rags to catch fire!

Angus is very keen to recruit new volunteers to the Saturday Gang – although he realises that, for many young people, transport is a major obstacle. He himself was encouraged to attend by his dad (who helps with our Forestry team). "I was lucky," he admitted. "Before I could drive, my parents used to bring me." But he is convinced that the benefits of belonging far outweigh the cost of getting there.

"If anything I've said sounds the slightest bit interesting, do come and have a look. We'd love to meet you, and there is always a space for you. It's so friendly – everyone is willing to help and there is always something new to learn. In short, it's impossible to be negative about the Saturday Gang."

Members of the Saturday Gang produce regular reports on their work. Why not take a look? Go to www.saturdaygang.blogspot.co.uk and www.youtube.com/user/SaturdayGangVideos

Letters to the Editor

Sir – The review in the *Tenterden Terrier*, Winter 2016 issue, of the Southern Railway Atlas mentioned the Kearsney Loop as an example of an obscure railway line. For those who haven't bought the book (I have, following the review) the Kearsney Loop was at the back of Dover; it connected the Canterbury East and the Deal lines, and was finally closed in the early 1970s. It also had two very close links with the present K&ESR. The signalbox at one end was called Deal Junction, and after closure it was recovered by our volunteers and now stands at Wittersham Road. That at the other end was called Kearsney

Loop Junction, one of whose regular signalmen, the late and much-respected Steve Whiteman, was responsible for most of the preserved line's early signalling, and trained all our first-generation signalmen. He laid the foundations for what we have today. Many of us spent happy hours learning the basics of the trade at Kearsney Loop Junction, which was a unique spot perched high on a cutting and from which on a clear day you could see the French coast. Sadly, it was abolished in 1980.

*Simon Marsh
by e-mail*

KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

September 2016

1st John E Denby	No. 165	£90.00
2nd Rosemary Geary	No. 229	£80.00
3rd Daniel Snowden	No. 422	£70.00
4th Tom Webb	No. 411	£60.00
5th Keith Howell	No. 534	£50.00
6th Roger Diamond	No. 296	£40.00
7th Mr D Ramsden	No. 269	£35.00
8th R T Price	No. 546	£30.00
9th Frank Lambert	No. 387	£20.00
10th G Coombs	No. 219	£15.00
11th John L Collard	No. 198	£10.00

November 2016

1st David Jeffrey	No. 728	£70.00
2nd Alan Marshall	No. 632	£60.00
3rd Colin Deverell	No. 698	£50.00
4th James Veitch	No. 417	£40.00
5th Peter Wilson	No. 148	£35.00
6th Mr A J York	No. 187	£30.00
7th Mr A W Dixon	No. 164	£25.00
8th Lionel Marchant	No. 305	£20.00
9th Chris McNaughton	No. 298	£15.00
10th Ken George	No. 359	£10.00

October 2016

1st Graham Ford	No. 120	£70.00
2nd P R H Alexander	No. 430	£60.00
3rd Raymond Tatnall	No. 750	£50.00
4th Mr J L Norton	No. 613	£40.00
5th Barry Roberts	No. 601	£35.00
6th Roger Diamond	No. 433	£30.00
7th Paul Mineham	No. 825	£25.00
8th J G Groves	No. 264	£20.00
9th Miss C M Harris	No. 014	£15.00
10th David King	No. 624	£10.00

December 2016

1st Chris Kennedy	No. 693	£200.00
2nd Mr E Stockdale	No. 568	£100.00
3rd Roger Chaplin	No. 565	£100.00
4th Mr R J Delves	No. 586	£100.00
5th Mr M Keable	No. 317	£90.00
6th Robert Bradford	No. 594	£80.00
7th Tony Hutchings	No. 506	£70.00
8th Peter Bennion	No. 382	£60.00
9th Mr H K Simons	No. 478	£50.00
10th Colin Avey	No. 466	£45.00
11th Ross Shimmion	No. 221	£40.00
12th Sam Macer	No. 761	£35.00
13th Richard Maxwell	No. 420	£25.00
14th James L Dobson	No. 683	£20.00
15th Mr P S Bradford	No. 483	£15.00
16th Rachel Smith	No. 597	£10.00

To join the K&ESR 300 Club or for more information phone Colin Avey on 01795 539039 or Chris Garman on 01424 441643.



The Board for 2016/17

Following a request from the floor at the 2016 AGM, we publish photographs of the railway's Trustees/Directors for the current year together with a group photo taken during the Board's January 2017 meeting. General Manager Shaun Dewey and Company Secretary Phil Clark-Monks are of course not Board members but regular officers 'in attendance'. An article about Phil Clark-Monks, top left in the group photo, is due to appear in the July 2017 'Tenterden Terrier'. (Alan Crotty)



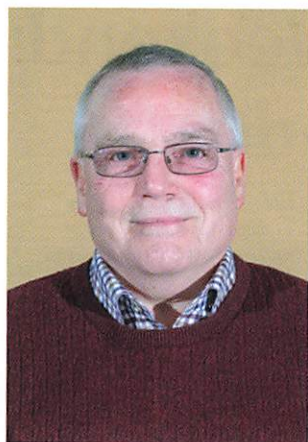
Bryan Atkins



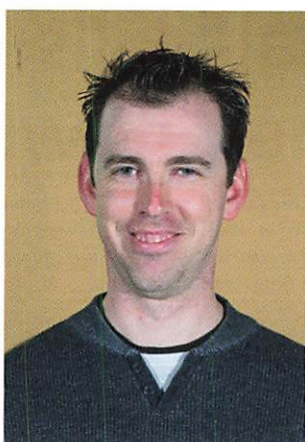
Kevin Bulled



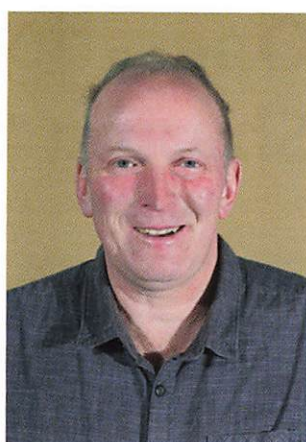
Geoff Crouch (Dep. Chairman)



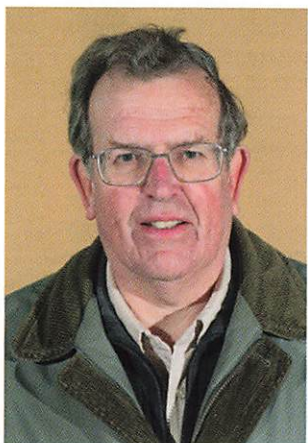
Shaun Dewey



Jamie Douglas (Chairman)



Dave Hazeldine



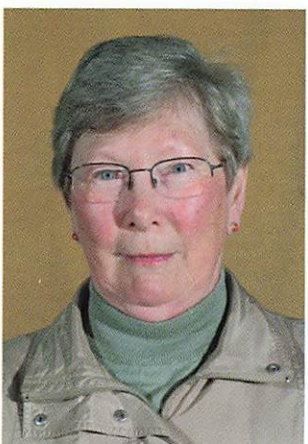
Brian Janes



Paul Jessett



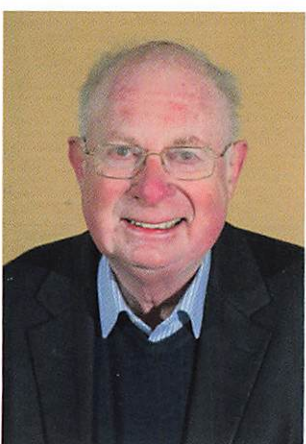
Ian Legg



Carol Mitchell



Stuart Phillips



Philip Shaw

Operational Skills Weekend: Sharing the Knowledge

Over the weekend of 15/16th October the Institution of Railway Operators (IRO) South East section hosted their Operational Skills Weekend at the Kent & East Sussex Railway. A total of seven members attended from varying roles across the industry, all with the aim of gaining hands-on experience in front line facing roles. Elliott Waters tells us how things went.

This event was created in collaboration with K&ESR as an opportunity for IRO members to gain an insight into the different aspects of operating a railway. It provided a platform for members to learn and develop operational skills within a live railway environment that would not normally be possible on the national network.

Throughout the weekend members rotated around the railway, working under supervision of K&ESR staff, and getting 'hands-on' with each of the roles available. The activities planned over the two day's included a footplate ride, a trip with a Guard, time in both Tenterden and Rolvenden signal boxes, Station Master/Ticket Office duties and train preparation.

Activities included a return trip along the line, either performing the duties of a Guard or on

the footplate experiencing steam or diesel operation. Each participant spent time preparing a train in the morning for the day's service and then worked a return trip along the line to experience a Guard's duties.

The differences in operation between locomotive and coaches compared with the DMMU were explained and demonstrated, along with operating trains with the old slam-doors and the challenges this brings.

Many were impressed with the disabled accessibility arrangements in carriage *Petros*, and how the vehicle provides a modern accessible solution while retaining heritage features. The footplate ride was well received by all, with some spending time on the shovel throughout the journey.



Bradley Bottomley oversees the points being changed in Tenterden Yard.

(Elliott Waters)



The participating IRO members.

(Elliott Waters)

An additional experience that was not anticipated was when members were given the opportunity to drive the railway's Class 108 unit at the end of the first day, once passenger operations had finished.

Members spent time with the signalling department experiencing both Tenterden Town and the busier Rolvenden signal box. The Signalmen on duty showed their extensive knowledge, explaining the principles behind signalling and answering all questions. Participants were then given the opportunity to work each box under supervision, including setting the routes, clearing signals, and using the block instruments.

Some of the more difficult of the levers to pull from the box frame were used, particularly at Rolvenden, demonstrating just how different working a frame is to working the more modern signalling installations that are on the national network.

Each of the participants also spent time at Tenterden Town station with the Station Master, undertaking train dispatch and general station duties, and experiencing front line customer service at K&ESR. The diversity of a Station

Master's duties, and how the role differs from the Station Manager/Supervisor of today, surprised some members of the group. There are no customer information screens in sight, unlike stations the participants use or work at, and it was back to the traditional fingerboard changing – which provided amusement for some!

This unique and varied event provided a great opportunity for IRO members to learn new skills, gain relevant experience, and appreciate what is involved with operating the railway, and how each discipline within it affects another. Members described the K&ESR as 'having a friendly and passionate group of volunteers, who made each of the activities enjoyable and were keen to share their knowledge, aiding the learning experience'.

Another explained how useful the event had been for his training as a Driver; seeing absolute block signalling in use and operating the frame assisted with his understanding of the principles behind signalling.

IRO South East would like to extend their thanks to K&ESR for their time and efforts in hosting the event, which allowed members to gain valuable operational skills and experience.

Railway Experience Days

Following one of our best years yet in 2016 our Railway Experience Days (RXDs) are as popular as ever. Some may have noticed our most popular product, Introduction to Steam Driving – renamed as Railway Experience Day for 2017 – had changed its format to a half-day course operating from Rolvenden to Bodiam with six participants per RXD. It was a big change, as for nearly 12 years the course had remained essentially the same, but with improvements made over the years that made it so popular.

I felt that after all that time it needed a refresh and we needed to push ourselves to see if we could offer an even better day. The changes were well received, with participants regularly commenting that it was good to actually operate the railway, to see how each role affects the others, and learn what it takes to keep the trains running.

But change is once again on the horizon. I regarded 2016 as a test-bed to see what we could achieve for 2017. The course now reverts to a full day, but with seven participants working in turn operating the train for two return trips from Tenterden to Bodiam. It was felt that Tenterden would be a much better starting point, as participants expect better facilities than those available at Rolvenden. Tenterden provides better toilets, more car parking and a shop, as well as the Refreshment Rooms.

The plan is for the train to be formed of *Petros* and the RMB, so shunting will be required each

day. The reason for the choice of stock was to have refreshments and, again, better toilet facilities, and disabled access. I hope these changes will prove popular. We will work throughout the year to make sure everything is kept to a high standard and all our participants have a day to remember.

Behind the Scenes tours are also well received, with nearly every date full to capacity; more of the same are being run to cater for specific customer needs. I never like to turn anyone away and always try to meet any request that comes in. Signal Box Experience Days have returned after three years, this time at Northiam rather than at Rolvenden, as it was deemed safer and easier to access. Signal Box Experience days are not run in such high numbers as other courses we offer.

Each year we try to improve on the year before, so a lot of change takes place, and our dedicated band of coordinators and volunteers are invaluable. Overall the courses bring in a lot of money to the railway each year, so it's important we keep up with the demand and never have to cancel any course.

2017 is looking promising, with a steady stream of bookings coming in; DMMU and Footplate Tasters were fully sold out by mid-December! Thank you to everyone who's assisted over the years – if anyone else would like to help out I'd be very glad to hear from you.

Bradley Bottomley



RXD on 30th September 2016 – Driver Jim Wilson chats with Guard Bradley Bottomley. (Philip Noakes)

Brian Heyes – A Celebration

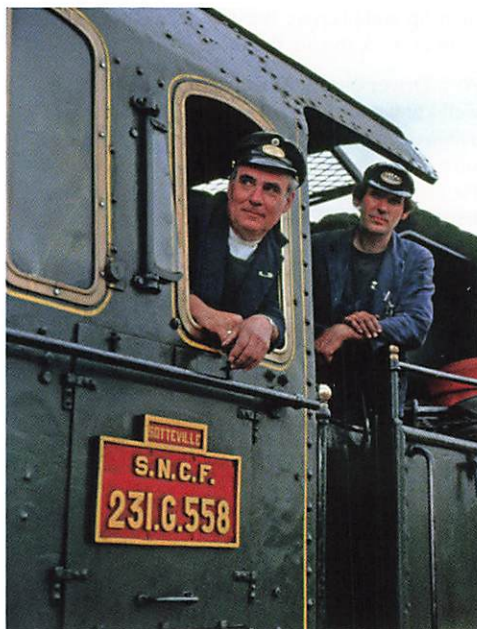
Brian Heyes, a stalwart volunteer and fundraiser for the K&ESR, passed away peacefully in his sleep on 22nd December at the age of 77. Fireman, steam Driver, diesel Driver, Maidstone Area Group, 300 Club, former Chair of The Terrier Trust – to name just a few of his activities on the K&ESR alone.

Brian Gordon Heyes was born on 22nd June 1939 in Lenham, Kent, the eldest of two children; his parents Frank Featherstone Heyes and Irene Rita Annie nee Hall later had a daughter, Ann. Railways patently came with the DNA: his father was a stationmaster, which inevitably involved a degree of travelling and relocation. He attended South Borough School in Maidstone, where his sporting prowess saw him run for Kent in the 1954 All-England Inter-County (Athletic) Championships, finishing third in the 440yds for Boys Junior. Like so many of his generation he loved both cricket and football, and was a life-long supporter of the Gunners.

His first job was at Bricklayers Arms where he started as a cleaner and progressed to fireman. Chris Garman recollects one particular story: “Brian was the fireman on the London to Dover service one day. On arrival at Dover his Driver said he was going to the pub for a drink; there was perhaps about an hour before they due to leave. When the Driver got back to the locomotive he was drunk; he sat on his seat and promptly went to sleep – so Brian had to drive and fire back to London. Good fun, hard work.”

However with the transition away from steam, Brian left BR (as diesel affected his health) and joined the Post Office where he spent the next 30 years: starting as a postman and progressing through the ranks to become a transport manager before taking early retirement.

Brian's HGV licence came in useful for the K&ESR, as Simon Long recalls: “He was often able to borrow vehicles at weekends and, driving them himself, collected a good deal of equipment that we had purchased or had had donated. I know we often got some funny looks when our ‘transport’ arrived to collect, as it was always a nice shiny red Royal Mail artic unit. He also had many contacts in the transport industry and he was able to arrange good deals for us on several occasions – often in exchange for Pullman tickets or footplate rides!”



Brian Heyes, accompanied by Dave Brailsford, in the cab window of a French Pacific during a visit to the CFBS.
(Brian Stephenson)

His enjoyment of cards resulted in meeting his future wife, Valerie. They were married on 5th September 1964 and had two daughters, Carol and Shirley.

“They enjoyed similar interests,” as Shirley reminisces, “such as skiffle music, rock ‘n’ roll and dancing. They regularly visited the Lyceum Ballroom in London.”

Brian and Valerie's family home was in Coxheath near Maidstone. “Dad was a key figure in community projects,” Shirley remembers, “including helping to raise funds for the village hall to be built.”

It is no exaggeration to say that Brian loved the railway. In the earlier days of preservation he was a Fireman though “Brian was quite keen to be promoted to Driver, and undertook many weekday and Pullman turns to gain experience,” as Simon Long explains. “He would often ask me to accompany him if there was no Cleaner available, as some of the older Drivers, like Ken Morris and Jack Hoad, were no longer up to doing much firing. They would let him drive

if there was a Cleaner on hand to do the work. Brian would regularly fire for Colin Edwards on Friday evening Pullman trains. Often I could light up and prepare the engine, as they were both at work during the day.”

As a Driver on the K&ESR Brian also became well known to the photographic fraternity as well as his colleagues on the footplate. Whilst ideally suited height-wise for the diminutive Terriers, P-Class locos or *Charwelton*, I remember that Brian had a particular and entertaining knack when driving the USAs. However bad the coal, however poor the railhead conditions and however challenging the weather, he always seemed to have that desirable skill of meeting every challenge.

Geoff Silcock recalls one photographic charter in particular, on 12th November 1995, with 32650 *Whitechapel/Sutton* (No.10) dressed up as 32678. The cylinder cock drain valve caused considerable problems throughout the day, and the engine could easily have been failed; but Brian did not want to disappoint the punters and kept her going at the personal expense of minor burns.

It has to be said, though, that this dedication and focus was not necessarily a sentiment shared by everyone on every occasion as Howard Wallace-Sims experienced not long after Brian became a steam Driver...

“My first trip out with Brian, on an Austerity, was interesting to say the least. For some reason or other we arrived very late at Wittersham Road, which was the terminus at the time. Brian made it clear that we would make up the time and he drove back to Rolvenden at a great rate of knots. Unfortunately I’d let the cleaner fire that trip, and didn’t notice that he was having problems until we approached Rolvenden with the brakes beginning to come on due to low steam pressure. We ran into the platform and, as we stopped, I hopped off and said I wasn’t staying on the footplate any longer if he was going to drive like that. He protested that he’d told me he was going to make up time and I replied “Yes, but you didn’t tell me that you were going to drive like a b***** maniac!” In the end I stayed on the engine, and we got on very well for the next 30 odd years!”

In 1994 Chris Garman and Brian Heyes took over the running of the 300 Club. Chris states that with Brian’s enthusiasm the numbers in use

increased significantly over the ensuing two decades or so. Projects large and small across the railway, from infrastructure to fixtures and fittings to rolling stock and motive power have benefited to date to tune of more than £60,000, with a similar amount being paid out over that period as monthly prizes.

But without doubt Brian’s greatest legacy on the railway was his 11 years as Chair of The Terrier Trust, which was formed in 1995. Following on from the tenures of two other brief chairmanships, his calm and methodical approach ensured that under his leadership and with the close support of his friend the late Gerry Siviour in the role of Secretary, two new A1X boilers were completed in a joint project with the Isle of Wight Steam Railway. The one for the K&ESR permitted the complete rebuild of ‘The Great Survivor’, No.3 *Bodiam*, which re-entered service in 2006.

Due to Gerry’s ability, TTT took on a much greater financial commitment during the restoration of No.3 than originally intended; and as a consequence the Trust became the majority owner. Not only that, but in 2001 Brian and Gerry led a major appeal to secure the future of Terrier 32678 that resulted in TTT becoming the outright owner of that historic engine as well.

It is ironic – yet totally appropriate, given his devotion – that Brian actually died mid-way between his ‘*Wonersh*’ (77th) and ‘*Knowle*’ (78th) birthdays: the first two Terriers to be rebuilt with A1X boilers back in 1911.

The incompatibility issue with diesel, when he worked for BR, was unfortunately not the end of Brian’s health issues. Heart problems developed, and the eventual fitting of a pacemaker would end his days of steam; he underwent successful surgery for bowel cancer and was also a diabetic.

Well over 100 people attended his funeral, held at Vinter’s Park Crematorium, Maidstone, on 27th January, with representation from the many organisations he had been involved with including the railway and the freemasons.

Valerie predeceased Brian in 2007. In addition to his two daughters, Carol and Shirley, he leaves behind six grandchildren – Philip, Alex, Thomas, Frairc, Amy and Max – as well as two great grandchildren – Harry and Zachary. For all his achievements, the greatest was the simplest: he was extremely proud of all his family.

Roy Franklin Seaborne 1930–2016

It is with great sadness that I have to report the death of Roy Seaborne.

Roy was a leading supporter of the Rother Valley Railway, as benefactor, trustee and latterly patron.

He was born near Ealing in West London and grew up in that area, which is where he developed an early interest in railways – particularly the Great Western.

He achieved a degree in electrical engineering at Imperial College, London, his first employer being the National Coal Board. He worked in their research and development department, embracing coal technology. Later he was employed by Elliott Automation, which was later taken over by Marconi, and Roy worked in the USA as well as in the UK on critical defence contracts.

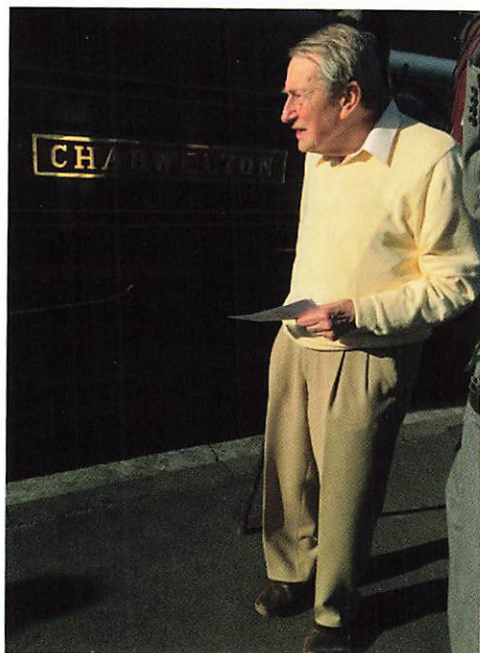
In middle age he admitted to being surprised at an unexpected redundancy package, and decided that working for someone else did not suit him. He decided to start his own property development company with both his redundancy package and a bank loan.

In this he was very successful and specialised mainly in developing redundant railway yards for light industrial use. These estates were at Canterbury, Dover, Wye and New Romney, the development at Wye winning an award for tasteful rural development.

With the business established, Roy turned his attention to his long-held interest in railways. He always had a keen eye for the overall railway scene – not just locomotives and rolling stock but all aspects of their presence in the landscape.

Living at that time at Little Isemonger, overlooking the K&ESR at Cranbrook Road, he was a generous supporter of the line and always purchased bonds as the railway developed westwards towards Bodiam. At that time he had a wire attached from his office above the garage to the signalman's hut, which automatically warned him of the approach of a train. Upon being alerted, Roy would walk down the road and open the gates. Not sure that this would be allowed these days...

His greatest interest was to come when the Rother Valley Railway was formed in the early 1990s. He was its first major benefactor,



confidently backing the scheme when all around were saying that the plan to extend the line to Robertsbridge Junction was for dreamers and could never be achieved.

He purchased three essential parcels of land at Robertsbridge, the first being the trackbed to the site of the first level crossing at Northbridge Street. Subsequently he bought the two parcels of land that made up the Railtrack (later Network Rail) yard. These purchases gave the RVR a base, sidings and the first half mile of the branch line.

Not content with that, he further purchased 26 bridge spans from the main line at Staplehurst, several of which are now to be found restored and reconstructed between Robertsbridge Junction station and Northbridge Street.

In his declining weeks Roy was content to know that his dream of a reconnected railway to the main line would finally come true, his only regret being that he would not live long enough to see it.

We will miss Roy, who was not just a generous supporter but a dear friend whose positive outlook and good cheer remains a memory in our hearts.

MUY

Gricer's Irregular Musings

Greenwich Mean Time. British Summer Time. And now Colonel Stephens Time. It's official: it really exists. This revelation comes about following research by Norwegian railway historian Olaf Prilo, whose work took him to the archives of Swiss clockmaker Jocus Est, from whom the Joint Ormskirk and Keighley Electric Railway ordered 24 station clocks in 1912.

"My intention had been to reveal my research early next month," Olaf told Gricer in March. "When delivered it was found that these clocks had a mechanical fault in that they lost 12 minutes during the course of a day," he related. "This was unacceptable to a company that prided itself on punctuality. Arrangements were being made for the clocks' return to Jocus Est when Colonel Stephens heard of them. As punctuality was rarely a priority on his lines, he offered to buy them for £12. Jocus Est considered this to be a satisfactory outcome and the deal was done.

"Accordingly," Olaf continued, "the Colonel instructed station agents that the clocks should be set right time at the beginning of each day. As the day progressed, trains invariably ran later and later: however, with the clocks losing more and more time, the delays appeared to be less than they really were. I believe at least four found their way to the Kent & East Sussex, but none are known to remain." *(Surely there should now be one of those smiley face like one gets at the end of vaguely insulting e-mails -Ed.)*

Nevertheless, in Gricer's opinion, the concept of Colonel Stephens Time lives on, in that our railway does indeed seem to operate in its own time zone. Gricer isn't necessarily alluding to the punctuality of our trains: use ageing and wheezing equipment (but that's enough of Gricer's afflictions) and delays sometimes occur. No, Gricer is referring to the time scale in which things are done – in that occasionally an outsider could be forgiven for thinking that parts of our railway are in some kind of parallel universe.

It boils down to that age-old issue of communication. Elsewhere in this journal the Chief Station Master comments on communication down the line. He may be assured that it does not merely affect station masters. For example, Gricer received last year's

Santa Special briefing notes at 10pm one evening. Which is fine, except it was the day he was on duty. Why might that be, Gricer wonders? It's no use saying "We sent them to roster clerks yesterday." Roster clerks are not twiddling their thumbs waiting for messages to arrive. *(Unlike the Editor waiting for Gricer to send his column in – where's that smiley face?)* Gricer imagines the arrangements will have been known some way in advance.

What Gricer finds particularly peculiar is that it invariably seems to be commercial staff who are missed out of the loop: the ticket inspectors, shop staff, station staff, booking clerks... and in particular staff down the line. So, with mischievous twinkle in eye, memo to all concerned: let's talk.

Volunteers who have been kicking around as long as Gricer will be sighing "It's always been like that." True. Gricer recalls arriving for ticket-inspecting duty at the prescribed time, one day more than 30 years ago, only to see his first train disappearing down Tenterden Bank. The timetable had been changed, but nobody had thought to tell the ticket inspectors. Protests to the roster clerk met with the response, "Nobody told me either!" Gricer doubts this is an issue unique to our railway, and naturally there will be occasional last-minute changes where it may not be possible to communicate with everybody: that's only to be expected.

If all that sounds rather gloomy, Gricer hears there is reason to be optimistic. He understands that, with recent changes in our management team, improvements have already been seen. For example: the 'wash-up' meeting held after 2016's Santa Special season. Its effectiveness will be judged on how well we build on it, because we've had these meetings previously – seemingly to little effect. In fact, Gricer is able to reveal exclusively the real reason why the old office block was demolished: the foundations gave way beneath the weight of years of accumulated issues allegedly swept under the carpet.

So yes, there is reason to be hopeful. But let's aim for more than just hopeful. Let's make 2017 the year when we communicate properly. With everybody.

The Generation Game

Gricer observes that, in line with other volunteer-led organisations, there is something of a generation gap among our volunteers. We have our younger volunteers still at school, college or uni, and we have an army of retirees. But in between there is a relative vacuum. It is a generation that leads busy lives and has other commitments. With the progression of time, our younger volunteers fall into that category as they start careers or move away. Which all puts an increasing strain on the older members upon who we seem to rely more and more.

To put this in perspective, Gricer suggests we ask ourselves this: would there be a midweek summer service without our retired staff?

Time and again volunteers go the extra mile; it isn't unusual to hear of them doing 11 hour days – including travelling – at special events. However, Gricer is increasingly hearing those of a certain age say, "I just can't do what I used to."

Much is happening on our railway. Significant projects are in the pipeline. But this is a 'now' issue. There have already been days when there is no Tenterden station master to welcome our visitors; lack of staff has already drawn comment on social media. As we rely more and more on our retired volunteers, we need at the very least to ask how we can ease the burden. Piling more onto them is no longer an option.

It's the Little Things...

It doesn't take earth-shattering changes to make our railway a better place for visitors, and this is a concept that our new management team has been quick to adopt. For example, Gricer understands that in 2016 a standby engine was in steam for Santa Specials to cover locomotive failure. (This after the failure, in 2015, of the loco on the very first train of the Santa season that led to delays of more than an hour.)

Hands up everybody who hadn't noticed that the long-out-of-order platform ticket machine in Tenterden booking hall has been removed (*mea culpa*). Restored, it is now in the museum where it earns its keep dispensing souvenir tickets. And what a brilliant idea having a free 'residents' day' in late autumn. As a PR event, and for raising the railway's profile, it was a masterstroke on what would normally have been a very quiet day. (Gricer understands that several residents were unaware we even existed.)

And finally, while it can hardly be construed as 'little', the new-look website is something of which we should really be proud. Terrific stuff which, Gricer hopes, heralds the dawn of a new vibrancy on our railway.

Didn't We Do Well?

By all accounts the 2016 Santa Special season was a record-breaker, with the majority of trains sold out in advance. In Gricer's opinion, the product this year was the best ever – the atmosphere at Tenterden was electric. It has always been good, but having seen the slickness of this year's proceedings it makes previous years pale into insignificance.

He is also mindful that this slickness did not just happen of its own accord: it must have taken many months of planning by paid staff and volunteers to bring it to fruition – not least in ensuring that there were more than 100 staff each day to put the show on the road.

If this is typical of the future of the railway, we have reason to be very optimistic.

Where are we Going?

Bodiam for sure. Robertsbridge, possibly. Beyond that? Not a geographic question but a metaphoric one. For years many volunteers, and this column, have campaigned to offer our visitors better value for money. At last we are delivering on that.

Mission accomplished then? Well, we can never be *too* good, but apart from that Gricer suggests we look now at a broader picture. That our customers enjoy good value is right and proper: it will mean, Gricer hopes, more visitors and greater income. But that brings its own challenges.

We need to ask whether greater income will mean we can restore more locomotives and historic vehicles – the very roots of our railway. Or will it mean that to deliver our new, improved product we have to recruit more paid staff (possibly costing more than it brings in), thus leaving little, if anything, for the causes true to our hearts?

Gricer has no magic answer. Perhaps there isn't one. But he hopes that, in the light of current and potential developments, it is something of which Trustees and senior managers will be mindful.

SANTA SEASON 2016

Some images from an outstandingly successful few weeks.



Eagerly awaiting the day at Tenterden.

(Stuart Kirk)



A ride on the carousel.

(Stuart Kirk)



The Pixies with Product & Reservations Manager Helen Douglas.

(Stuart Kirk)



Meeting the man himself.

(Stuart Kirk)

PEOPLE IN PROFILE:

Charles Lucas

Chris Fautley interviews Charles Lucas, Chief Station Master.

Charles has been a member of the railway since the year 2000, at which time he also began volunteering. As well as Station Master he also serves as Guard, Booking Clerk and Ticket Inspector, and in the past he worked for a short period in the shop. Now retired from full-time work, he is a local treasurer for SSAFA, the armed forces charity. His wife, Val, is a volunteer in Northiam tearoom.

CF: What drew you to the role of Chief Station Master?

Charles: Having worked in various roles on the railway, I was looking for a way to use the experience gained to assist the K&ESR further and contribute to ongoing improvements in what we offer to visitors and volunteers.

CF: What exactly does it entail?

Charles:

- Establishing and maintaining appropriate standards for volunteers working as Station Masters
- Maintaining communication with Station Masters and responding to their needs and concerns
- Identifying volunteers to train as Station Masters and organising their training and qualification
- Working with other departments to ensure the smooth running of the railway.

CF: How many Station Masters are there at the moment?

Charles: There are 20 active Station Masters, plus six who have come forward for training in the new season.

CF: In a perfect world, what would be the ideal number to cover all duties through the year?

Charles: My immediate target number for the coming season is 30, with a longer-term objective of a further ten – and more in due course, to include staffing of Robertsbridge. Other related objectives are to improve flexibility so that more Station Masters can work at more than one station, and to reduce the average age of people in the grade through recruitment.

CF: There appears to be an acute shortage of Station Masters and platform staff at the moment. Why do you think this might be?



Charles: There has been a shortage of new volunteers coming forward and completing training, while some long serving Station Masters have become less active. Thus the number available for duty has reduced. Also, many are qualified for only one station, so rostering flexibility is limited.

CF: How might we address this?

Charles: An organised and targeted approach to recruitment, training and ongoing assessment.

CF: What do you see as the Station Master's most important role?

Charles: Ensuring a safe, enjoyable and informative experience for our visitors.

CF: *What are the best parts of the job?*

Charles: Working as part of an effective team for the benefit of our visitors and each other.

CF: *...and the worst?*

Charles: Sweeping away rain puddles on the platform at Tenterden, which promptly re-fill!

CF: *Write a job description in a dozen words.*

Charles: Visitor and staff safety; Enjoyable visitor experience; Station management; Prompt train service.

CF: *You are also responsible for platform staff. Is that role part of the progression to Station Master?*

Charles: Not usually. Most people wishing to train for the role of Station Master are already experienced volunteers on the railway, or have experience with other railways.

CF: *What is entailed for platform staff?*

Charles: Platform assistants are generally required only for event days and intensive running days, and there is no real role during routine running. The duty involves welcoming passengers and ensuring their safe boarding of trains in accordance with booking arrangements, where applicable. It should be said that the duty is often filled on an occasional basis by volunteers with other roles on the railway. There is a rather more specific role at Northiam when two platforms are in operation.

'Platform assistant' is a vague term, which includes what might more properly be called 'Events assistant'. The latter is an important role and more thought needs to be given to identifying several perhaps distinct roles, under different supervision.

CF: *In the last Terrier you mentioned that you frequently hear complaints from staff regarding down-the-line communication to Northiam and Bodiam stations. Why, in your opinion, do we so often get this wrong?*

Charles: Because we do not think about the need to do it, or simply fail to do it! We should always consider how what we are arranging or doing may affect people in other roles and in other places. It should be pointed out, however, that those receiving communications should note – and act on – the contents.

CF: *What steps are you taking to improve the situation?*

Charles:

- Promoting communication as a two-way process.
- Making sure that proper briefing notes are always issued for all event days and for other non-routine matters affecting stations.
- Issuing periodic notes to Station Masters to provide a flow of relevant information.
- Holding an annual meeting of Station Masters to inform and to exchange ideas.

CF: *You also mentioned "improving life for station masters and passengers". What do you have in mind?*

Charles: Immediate tasks are:

- To enhance the PA system at Tenterden by the installation of a radio-microphone system, allowing the Station Master greater freedom of movement on the platform.
- To move the Station Masters' working area to a new office, which would be part of a new catering building at Tenterden, thus freeing up space in the main station building for an enhanced advance booking area.
- To improve access to trains at Northiam and Bodiam for mobility-impaired passengers by the provision of access steps, currently lacking at both stations.

CF: *If you could do just one thing for each station, what would it be?*

To help both passengers and Station Masters by improving disabled car parking arrangements at Tenterden and Northiam by more and better allocated space and improved signage, and also to provide proper allocated space at Bodiam with suitable signage.

CF: *If money were no object, what would be on the Chief Station Master's wish list?*

Charles: A footbridge at Northiam.

CF: *What are your longer term aims?*

Charles:

- To develop a structure within the department and to delegate responsibilities.
- To hand over the role in good order to my successor at an appropriate time.

CF: *Complete the following: If I could achieve just one thing as Chief Station Master, it would be...*

Charles: ...to maintain a team of competent Station Masters, including a sufficient sustainable number to serve the railway in the long term.

CF: *Charles, thank you for your time.*

Extraordinary Traffic and Excessive Weights

What building the Cranbrook & Paddock Wood Railway did to the roads.

The main line of the South Eastern Railway (SER) across the Low Weald from Tonbridge to Ashford was opened between 1842 and 1843, but it was another 50 years before the area of the High Weald centred on Cranbrook saw its first train. There was no lack of proposals by local landowners and speculative promoters, but no capital was forthcoming from local interests, and the SER evidently felt that the area was not of strategic importance in its struggles with its 'Chatham' and 'Brighton' neighbours. However in 1877 the independent Cranbrook & Paddock Wood Railway was incorporated with a distinguished board of directors, and trial boreholes were sunk at the sites of two deep cuttings; by early 1878 the line had been staked out, and working sections were prepared ready for work to start as soon as final agreement had been reached with the SER.

But this was not to be, and it was 12 years before the SER revived the project. A contract to build the railway was then awarded to Joseph T. Firbank, and construction began in 1891. Firbank's local manager was George Throssel (or Throstle), a civil engineer who had previously worked for Firbank's father, Joseph Firbank snr, on contracts in Sussex. Throssel's father, John Throssel, had worked with Joseph Firbank since his earliest days as a railway contractor and was an executor of his will. By 1891 George Throssel was living at Brenchley. The railway company's consulting engineer was E.P. Seaton, but the day-to-day supervision of the contract fell upon the resident engineer, Holman Fred Stephens – who knew Seaton from his apprenticeship on the Metropolitan Railway – in his first position of independent responsibility. The line was opened from Paddock Wood to Hope Mill (Goudhurst) on 12th September 1892 and was extended to Hawkhurst on 4th September 1893.

Building the railway imposed a considerable strain on the local roads, and the resulting disputes not only cast light on the materials used in building the line but also suggest why access to a railway was considered to be so important for developing the trade of the district it served.



Aveling and Porter traction engine with wagons which have a passing resemblance to their railway equivalents of the time. (Via Tom Burnham)

The Highways Act of 1878 had made maintenance of main roads in rural areas (particularly former turnpike roads) the responsibility of the county magistrates, but when County Councils were established in 1889 they took over this task. The Kent County Council had a Roads and Bridges Committee and a County Surveyor, but it was some years before the Council had its own labour force to carry out the necessary work. At first it was contracted out to District Highway Boards (who were responsible for parish roads at that time), but in 1893 the County Council set up a system of contracting with private firms to maintain the main roads within particular areas. This system was the subject of much acrimonious debate within the Council over the following decade, until it was eventually abandoned in favour of direct control.

In the late 19th century Kent's rural roads were still maintained essentially by spreading suitable broken stone on the surface and rolling it flat with a steam roller. This resulted in a surface which was just about adequate for light horse-drawn traffic, but which easily went into ruts when heavy wagons or – in particular – steam traction engines ran over it. In recognition of this, Section 23 of the Highway and Locomotive (Amendment) Act of 1878 allowed highway authorities to recover the additional cost of road maintenance resulting from "damage caused by excessive weight passing along the same or by extraordinary traffic thereon", "having regard to the average expense

of repairing highways in the neighbourhood”.

Accordingly at the Cranbrook petty sessions in March 1894, Joseph T. Firbank, the contractor, was summonsed by KCC, who claimed £700 in respect of additional repairs and maintenance for the 7½ miles of road from Broadford Bridge, in Goudhurst parish, to Highgate, Hawkhurst, between 31st March 1891 and 31st March 1893, in connection with building the Cranbrook & Paddock Wood Railway. The Council was represented by G.F. Hohler, then a young barrister practising on the South Eastern Circuit, and Mr Firbank by W.C. Cripps, a solicitor from Tunbridge Wells.

County Surveyor Frederick W. Ruck and William Forrester, the assistant surveyor for the district, gave details of the damage done to the roads, and Mr Cripps then gave details of the materials carried: Messrs Lambert of Horsmonden had carried 945 tons, Vidler and Sons of Rye had carried 1,555 tons of beach ballast and Holmes and Turner had carried 77 tons of bricks. General cartage added another 2,916 tons and there were 300 tons of bricks for stations. Frank Spencer of Jesse Ellis and Co. (a well-known Maidstone firm of traction engine proprietors which had contracts from the KCC for road maintenance) gave evidence of the damage caused by this activity, as

did road foreman John Haylor, who said there were ruts 8 or 9 inches deep and 15 inches wide.

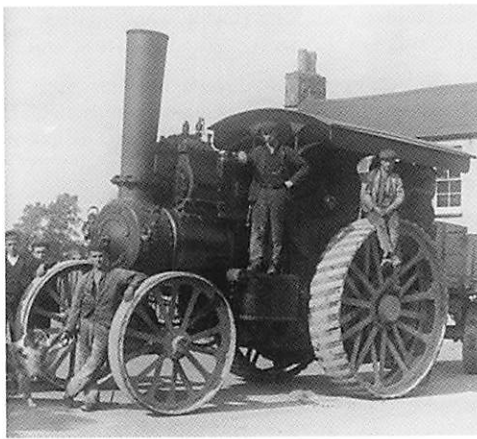
These facts were not in dispute, but Mr Cripps raised a number of legal objections. In particular, the summons had referred only to the parishes of Goudhurst and Cranbrook, but the sum of £700 claimed also included damage to roads in the parish of Hawkhurst. He also argued that Mr Firbank was not liable for the damage, as it had been caused by his sub-contractors, and produced witnesses as to the materials they had carried. After an adjournment the magistrates decided to consider only damage in Goudhurst and Cranbrook, but rejected Mr Cripps' other arguments and awarded the County Council damages of £430. Mr Cripps said Mr Firbank would probably accept the decision, but gave formal notice of appeal.

The question of further proceedings came up at the annual meeting of KCC on 14th March 1894, when the clerk moved that further proceedings be started against Vidler and Sons to recover additional road repair costs incurred for the main road in Hawkhurst leading to Tubbs Lake, and that a certificate be agreed stating that the KCC was the authority responsible for the repair of this road. Both of these decisions were clearly intended to avoid the legal arguments raised by



*Aveling and Porter steam roller used by William Lambert of Horsmonden.
Does any reader recognise the location of this photograph?*

(Via Tom Burnham)



A typical scene of a Fowler traction engine pulling wagons, c.1885. (Via Tom Burnham)

Mr Cripps at the previous hearing. W.B. Tylden-Pattenson, a member of the Council's Roads and Bridges Committee, who had given evidence at the hearing in Cranbrook, "thought they would be better advised to leave the matter where it now stood. They had already got heavy damages from Mr Firbank." However this view was not shared by a majority of the Council, and it was agreed to continue with the case against Vidler and Sons.

The case of KCC against Anna Maria Vidler, John Symonds Vidler and Thomas George Sharpe, trading as Vidler and Sons, was heard at a special sitting of the Cranbrook magistrates at the Vestry Hall on 17th May, which lasted more than four hours. The Council sought to recover £350 for damage done to the main road from Tubbs Lake to Highgate, Hawkhurst, by extraordinary traffic and excessive weight. The parties were again represented by Mr Hohler and Mr Cripps respectively. Appearing as witnesses for the Council were Frederick Ruck, William Forrester, Frank Spencer (who was now manager for the Kent Road Company, a rival road maintenance contractor) and George Throssel.

Mr Throssel gave evidence that extraordinary traffic was carried over the road in question in the early part of 1893, in the form of beach and ballast conveyed by traction engine from Vidler and Sons' wharf at Newenden to different parts of the district for railway purposes, as a result of which, by cutting up the roads, the County Council was put to an extra outlay of £585 7s 1d over the ordinary expenditure in repairing the road in question. For the defence, evidence was called to show that the carrier of the material

over the road was the party at fault, and not the contractor (Vidler and Sons) who supplied it. The bench concurred, and dismissed the case.

Advised by their legal counsel that the magistrates had drawn the wrong conclusion in law from the facts proved, the KCC referred the case to the High Court, which ruled that the magistrates were indeed wrong in their interpretation, and that Vidler and Sons were liable as being the persons who gave the order for the extraordinary traffic. Vidler and Sons appealed against this ruling, and the case was heard by the Court of Appeal on 20th December, with the two parties now represented by Queen's Counsel.

It was agreed that Vidler and Sons had undertaken to supply a large quantity of ballast in connection with the construction of the Cranbrook & Paddock Wood Railway, and so arranged contracts with three proprietors of traction engines, by which the owners agreed to carry the ballast along the highway in question.

The Master of the Rolls considered that the question to be decided was whether this extraordinary traffic was carried on under the orders of Vidler and Sons. It might be that no single traction engine proprietor used the road to an extraordinary extent, but the usage by all of them combined did amount to extraordinary traffic. Who, he asked, had ordered that traffic to be carried on? Vidler and Sons had contracted with Firbank to deliver ballast where it might be required from time to time, and had resolved to perform their contract by making other contracts with the traction engine owners.

Those contracts did not say that the owners should carry the ballast as and when ordered by Firbank, but that, as and when Vidler and Sons required, the owners would let them have the use of their engines, charging them at a specified rate. Therefore nothing was to be done by the owners under these contracts until something was first done by Vidler and Sons.

In practice, whenever Vidler and Sons received an order from Firbank, they gave an order to one or other of the engine owners; and they gave such orders to each of them. The result was that it was Vidler and Sons who gave the orders under which this extraordinary traffic was carried along the road, and they were therefore liable under the Act. Lord Justice Rigby concurred, and so the Court dismissed the appeal.

Tom Burnham

Notes for contributors

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

Content

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

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

Text

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

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

Photos

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

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

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

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

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