



JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

# Tenterden Terrier



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**FRONT COVER**

*The magnificent sight of  
visiting engine Foxcote Manor  
on Wittersham Bank.*

(Phil Edwards)

**BACK COVER**

*Glow in the dark – Pannier  
No.1638 at Bodiam.*

(Chris Kennedy)



Original works plate from 08888/D4118.

(Dennis Hoy)

# Tenterden Terrier

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# Editorial

## The Kent & Great Western Railway

Readers may have noticed that the Spring issue of this journal had a certain bias towards diesel traction. This was not intentional; and neither does it seemed to have raised any hackles. There was a deliberate intention to emphasise Robertsbridge developments, but the diesels were something of a coincidence. Also earlier in the year it came to our notice that a club somewhere in the South East refers to our K&ESR as 'The Kent & Great Western Railway'. Well, should this edition of the *Terrier* be seen by these people, they will be spluttering into

their mid-meeting tea-cups – there is a definite tendency towards things Swindon.

Let it be understood, your Editor has two great passions in the study of the iron road: the Southern Railway, and its erstwhile 'protectorate' the Kent & East Sussex. The latter, albeit deep in SR territory, has for over a century had a somewhat inclusive approach to locos and rolling stock, and in more recent times we have had to acquire or borrow GWR items because, to coin a phrase, 'there's a lot of it about'. We are proud of our Southern locos and stock, and it has been great over the past decade to borrow a Beattie Well Tank, the Bluebell's O1 and Swanage's M7, but there is a wider world out there and the Great Western theme that has been apparent in 2017 needs celebrating.

*Nick Pallant*



*No.1638 nears the end of the climb up Tenterden Bank.*

*(Phil Edwards)*



# Pullman Car *Aries* in Focus

*Aries* is the latest of the railway's historic fleet of coaches to come into the Carriage and Wagon shed for a complete rebuild. Indeed, this is the first major work since the vehicle left the Pullman Car Company at Preston Park, Brighton, in 1952 – the last Pullman to be built at their own works.

Although now 65 years old *Aries* had only a short working life of 17 years before being sold out service to a private buyer. Its working life was spent on BR(S) rails, running mainly out of Waterloo or Victoria to various south coast destinations. On many occasions *Aries* was used in formation with other Pullman cars to convey the Queen and members of the Royal Family to Tattenham Corner for The Derby. However, even royal patronage could not prevent *Aries*, along with the rest of the Pullman fleet, being disposed of in 1969.

At the beginning of its life away from the main line *Aries* was used as intended by its new owners – as a restaurant car at the Yew Tree Public House near Rochdale – for nearly 20 years, before being sold again and taken to the East Lancashire Railway where it was planned to undertake restoration. A recent visitor to Tenterden seeing *Aries* in the C&W advised us that she remembered eating in *Aries* at the pub in the 1980s, at which time it was still fully fitted out.

Whilst at the East Lancs *Aries* was stripped out to allow for asbestos removal, but the restoration never commenced and in 2006 it was sold on to a new owner in Devon. After that, nothing appears to have been done until it was offered for sale in 2012. Collected from Portsmouth Arms station, the Pullman was first sent to Rampart Carriage & Wagon Services of Derby for the underframe to be refurbished prior to being delivered to Wittersham Road and thence to Tenterden, entering the C&W works in March 2017 (*appropriately close to the astronomical First Point of Aries –Ed*).

*Aries* is of a pre-war 1938 design, with timber framing clad in welded steel sheet which is screwed to the timberwork. The roof is all steel with welded seams, welded to steel hoops, which in turn are bolted to the timber cant rail. Remember that at this time BR(S) was building Mark I coaches of all-steel construction, so *Aries* is definitely an old design.

The internal finishes are a reflection of the times, with a less ornate interior: more art deco design, compared with the flowers and bows of earlier Pullmans. *Aries* was displayed at the Festival of Britain on the London's South Bank in 1952. It must have made quite an impression at a time of continued rationing, although the writer (who was taken there) does not remember seeing it – he was only six years old at the time.

So what are our plans for *Aries*? It has long been the aim of the railway to have an all-Pullman rake for the Wealden Pullman and *Aries* will facilitate that, releasing the Maunsell NBO 54 to be used with the other Maunsell coaches in an all-Maunsell Southern rake.

As built *Aries* was a Kitchen First seating 20 diners, later altered to seat 27 but with the kitchen still in place. As *Aries* will be replacing NBO 54, we do not need to retain the kitchen; so this area will be converted to an additional dining area, which will increase the seating capacity to 38. This alteration will mean the windows being reconfigured to suit the new seating layout. It will also provide us with a larger vestibule at the Robertsbridge end to use for coats and umbrellas.

The kitchen area did not have the decorative veneered panels of the main parlour, so new units will need to be manufactured to match. The bulkhead to the original parlour will be retained, though modified, and this will give us a clean break between the old and the new. Many of the original fittings are missing, but contact with the Pullman Society should enable us to obtain originals from which copies can be made. It is our aim to restore *Aries* as sympathetically as possible within the budget we have set ourselves.

The C&W team have given themselves the ambitious programme of four years to complete the project. This will require many components and services to be bought in, but there is still a lot of work for volunteers to get their teeth into. If you'd like to work on this project, you'll be most welcome. Please contact John Wheller on [john.wheller63@gmail.com](mailto:john.wheller63@gmail.com) or Andy Hopper on [thehoppers@hotmail.com](mailto:thehoppers@hotmail.com)

Keep up to date with progress in Lineside News or through the monthly e-newsletter.

*John Wheller*



## COMMERCIAL

### From the (Deputy) Chair – Geoff Crouch

Jamie is busy with the 'Big Railway' at present, and has asked me to keep you up to date with our progress.

Our Bricks Britannia event was very well received, with great reviews and good customer numbers. It worked well because of the commitment shown by our team to make sure our visitors had a great day out. It was well publicised, and well organised both at Tenterden and on the trains. Sometimes we had to plead for volunteers, but they always turned up and kept things going.

It's easy to say, but if every volunteer did one extra turn every couple of months... Having said that, volunteers are returning, old faces are back with us; the railway has found its 'mojo' again.

We also ran the 1940s Event – ever popular, and with a Spitfire overhead – a weekend to remember. Following that, and linked to it, was the Evacuation Event. This fits well with our educational remit, with lots of children learning about the mass evacuation of youngsters before the Blitz.

The arrival of 7822 *Foxcote Manor* caused a great deal of interest, and we were somewhat

disappointed that it failed. However, new valves are being made at time of writing and she will be staying with us when re-commissioned for a month or so – something to look forward to, so keep an eye on the website.

No.21 *Wainwright* is on target to be outshopped in mid-August, which will relieve the strain on our current home fleet. 32678 should be available in mid-July. The Pannier Tank (1638), *Norwegian* and the DMMU have been stalwarts over the past few months, and we shouldn't forget another TREATS loco, the Class 14, which has proved to be a saviour. 08888 will soon be commissioned, and there may be another loco coming our way for a couple of months, but I am sworn to secrecy. No.25 *Northiam* will follow in due course – probably around the end of September.

I must mention the Great Western Railcar. We have had some generous donations following the recent appeal. We will match these from our own funds and we should see some solid progress as a result. If you have some spare change (nothing higher than £20 notes), please make a donation. Your money will go straight into the Restricted Fund Bank Account for the exclusive use of the Railcar Project.

### Progress on the Rother Valley Railway – Mark Yonge

The planning permission alluded to in the last edition of the *Terrier*, which was cautiously optimistic at that time, returned a unanimous vote from the planning committee of Rother District Council. This was followed by a mass of media interest, mainly from local television and newspapers, but additionally the RVR featured in the *Sunday Times*. This vote of local confidence has focused our minds, and the scheme to reconnect our two railways is proceeding positively as follows.

The new lavatory building: We are pleased to report that the new lavatory building at Robertsbridge Junction Station is nearing completion. This is a vital facility because our visitor numbers are continuing to increase, particularly on Sunday afternoons when guided tours take place. Our single toilet, at the main line station, is unable to cope during busy times.

Further section of trackbed purchased: The other piece of good news is that the company has purchased the trackbed between Junction Road (the B2244) and Austin's Bridge. The distance is around one third of a mile, which means that the length of line remaining to be acquired amounts to about 1.65 miles. We would like to thank our benefactor for providing the funds for this vital purchase.

What happens next? It is anticipated that a Transport & Works Act Order will be applied for during the summer months of this year. Naturally discussions are continuing to be held with the remaining two landowners and we are hopeful that a positive outcome will be achieved. It is possible that a public enquiry may be held. In the meantime we are pleased to witness the work of K&ESR committees that are discussing plans for timetables on the extension and the installation of a new passing loop at Junction Road.

More of this fast-moving story will be featured in the next edition of the *Tenterden Terrier*.



Wainwright and Northiam in Rolvenden yard,  
6th June 2017. (Dan Dickson)

### Shop Report – Craig Tyler

First and foremost, I would like to congratulate and welcome Gillian Freeman, our newest Bodiam Shop volunteer, in passing as competent last month. Our congratulations also go to Gayna Mills, a regular volunteer at Tenterden Shop, who has also been passed competent at Bodiam.

February's Thomas event was a building success for the shop by comparison with the figures from last year. The total revenue was up an impressive 23.1% on 2016's figures.

The railway's summer season is just starting, our most recent event being the 1940s weekend (20th/21st May). As with the February Thomas, we saw a healthy boost to turnover. We had similar opening times and locations trading over both weekends, so the 18.4% increase is comparable.

Our next major event is July's Thomas. Our suppliers have been cutting down the ranges of Thomas models available, and their quantities, but have been increasing the product range with the latest Thomas design. We will continue to stock the basic engines through all three ranges for the July Thomas event and follow our supplier's lead by increasing the range of supplementary stock. It is likely that for the September Thomas event we will see a reduction in models across the board.

Our new editions are in for bespoke products – mainly new stationery lines and K&ESR branded products. Do come in and see for yourself; it's well worth a look.

For our OO model railway display, we have recently taken stock a new locomotive – an early BR green 64XX Class – three are in stock at the time of writing, with more on the way. Our stock of Wickham trolleys is in single digits owing to strong demand before the price increases – why not get one of the last few remaining?

At the time of writing, Tenterden Shop has been open every running day – huge thanks to all the volunteers for keeping our shops open as much as possible, not only at Tenterden but at Northiam and Bodiam. We always welcome new volunteers to the department, and I would therefore urge you to get in touch – [ctyler@kesr.org.uk](mailto:ctyler@kesr.org.uk)

### Commercial – André Freeman

What a great month April was for us. The 'Bricks Britannia' event proved very popular with our visitors and resulted in us welcoming 11,300 visitors, soundly beating budget and last year's total of 6,800 – an increase of no less than 66%! Another success of 'Bricks Britannia' was the online booking capability, where our drive to promote advance booking witnessed a 600% increase when comparing this April with April 2016. This shift has significantly eased pressure on our advance booking office staff, who are now better able to respond to customer queries and work proactively rather than reactively.

Mention must also be made of the improvement in shop turnover which, although in part due to the sale of the 'Make & Take' Lego activities, increased by more than 85%. None of this would have been possible without the support of our working members, who contributed a huge number of hours to ensure we put on an event we can be proud of. It's certainly been the busiest start to the season we've seen for many years.

Following closely behind, the 1940s event in May was blessed by some perfect weather which really helped to ensure that all the hard work of preparation was not in vain. The benefit of a having a dedicated event-specific coordinator was clearly demonstrated: we welcomed around twice the number of visitors that we saw in 2016.

Our train service was of lower capacity than we had intended, which caused some overcrowding at times and resulted in queues resembling those seen during the last war, but again our staff worked very hard to minimise the impact.

Equally buoyant was the 'Evacuation Experience', which saw some 700 children transported to 'Wales' for the duration. This really is an excellent educational event, and it resulted in some very positive feedback from both education professionals and 'evacuees'.

As the Wealden Pullman season was almost entirely fully booked before the end of April, 2018 dates have been released for sale and are already



selling well. Our range of railway experience packages is a mixed bag however – some have sold out, while others have proven more challenging to promote. A revised marketing style is currently being developed with a local agency, and we look forward to seeing improved results.

Helen Douglas and André Freeman recently made a working visit to the Swanage Railway to look at the way they use Merac – the computerised sales and booking system that we also use here. The Swanage is a very different railway to our own, but it's clear that they have exploited the power of this software better. Although in many ways it was frustrating to see how well it can work, and therefore the missed opportunities that have previously escaped us,

we came away inspired by what we saw and have already been able to implement some of what we learnt. Significant further improvements are planned – almost all of which require only time, not capital expenditure.

As we look forward to the summer season and the challenges it presents, it's appropriate to reflect on the passion and commitment our staff have for our railway. The improving communications within the organisation are without doubt having a positive effect on cross-departmental working, but it's also clear that these changes are being noticed by our customers too. As we continue to improve the way we work together, and develop a cohesive marketing style, the benefits become ever more apparent. Enjoy your railway!

## OPERATING

### Signalling Department – *Tony Ramsey*

With the 2017 season now in full swing, members of the Department are working hard to ensure we deliver all the turns required. May I therefore take this opportunity to thank everyone for their help?

Congratulations to Mick Leech, who has qualified as a Signaller at Tenterden Town, and to Simon Marsh, who has requalified as a Signaller at Rolvenden after some years away. We also congratulate those who have passed out as Crossing Keepers: Hugo Baxter, James Dorey and Keith Dorey at Cranbrook Road; Nigel Lyon at Rolvenden; Simon Marsh and Mark Singleton at Northiam.

The Railway Rules Working Group has continued to review the Rules, Regulations and Instructions (RRIs). It has been pleasing to receive constructive feedback from staff, which has resulted in amendments to the RRIs. A review of Section B of the Rule Book has been completed, and the Group is currently reviewing Section H.

All members of the 2016 training course successfully passed the signalling exam, and we currently have five new trainees on the 2017 course. We have been pleased to welcome several qualified Signallers who have attended individual sessions as 'refresher'. We aim to extend this provision, but at present are constrained by our limited accommodation (and, sadly, our attempts to raise this problem with the higher echelons of the railway appear to have fallen on deaf ears). However we have been able to hold two MICs jointly with the Footplate

Department: in March, Joel Pearson gave a presentation on the principles of signalling, and in April Clive Norman gave a detailed commentary during a route-learning trip. We look forward to further combined ventures.

Alas, we must bid farewell to four Signallers who have decided it is time to retire. These are Alan Fagg (Wittersham), Ted Micklam (Tenterden, Rolvenden and Northiam), Colin Pearson (Rolvenden and Wittersham) and John Pocock (Wittersham and Northiam) – although happily all of them will continue to be involved in other roles. We also regret that John Wellard, Crossing Keeper at Cranbrook Road, Rolvenden and Northiam, has had to retire on health grounds. We thank all of them for their contribution to the Department.

### Guards Report – *Bradley Bottomley*

With the busiest time of the operating season upon us, I'm sure you'll hear the call from nearly all the departments on the railway asking if we can do one or two more turns each. So it's good that Simon Marsh was passed out on 6th April by Guards Inspector Pete Spratling, and we have more trainee guards coming forward as well as a few faces from other departments. These include Michael Goodwin (signaller); Sarah Tagart (steam raiser); Nathan Tutty (fireman) and new member Paul Hopper.

A plea from our roster clerk: when guards input their availability in HOPS, please can you mark either yes or no on the turns so guards won't be contacted if they are away.

## Rolvenden MPD – Paul Wilson

Firstly, the list of locomotives available for service is notable by how short it is. The last time there was only one Class 5 available was 2015. As contingency were the smaller locos – 32670, 32678, *Charwelton* and 376. The two Terriers and 376 clocked up an impressive 200 steaming days between them in covering for the lack of Class 5s. I am sure all will recall the lovely sight of two Terriers working the Sunday Lunch Pullman.

At the start of the 2017 season 32670 (3) was stopped for her ten-yearly overhaul, as was 30065 (22). This again left us with one Class 5 – 1638 – with only three smaller locos as back-up: 32678, *Charwelton* and 376. While very tight, it was hoped that the smaller engines – supplemented by the valiant TREATS Class 14 – would pull us through with *Wainwright* and *Northiam* in the wings to return from overhaul. To then lose 32678 (requiring a re-tube) followed a few weeks later by *Charwelton* was incredibly unlucky and unprecedented. Steam locos seem to be rather *ovis aries* in their behaviour; what one does, they all do. Even 7822 *Foxcote Manor*, which might have given us a small respite in May, succumbed. The Class 14 diesel also decided to play up, giving Mike Grimwood many a headache.

### Available for service:

**Norwegian 376 (19):** The problem of the blowing piston rod glands has been cured. Having the rods machined to be fully round again, plus new cast iron packing, has stopped the blowing and all is well. Annoyingly, despite valiant work, the air pump is becoming unreliable, leading to failures over the 1940s weekend. Work is under way to try and resolve this, which has included contracting out machining of the reversing and shuttle valves and fitting of new rings. This was not entirely successful. Hopefully some research into 377 at Bressingham may provide valuable information to assist fitters in this taxing issue.

**1638 (30):** Performing extremely well. Fitting staff have been booking on with the steam raiser to carry out mechanical inspections prior to service – being the only Class 5, it has proven difficult to stop it for maintenance as we would normally.

### Under overhaul:

**Knowle 32678 (8):** New boiler tubes are in the process of being fitted. Once this is done the

boiler will be hydraulically tested and witnessed by the boiler inspector, followed by a steam test. The main steam pipe has been removed and annealed, and is ready to refit once the tubing is finished. A new regulator J pipe has been cast, machined and fitted. Thanks are due to the Isle of Wight Steam Railway for the loan of a spare that kept the loco going pending fitting of the new one. An area of the smokebox surrounding the chimney was very thin, and at the moment the chimney is sitting on the new patch ready to be welded into place. It is hoped to have the loco back in service for July.

**Wainwright (21):** Looking more like a USA tank each day. The tanks are fitted in place and the majority of the injector pipework is assembled. Vacuum and steam heat pipework has been installed. The regulator has been refurbished and fitted, and the dome replaced. Richard Stone has made an impressive job of painting the boiler barrel in the Longmoor blue livery that this loco will carry on entry back to service. This livery change was decided upon at a very late stage, and did delay work as the livery first proposed was the 1962 Ashford Works green. The smokebox components are all fitted in place. The cab is due to be fitted soon. Once the loco is complete the springs may need to be adjusted to give the correct ride height.

**Northiam (25):** Recent work has concentrated on fitting the Armstrong blast system (as fitted to 23 and 30065), which had to be done before the tank and chimney could be fitted. As this report is being written, the tank is being craned carefully into position. There was a lot of work required to get the underside of the tank painted ready to fit – no easy task outside even in the British summer! The rest of the tank can be painted on the loco.

Other parts such as lubricator boxes and pipes have been refurbished and fitted. New brake blocks were cast (from a pattern kindly loaned by RSE) and installed, and the brake rigging was adjusted and secured. Work continues to ready this loco for service – subject to labour resources, with 21 being the priority at the moment.

### Stored:

**Bodiam 32670 (3), P class (11), Charwelton (14), Maunsell 30065 (22), Holman F Stephens (23) and 6619 (32).**



### Steaming days by locomotive

		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Total
3	Bodiam	52	53	48	37	43	25	37	12	49	36	392
8	Knowle				45	40	16	33	30	68	22	254
11	P class	50	35	54	23							162
14	Charwelton				33	50	84	56	15	54	36	328
376	Norwegian							29	54	83	85	251
22	Maunsell	0	41	66	66	87	82	56	*65	112	99	674
23	H F S	92	70	74	78	82	80	81	61			618
24	Rolvenden	70	9	39	37							155
25	Northiam	79	81									160
1638	Pannier	13	97	54	63	66	83	38	56		95	565
6619							16	33	65			114
Hired in										20		20

### Class of locomotive available for service

Class 5	4	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	1	2
Class 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Class 2/3	2	2	2	4	3	3	3	3	3	3

### Steaming days by class of locomotive

Class 5	254	298	233	244	235	261	208	247	132	194
Class 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	54	83	85
Class 2/3	102	88	102	138	133	125	126	57	171	94

<b>Total</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>3,693</b>
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\* No.22 was additionally hired to the Yorkshire Dales Railway for 27 steaming days in 2014.

## 4253 Locomotive Company – Bryan Atkins

The end of March saw the locomotive successfully re-wheeled. This marked a significant event in the restoration of 4253, and was the result of much prior hard work and planning by members of the team. Despite all the preparatory work in the weeks and days before, the actual re-wheeling was still took a gruelling 12-hour day by 13 men, leaving all members of the team almost too exhausted to celebrate.

With wheels under the engine, the restoration of the locomotive has seen a step change. The following week the new cab steps, which were made some time ago, were riveted to frames and helped to give a more locomotive-like appearance.

The springs, with their adjusters and brake hangers, were immediately installed; this was followed by the brake pull-rods which had been re-bushed as necessary. The brake vacuum cylinder – a large item – has now repositioned back between the frames at the rear, which will now allow the bunker and cab floor to be replaced. The sand-boxes and refurbished control mechanisms have also been put up.

Other jobs have included the fitting of the weigh shaft arm, and even a trial fitting of the axlebox oiling pots has now been achieved. Work is now focusing on fabricating and fitting the steam heat and vacuum pipework from buffer to buffer,

along with manufacture of the numerous brackets that are required.

Work away from the frames has also continued with the newly received and assembled valve pistons being made ready for installation, while the job of building up and grinding back the surface of the foundation ring, which seems to have gone on for months, is at last now coming down the home straight.

The mammoth task of moving the water tanks out of the booth where they were built and laying them on their sides has been undertaken, in order that the bottom edges could be riveted and then painted. This required many people, jacks and machine skates to get them into position outside and then a block and tackle on the gantry to lower them onto their sides across the rails which previously housed the wheel-sets. Some 50 rivets were put in the bottom of each tank, and the lifting eye brackets have been attached. However there is still some work to complete before the tanks are ready to be installed on the engine.

Work on the boiler will resume soon and the appearance of the engine is set to change again over the summer months. Our website is [www.4253.co.uk](http://www.4253.co.uk). For those interested in becoming a shareholder in this rapidly developing project, please e-mail [gwr4253@gmail.com](mailto:gwr4253@gmail.com) (*It is intended that 4253 will be the subject of a major Focus feature in the next edition –Ed.*)

## **TREATS – Mike Grimwood**

**Class 14 D9504:** The locomotive entered the carriage shed in March for an A Examination. During this it was discovered that a gear tooth had broken off the engine starter ring; this may have been damaged when the starter motor bendix failed at the end of last year. A replacement starter ring was obtained and fitted, and D9504 has returned to service, hauling a number of service trains in May.

**DMMU M50971** entered the carriage shed on 2nd February for its five-yearly C examination. During this examination both of the vacuum exhausters, the no.1 engine alternator and the vacuum brake feed valve were replaced with overhauled units.

It was discovered during the testing of the vacuum braking system that there was a leak within the high side system. We were unable to find it using the vacuum, so the pipework had to be disconnected and capped off so that an air pressure test could be used to find the leak.

**DMMU M51571** entered the carriage shed in March, also for the five-yearly C examination; a number of defects were discovered and rectified.

Both units returned to service at the beginning of April.

**Class 03 D2023:** The locomotive is in service and has been in regular use at Tenterden and working a number of trips to Rolvenden carriage shed with coaching stock movements.

**LMS Motor Car Van 37011:** Work has continued with the replacement of the timber body work. The Bodiam-end doors, which were no longer required, have been removed and replaced with a solid timber end. All the door locking equipment and steel door hinges have been replaced so that the end looks as originally built.

## **GWR Railcar W20W – Andrew Webb**

The internal fitting out of tongue & groove timber cladding of the walls in the luggage compartment is nearly complete.

All needle-gunning and painting of the underframe is now complete. The Headcorn replacement steel footplate is ready to be riveted. The crack in the steel casting for the handbrake has been repaired. This casting and all components for the buffing and drawgear are painted and ready for fitting. As this work

progresses the profiled and cut-to-length timber work for the Headcorn cab will be fitted with new bolts and brackets as required.

The installation of new control wiring and further air pipe continues below floorboard level.

Finally we extend our thanks to all who have contributed to our appeal for donations to the GWR Railcar Fund. To date we have received over £6,000, and money continues to come in week by week. This extra funding has enabled more to be allocated to the overhaul of the second engine, which is our critical path. Completion will enable other work to continue.

## **08888/D4118 – Mark Stuchbury**

Work continued on 08888 during February and March with the reinstatement of the vacuum brake equipment. Sadly an important and quite scarce electrical contactor for the vacuum brake was damaged in transit, meaning that the recommissioning plan was significantly delayed while another one was sourced. The vacuum brake was eventually tested in operation on 28th April, when the loco went to Wittersham Road to pick up the newly delivered Foxcote Manor and bring it back to Rolvenden. It performed faultlessly.

08888 then returned to Tenterden where, during May as part of recommissioning, all six axleboxes were drained of oil, the axle journals were checked and new spring pads were inserted with fresh bearing oil. An engine oil sample was sent away to a specialist laboratory for testing to see if there were any 'nasties' therein that would indicate a damaged engine or unwanted contamination with water or fuel. The results showed everything to be absolutely fine.

The well-worn driver seats have been sent away to a furniture upholsterer in High Halden. He has managed to obtain a near-original copy of the heavy-duty leatherette material used by BR and is refurbishing the two seats with new cushioning and covers.

Work on the new Driver's Manual has finished, and driver training is expected to take place during June and July.

Finally, one of the original BR worksplates actually fitted to 08888 when new (as D4118) was obtained when it appeared on an Internet auction site in June. The 'Built 1962 Horwich' plate had long since been removed from the loco, so it was good to get one of them back to take castings.



## Rolling Stock – Anthony Wilson

Readers should be aware that it is not just serviceable rolling stock and wagons that receive attention in Carriage & Wagon (C&W). Work includes new projects – the most recent started being *Aries* – and the facilities are also used by groups such as TREATS, the recently-arrived 08888 and PWay on-track machines.

**Maunsell NBO 53:** The roof repairs are now complete, with new canvas installed and repainted. All the external panelling has been installed, and insulation fitted. Work has moved on to the passenger compartment, with the floor first removed and now being re-installed. A lot of preparatory painting is under way, and varnishing has also been taking place. The steam-heat pipe repairs are now being tackled.

**RU 69 Diana:** Work carried out has included the varnishing of the passenger compartment, fitting of a new kitchen ceiling, the overhaul of extractor fans and a routine 18-month exam.

**Mk 1 TSO 73:** The steam-heat system has been refurbished, new lino fitted throughout and a general tidy-up of the internal décor carried out.

**SECR 2947 & 3062:** Routine 18-month exams completed.

**GER 197:** Routine 18-month exam completed, but currently stopped as all the axlebox bearings need white metalling.

**Dogfish 154:** Work continues on the chute assembly; it is very nearly finished. Once complete, work will begin on building the hopper section.

**Metropolitan Coach 353:** This is visiting from the London Transport Museum (see feature article on pages 30–32). It has had an 18-month exam and been re-varnished to make it ready for traffic.

**District Coach 100:** New LED reproduction gas lighting has been fitted, seat bases have been made and we are awaiting quotes for upholstery.

**Mk 1 TSO 68:** This too has had a routine 18-month exam, and also a window repair.

**General shed use:** Since March, and in addition to TREATS and 08888, the shed has received a Balfour Beatty Tamper under testing and a Strabag Rail milling machine for servicing.

**Shed improvements and notes:** Electrics and an airline have been now fitted in the shed

extension in order to aid work. John Colwell has visited and done some more work on his Midland Railway box van No.135.

## Pullman Car *Aries* – John Wheller

*Aries* entered the C&W shed in time for the Members Day in March, and work commenced to restore the vehicle. The first month's work concentrated on surveying and dismantling, mainly of the kitchen (Robertsbridge) end, which enabled us to ascertain the extent of the reconstruction required and to consolidate the budget for this phase of the work.

Virtually all the timber framing to the old kitchen area needs to be replaced, due to decay and relocation of the windows. The flooring in the kitchen area and some, if not all, of the bearers need replacing, again due to decay. The flooring to the main saloon appears sound. Our initial investigation has indicated that the bulk of the roof can be retained and a trial sand-blasting was carried out in the shed which indicated that a good finish can be obtained prior to painting. Although this experiment was a success, the noise and dust did cause a lot of nuisance to other users, for which we apologise. We are currently obtaining quotations for the sand blasting and the scaffolding tent that will need to be erected outside the shed to carry it out in.

Work continued with stripping out the brass sliding toplight windows and removing woodwork to be retained, as patterns, until a fibrous insulation was discovered between the metalwork and the woodwork and work was stopped. When built in 1951 the whole of the interior of *Aries* was sprayed with asbestos as a form of insulation or fire proofing; this was removed by a specialist in 1998, but small quantities have been encapsulated in the little gaps between the timber framing and the metal sheeting. The amount is not large but it appears to be everywhere and will have to be dealt with by our specialist contractor. We assume the then owner did not anticipate replacing the external sheeting at the time of the asbestos removal. However over the past 19 years this has been allowed to rust, particularly round the windows and below the cant rail, and now needs replacing. Regrettably we do not anticipate any further progress on site before the end of July; work will continue off site, though, obtaining material quotations ready for when we can recommence.

### Ashford Area Group – *Ted Micklam*

On 30th April we enjoyed our 13th and last continental coach trip. Once again the coach, albeit only a 56-seat variant, was full.

Determined to make the most of the occasion we stopped at a Belgian chocolate 'factory' on the way, where ice creams and refreshments were enjoyed in the warm sun. Our arrival in Maldegem coincided with a peak in horse-drawn traffic around the town; this prompted the local traffic police to test our driver's ability to find a way to an impromptu coach park without passing through the very narrow old town streets.

The gala was very much appreciated by all. With seven locos in steam, the occasional diesel movement, the Museum and a succession of horse drawn 'trams', it would be difficult to find a UK gala to match for about £10 a head! No wonder our hosts insisted on hand dating our tickets; I am sure some would be tempted to return for a second day. Thankfully it was a typically perfect day out to end our series of outings, throughout which Keith Mapley has done all the research, planning and execution in his usual efficient way.

By the time you read this we will have had our last meeting: Michael Bunn on 'A Tour De France by Train' on 21st June. Our supporters will be pleased to know that from September onwards the third Wednesday evening of each month at the Rail Staff Social Club, Beaver Road, Ashford TN23 7RR will be filled by the South East Branch of the Railway Correspondence and Travel Society. Their first topic will be 'Railways at War' by David Start. I understand that all visitors will be welcome.

Contact Ted Micklam on 01233 503999 or e-mail [edward.micklam@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:edward.micklam@tiscali.co.uk)



*Contrasting motive power at the Maldegem Stoomcentrum Gala 2017. (E. Micklam)*

### Bodiam Group – *Malcolm Burgess*

The group is still coming to terms with the sad loss of Robin Dyce as its driving force. We have agreed that Vic Grigg will take charge of garden and grounds matters, while I will lead on buildings and structures. The fund collected in memory of Robin will be used for a project at the station, but the exact nature of this is still under discussion.

The hop garden is looking vibrant following the renewal of the poles, and is clearly benefiting from the care being lavished on it by Vic along with Frank Wenham. The extensive clearance of undergrowth undertaken by Frank, Freddy Soper and other team members during the winter has improved the appearance of the whole site, and it is now much easier to keep tidy. We eagerly await the arrival of the weed-killing team to complete the job around the siding.

The front garden has been looking as attractive as usual under the tender ministrations of Gaye Watson, who has taken over regular cultivation from Sheila and Pam Stevens, although they are continuing to support the site by kindly supplying the splendid begonias for the planters around the station. We have installed a new garden water supply to eliminate the need to carry many heavy watering cans. We await news about whether the garden will feature in an entry by the parish council for a further award this year.

Around the site Bruce Sharpe, our resident electrical expert, has installed a 13amp power supply to the Robertsbridge end of the platform. This will enable us to avoid long runs of extension cables when working at that end of the site, particularly when cutting the hedge on the far side of the track. It has already proved invaluable as we begin the task of refurbishing the timber fencing along the back of the platform, which has become seriously unsafe in several sections. Chris Wady, Freddy, Bruce and Paul Randall have begun this task, working on a small section at a time to avoid disruption now that regular passenger services are running.

The shop has a brand new door to the yard side, procured by John Harding, who, along with Paul, also undertook painting. This significantly improves the appearance of the station and completes the redecoration of the main building, with the exception of the roof – which we hope to address at the end of the running season.





*Memories of Dixter Halt, 25th May 1981.*

*(Hugh Nightingale)*

Graham Holden continues his marathon task of restoring the many platform trolleys. The splendid results can now be seen displayed, and have attracted several appreciative comments.

After much discussion with the railway's management, a new professional cleaning regime for the toilets will commence by the time you read this. It is an aspect which has not enhanced the visitor experience in recent years – made worse, particularly in wet weather, by the ash surface of the yard which gets walked in everywhere. A decision to renew/repair the crossing gates would really complete the transformation of the station's appearance.

Congratulations to Vic Grigg, who has passed out as a station master for Bodiam. In tandem with Bill Larke, who has trained in management of the shop, we now have a 'home-grown' station operations team. We hope Bill can still find an hour or so for outdoor work as well!

The group helped to prepare the site for the visiting 5" gauge live-steam Manor locos which featured as part of the 'Manorfest' day on 14th May. They attracted a lot of interest, and helped offset the disappointment resulting from the non-appearance of the main attraction.

Just a reminder that Hoppers Weekend is 9/10th September; we hope that it can be a really special event as a fitting tribute to Robin.

### **Forestry & Conservation – Steve McMurdo**

Our group is actively involved all year round in the seemingly never-ending requirement to keep the vegetation alongside the line under control.

During the winter months the absence of trains to take us out to site – and most importantly collect us at the end of the afternoon – means we prefer to work closer to stations or road crossings, although the need to quickly respond to emergencies such as fallen trees on the line means this is not always possible.

Before the start of the operating season we spent a Sunday at Rolvenden pruning hedges and attacking undergrowth. The work in the headshunt at Tenterden mentioned in our last report was completed, with the team assisting our professional tree surgeons in reducing the crown of two substantial trees. It was particularly encouraging to receive a pleasant letter of thanks from the owners of one of the neighbouring houses, whose property had been previously overshadowed.

The emergence of spring, combined with hopefully warmer and drier weather, has finally enabled us to be in a position once again to tackle larger and more ambitious projects. As a starter we have commenced a major clearance exercise beginning at the location of the short-lived Dixter Halt, and will be working our way back towards Northiam as the summer progresses.



This is a particularly scenic section of the line, with Dexter Wood on one side and far-reaching views across the Rother Valley on the other, but we have not worked here for a few years and cutting back and clearance is now due.

Additionally there are a number of private crossings used by farmers on this stretch, and it is essential that lines of sight for these users and our crews are maintained.

No trace remains of the short timber platform and small wooden shelter which comprised Dexter Halt, built in the preservation era. It was used irregularly in the early 1980s for shuttle services from Bodiam operated either by Marcia, typically with the District Railway coach and brake van, or by the long-departed AC railbus. This was some years before the line was reconstructed, at a time when the impressive sight of *Foxcote Manor* passing us while working there a few weeks ago would have been unimaginable.

Readers of the members' e-newsletter will be aware of the recently arrived rail-mounted flail, and its usefulness was recently demonstrated following an urgent requirement to improve visibility at Padgham's Crossing. The machine devours trackside undergrowth at an impressive rate, without the laborious use of hand tools. This enables us to quickly gain access to trees requiring attention from chainsaws, and thus complete the task far more quickly. We look forward to working further with the operators of the machine, and there is no doubt it will very much help our limited resources in the months to come.

### **Tuesday Group – Graham Hopker**

The During the winter months the path from the A28 at Northiam to the Memorial Garden was completed by laying concrete paving slabs. This gives stability to the access to the garden for wheelchair users as well as walkers.

Elsewhere at Northiam, the ground frame by the road crossing has been repainted and over several weeks the majority of the fence was repainted and fence-post replacement was undertaken. During February work was carried out to replace the wiring of the lighting system on No.2 Platform.

April and May saw us at Tenterden, where we painted and black-stained the recently erected shelter for the replica Colonel Stephens railmotor. The very large front and rear doors of the Carriage and Wagon shed were repainted, and the wood cladding at the front was re-stained.



*Members of the Tuesday Gang working on the Signalman's Crossing at Tenterden Town, 25th April. (John Rose)*

At the request of the Tenterden gardeners (and as mentioned in the Gardening Report) the old 'fire buckets' which hang under the running-in board were repainted bright red before being planted up for the summer.

During March Dave Brown carried out some electrical work in the Museum.

We were then asked to assist with work on the new Catering Outlet at Tenterden (see separate feature –Ed), where we black-stained all the outside wood cladding. We have also taken on the task of fitting out the new Station Master's Office at the south end of this building. To date power points have been installed and the walls have been clad with sheet ply.

In May the Signalman's foot-crossing from the box to the crossing gates at Tenterden was replaced and extended, making this frequently used route safer and avoiding the need to walk on the ballast.

### **Gardening Group – Veronica Hopker**

The last report ended in January. As the winter was mild compared with previous years, work continued tidying the gardens, cutting back dead foliage, splitting plants and generally tidying the larger shrubs.

We have a lot of bees at the moment, no doubt attracted by the old-fashioned perennials we tend to grow. Bee boxes have been put on the Pullman Dock garden to encourage single bees to take up residence – together with any other bugs or beetles that like the look of the accommodation!

The little garden by the offices has been tidied and more plants added. The gap to the right of the office door has been blocked off and a small



planting area created. This has been planted with a Philadelphus which, hopefully, will fill the gap and stop people walking between the information building and the offices.

The shrubs at the rear of the toilet block were trimmed but we found a blackbird sitting on her nest, so that curtailed our snipping.

In March, following the sad loss of Brian Gooch, a rose was planted in the Pullman Dock garden in his memory. It was put in level with the kitchen of *Diana*, where Brian used to work.

April found us trying to clear docks and other pernicious weeds that grow on 'the mound'. The weeds are a continuing problem, but as the plants mature it will help to keep them under control. New plants are gradually being added to all the gardens as we are trying to ensure the gardens are attractive to our visitors and add to the whole railway experience.

Norman Bowden of the Tuesday Group has now completed the locomotive (made from box hedging) on the Signal Box garden. Norman has been working on this for about three years, and it has now reached maturity. Thanks Norman: it looks great.

The red buckets on the running-in board have been planted up with trailing fuchsias, which should give a good display later on. The hanging baskets have been planted up and, with the help of Dave Brown of the Tuesday Group, are now installed round the station building.

An obelisk, made by Chris Furmston, has been put on 'the mound' for the everlasting sweet peas. These have been in the garden for some years, and have been allowed to wander through the plants; but this year we thought we would try growing upwards for a change.

The new secondary catering building will be complete by the time this report is published, and by then there will be hanging baskets on the station side and a garden on the platform side. This will be planted with a variegated Photinia, climbing hydrangea, clematis and a few other plants.

As usual my thanks go to Jan Lelean for all her hard work helping with the gardening and continuing on her own when I am away. This year we have the occasional help of Nell Joint, who works with Liz Brown at Northiam, who joins us when possible. Thanks are also due to Rudi (one of Chris Furmston's assistants), who

has kindly helped with heavy digging jobs, and to Doug and Eve Ramsden for the continued supply of various plants.

### **Rolvenden Station**

Earlier on in the year the flower tubs were tidied and the little garden weeded. However the weeds soon returned. At the beginning of June the watering system was switched on, and the tubs planted for the summer with fuchsias and begonias; a few plants were put in the little garden. If anyone at Rolvenden can spare a few minutes to pour some water on the garden to keep it alive, please do so; that will be very helpful.

### **Wittersham Road Station**

Thanks go to Humphrey Atkinson of the Tuesday Group who has taken on the task of planting the troughs on Wittersham Road platform. He has grown a selection of plants which he will be planting over the next few weeks. We hope the rabbits leave them alone.

Buddleia, notably in the border alongside the path to the platform, attracts several species of butterfly. Biodiversity is important, yet we have never recorded or reported. Please make a note of the types you spot over the next few weeks and let us know.

### **Northiam Station**

The wild flower patch has been weeded in the Memorial Garden, and new plants put in to try to establish a display of smaller flowers. Last year the seed mix used contained some very large plants.

Doug Ramsden and Mark Taylor of Tuesday Group have been working hard to keep the grass cut and everything tidy.

*Report by Liz Brown:* Nell Joint and I have been working at Northiam since March, cutting back and tidying up to prepare for the summer. Unfortunately the Aquilegias that usually give such a show in April and May have not been good this year – probably due to late frost and lack of rain.

With the warmer weather we have planted up the platform pots and the trough by the picnic garden. Hopefully the rabbits will allow some of the bedding plants to grow in the lineside garden as well, and more flowers will appear during the summer. Our labours were a little disrupted on Tuesday 23rd May when the Evacuees' Special made an unexpected stop at Northiam due to a problem down the line. Work continued despite the threat of enemy action!



*Arrival of the replica Ford Railbus for display at Tenterden Town on 5th June.*

*(Bradley Bottomley)*

## Museum Notes

Along with the railway we have had an excellent start to the season. The 17 days of the Easter holidays (plus the excellent Lego exhibition) meant that we had over 3,000 visitors in that time. Nearly 200 visitors a day – and we thought this incredible until visitors during the 1940s weekend doubled that daily figure! Up to the end of May we have welcomed over 5,500 visitors – more than 60% of the railway's visitor numbers. Such increases are almost too much for a museum which is designed for around 30 and with an acute shortage of volunteers.

The major visual event of the winter was of course the erection of the railmotor shelter. Its occupant finally arrived on 5th June. The reasons for its delayed arrival are rather tedious to go into, but basically transport contractors were unwilling to convey such an unusual and delicate item without charging the earth. With the railmotor now in place we sincerely hope to encourage more people to visit the 'far side' of the line to enjoy the attractive viewing area.

The major change in the internal layout of the museum went smoothly. The resultant reshuffle – which involved the moving of the contents of up

to five cabinets and creating a 'temporary exhibit' relating to Stephens' railmotors – was completed in time for the new season. New models and reorganisation have freshened up many of the exhibits: something we aim to do regularly, even when manpower shortages work against us.

The most important additions to the archive are two photos presented to us by our neighbour Henry Edwards from the estate of the late Harold Apps, a Tenterden Town Councillor of many years. These are of the first departure from the original Tenterden station (now of course Rolvenden) at 7.30am on 2nd April 1900. Local papers reported 'a large number... lined the platform' and the first photo (right) shows this to perfection, with all dressed in their Sunday best. The second (far right) shows the train about to depart, signal shrouded in steam: hardly surprising after a notably cold, dull and wet winter (the opening was delayed by flooding), in the early morning light of that spring day over 117 years ago.

*(Harold's father Charles would have been eight at the time. His father, Edwin, was described as an ironmonger and shopkeeper living at Beech House in the 1901 Census. Charles had a number of siblings including a twin brother Frederick, so is it*



*possible that they and their next-oldest brother, Bertram, are standing with their mother under the 'DEN'; one astutely studying a handbill? The very tall gentleman to the right is also intriguing. -HN)*

### **Colonel Stephens Society – Ross Shimmon and Dana Wiffen**

This year's Members' Weekend took place in Norfolk. We normally meet at a railway associated with the Colonel, but this was an exception. We like to move around the country to give members a chance to attend reasonably easily, but are also dependent on volunteers to organise it. So this year we started at Dereham, close to the Mid Norfolk Railway, for our AGM. We had lunch at Dereham Station in a comfortable BR Mk.2 carriage with at-seat service. Afterwards we joined the service train – a Class 101 to Wymondham Abbey.

Leaving Dereham, large numbers of Mk.1 and Mk.2 carriages were observed; some of us spotted several battery-operated parcels vans, once a common sight at Dover, and we also saw GWR Pannier tank 9466. Stations are in various states of restoration. On arrival the group had a guided tour round the ancient Wymondham Abbey, which has a very attractive modern extension. Several of our members walked to the main line station at Wymondham while others explored the village; then the 101 took us back to Dereham for dinner, drinks and bed.

Next morning a wonderfully preserved 1959 Bedford Duple coach was waiting for us. Our driver had a good knowledge of railways in the area, and made the slow journey to Holt interesting by pointing out where the tracks of the M&GN had been before it was closed. We arrived at a busy Holt station in sunshine with 15 minutes to spare and made our way to our reserved carriage, where North Norfolk Railway volunteers were expecting us. The crowded

steam train was headed by a B12, its Westinghouse pump causing bouts of nostalgia for some.

After arrival at Sheringham we had an hour to wander round the town or head for the seaside. We then reassembled to board a Class 46 diesel-hauled train bound for Weybourne station, where we were directed by staff to a reserved waiting room for lunch. Once refuelled, volunteers took us for a tour of the engineering sheds. A particular delight was the fully restored Wisbech & Upwell tramway coach, GER No.7, which worked on the Kelvedon & Tollesbury branch before it closed and then spent the next 23 years as an onion store. It's now owned by the M&GN Society.

From Weybourne we caught the 2.56 for Holt, and had a tour of the William Marriott Museum before returning to our coach, where we were joined by Paul Young, our guide from the North Orbital Railway. We then headed towards Melton Constable, tracing the closed section of the line and hearing the plans for the future. At Melton Constable we saw what had once been a busy railway hub; the few remaining railway buildings are now used as warehouses for potato storage.

Plans for both the NNR and the MNR to make their way to Fakenham seem more than just a pipe dream, although from Holt there are several obstacles to overcome. The Society ended its second day in Norfolk with a visit to County School station on the MNR.

Next year sees the 150th anniversary of the birth of Holman Fred Stephens, and we will be celebrating the occasion with events at Tenterden and Robertsbridge. We hope to see you then, if not before.

For more information, visit our website: [www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk](http://www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk)





*Members of The Colonel Stephens Society in front of the Wisbech & Upwell Tramway coach, GER No.7, on 21st May.*

*(Bruce Hunt)*

## BOOK REVIEW

### **The Snailbeach District Railways**

*by Andy Cuckson*

*223 pages, 27.2 x 20.5cm, hardback.*

*Published by Twelveheads Press. £30. Available from the K&ESR gift shop at Tenterden Town Station*

Until now, enthusiasts – and indeed anyone interested in the Snailbeach District Railways (a grandiose name for a very short railway) – had very thin pickings to choose from for their reading. There was just the 52-page small-format book by Eric Tonks, originally published in 1950, with a revised edition in 1974, supplemented by numerous articles in a variety of magazines, including the Tenterden Terrier and The Colonel.

After more than 20 years' research by Andy Cuckson, here is what must surely be the definitive history of the line. Beautifully produced, it includes many illustrations from a wide variety of sources, including our very own Colonel Stephens Railway Museum, very clear maps and drawings in 7mm scale of the locomotives and rolling stock by David H. Smith, and illustrations of original documents. A full history of this 2' 4" gauge line, it begins with the plans to bring railways to Shropshire's Snailbeach area, followed by the opening in 1877, the struggles to serve its community through the ups and downs of the lead mining and quarrying industries, until its final closure in 1959. The author describes the subsequent development of the site. There is also a postscript which brings the story up to date. The company still exists on paper under the chairmanship of Michael Iggulden, who provided the foreword and whose surname will be familiar to enthusiasts of the work of Holman Stephens.

Chapters cover early planning, the construction, times of prosperity and decline, the acquisition by Holman F. Stephens, the demand for roadstone, and the use of a farm tractor instead of the life-expired steam engines. There are detailed descriptions of each of the six steam locomotives as well as the wagons.

The Snailbeach never officially carried passengers, though there was a miners' car. Unfortunately no details have survived of this vehicle. Judging by the diligence Cuckson displays in this book, he would have found them if they exist.

Among the most interesting chapters are those that record the line's operation, the personnel involved and 'Incidents, accidents and anecdotes'. The latter reveals much of the character of the line, the people who operated it, and the railway's relationship with the community it served.

The use of gravity working of full loads from the quarries to the exchange sidings at Pontesbury is fully explored as an economic, if dangerous, operating practice. Fortunately serious injuries seem to have been few. It is fascinating to read how orders for empty wagons were put together to ensure an economic load up to Snailbeach, sufficient for the downhill runs.

The text is fully supported with appendices covering such items as traffic statistics and engineering details, and a bibliography, lists of references and notes. Unusually these days for a railway history, there is an index, arranged by subjects and surnames. Highly recommended.

*RS*



# Rolvenden Level Crossing



*Breaking out the old crossing.*

*(Dave Hazeldine)*

The Kent & East Sussex Railway is famous for its level crossings, and possibly the busiest of these is on the A28 adjacent to Rolvenden Station. With its location being in a dip between two fairly steep hills, this crossing – which had not been fully renewed for around 60 years – takes a pounding from vehicles often travelling at appreciable speed.

Replacement of this level crossing had been under consideration for some time, and the opportunity was taken to install a pre-cast concrete modular unit. This was of a type which has been widely used in continental Europe, and the manufacturers were keen to have a UK example in the hope of achieving sales in Britain. Much of the materials and plant used was therefore paid for by them, resulting in substantial savings for K&ESR.

The job was undertaken over the weekend of 11/12th March, resulting in extensive diversions for road traffic. This was an unusually challenging project for our P.Way Department, and assistance was received from our good friends at London Underground. Working as volunteers, LU staff members undertook the



*Installing the slabs.*

*(Dave Hazeldine)*



design and site survey as well as turning up to provide additional help over the weekend.

Work started at 5am on the Saturday morning with the digging up of the existing road surface and track-bed, leaving a trench across the road 5m wide and 0.5m deep. A sub-base was shovelled into this, followed by the pouring of two inches of concrete. The five precast concrete crossing panels which were then installed were custom manufactured for Rolvenden, it not being generally realised that the rails here are not straight but curved to direct the trains up the bank.

The rails were then craned back into the specially made slots in the panels, and adjusted for height and alignment before the gaps around the rails were filled with a flexible grout. In addition to all this the opportunity was taken to repair the adjacent river bank! The track was reconnected, the gap between the concrete panels and the existing road was tarmaced, and work was completed in time to allow the road to reopen, on schedule, on Monday morning.

We now have a crossing that should last for decades – and to a design which may be used for other K&ESR crossings in the future.



*Repairing the river bank.*

*(Dave Hazeldine)*



*Reinstating the track.*

*(Dave Hazeldine)*



*The completed crossing.*

*(Dave Hazeldine)*



# TENTERDEN'S SECOND CATERING OUTLET

*In September 2015 Dave Hazeldine was asked to head a team to consider the design and construction of a second catering building at Tenterden.*

For over ten years the Catering Department under André Freeman has been setting up and taking down a BBQ marquee on the site of the tram that had been removed earlier. This process took four or five days each time an event took place, the annual cost being £7–8,000. This was an extremely poor utilisation of time, as well as a waste of money.

André, his catering team and I drew up a project specification, which in turn was put into architectural form by Humphrey Atkinson. After a number of iterations the plan was costed and a business plan was produced by me and André. It soon became apparent that the proposal offered a good rate of return. The building would need to be attractive on the exterior, and should have a hygienic and professional-looking interior which would be user-friendly and very easy to set up and pack away.

For various reasons the project was put on the back burner until Bryan Atkins revisited the spreadsheets in June 2016 and highlighted its excellent returns. The Trustees decided that the £36,000 capital cost could be met in the 2016/17 financial year. It was also decided at the last minute to add a small Station Master's office on the west end. Paul Vidler undertook the planning application, and permission was granted just two weeks later!

The next big issue was how and when to construct the building, and who should do it. After consultations, Dave Stubbs and I agreed it should be a volunteer project. When to build? The timing was critical to the Commercial Department, as no clear space in the calendar was available. It was therefore decided to construct the building in three phases.

Phase 1: November 2016. Clear the site and excavate foundations, using our own plant, and Clive Lowe drove his Hitachi road-rail excavator. The Pullman was shunted out of the dock, and the spoil was loaded onto PW wagons there, all activities were kept in house and with multi department help and resources. The foundations

and base slab were cast the week before the Santas were due to start. A temporary plywood floor was constructed and a marquee was erected on top, held down using a temporary steel frame constructed under the floor; this in turn was held down by bullhead rail chairs borrowed from PW – lots! Four days after the slab was cast the whole temporary kitchen was installed under the supervision of Keith Jones. The Santa BBQ then proceeded, with its customary success.

Phase 2: January 2017. All the new services were put in, with Matt Stubbs and I taking a week off work to undertake this. Of course it was never likely to go without incident! We managed to cut an old water pipe, which no-one knew about, and it flooded all the trenches. One small repair later we had electricity, gas, water, foul water and telecom/IT ducts laid and backfilled. Some cold-rolled tarmac was used for pathways for the Thomas February event. While the services were



*Installing the cladding.*

*(Dave Hazeldine)*





*All ready for the customers.*

*(Dave Hazeldine)*

being installed Dave Stubbs was busy in his workshop, manufacturing the building in all its component parts – including very nice windows, doors and end trusses.

Phase 3: End of February. The day after Thomas finished the marquee and the temporary flooring were removed and the new superstructure was delivered from Dave's workshop. A week later the basic structure was erected and made watertight. The internal and external fit-out then started, dependent on the weather. The exterior was clad in feather edge board with metal sheet roofing, similar to the station building. The interior walls were lined with Fireline plasterboard to assist fire-proofing, then functional stainless steel wall of catering grade was added with plastic interlocking sheets for the ceiling. Both walls and ceiling were designed with ease of cleaning and maintenance in mind.

A large extractor hood and ventilation system has been installed. Up to ten gas-fired or electric

cooking appliances can be accommodated. Single- and three-phase electric points have been provided, and can be added to easily if required in the future. For those of a technical disposition, 1,000m of cable and a 48-way distribution board with 34 individual circuits have been wired and tested! The Tuesday Group have painted the exterior, and also have taken on the fitting-out of the Station Master's office.

The week before the 'Forties' event witnessed an all-out effort by everyone involved, and saw the structure open and ready for business on the Saturday morning. The building has even had the catering staff dancing for joy in the middle of the space thanks to the ergonomics of the building!!

This project has been a good example of the current 'can-do' attitude on the railway. Particular mention must be made of Duncan Buchanan, Phil Clark-Monks and Alan Crotty for helping with all the work, with thanks also to the many other volunteers who have contributed to the project.



# FOXCOTE MANOR



*Steam and rain – No.7822 Foxcote Manor at Tenterden Town.*

*(Phil Edwards)*

*Swindon comes to Rolvenden.*

*(Alan Crotty)*







*Token exchange at Wittersham Road.*

*(Humphrey Atkinson)*

*Ready to tackle Wittersham Road Bank.*

*(Alan Crotty)*







*An impressive view of an impressive loco.*

*(Phil Edwards)*

*This GWR loco somehow looks right next to our SE&CR Birdcage!*

*(Phil Edwards)*







*Hauling Metropolitan Railway No.353 between Rolvenden and Tenterden.*

*(Humphrey Atkinson)*

*Foxcote Manor on Pullman duty.*

*(Keith Edwards)*





# Letters to the Editor

Sir – You may already have been told the location of the photograph of the Aveling and Porter road roller on page 45 of the Spring 2017 issue of the *Tenterden Terrier*. It is at the road junction outside the churchyard in Brenchley. The churchyard is behind the photographer, the tree is still there and the buildings behind are little changed.

Lamberts' yard was situated opposite the station in Horsmonden. When I moved to the village in 1970 the yard was still occupied by a road building contractor, Roe Roads, but the steam engines had long since gone. As well as road building, Lamberts were also agricultural

contractors. My father recalled having visited Lamberts' Yard with my grandfather some 50 years previously. Their purpose was to purchase a second-hand threshing machine for their farm in East Kent.

The machine was shipped by the South Eastern & Chatham Railway from Horsmonden to Elham, on the line that then connected Folkestone with Canterbury. From Elham it was hauled by road up the hill to Acrise, possibly using a steam tractor. It remained in service on Blandred Farm for around 40 years.

*Noel Grabham  
by e-mail*

## KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

### January 2017

1st James L Dobson	No. 683	£70.00
2nd J R King	No. 469	£60.00
3rd Keith Clifton	No. 708	£50.00
4th Mrs Janet Anstiss	No. 427	£40.00
5th Trevor W Clark	No. 188	£35.00
6th Dick Dickson	No. 101	£30.00
7th Andrew Rillie	No. 751	£25.00
8th Barry Fisher	No. 780	£20.00
9th Chris McNaughton	No. 324	£15.00
10th Karen Lloyd	No. 232	£10.00

### February 2017

1st Mrs M L Farahar	No. 712	£70.00
2nd Mr Nigel Thomas	No. 074	£60.00
3rd Mrs P Greenwood	No. 168	£50.00
4th Ernest C King	No. 336	£40.00
5th Ruth Gower	No. 036	£35.00
6th Lionel Marchant	No. 304	£30.00
7th Trevor W Clark	No. 188	£25.00
8th Ernest C King	No. 214	£20.00
9th Mike Dawes	No. 687	£15.00
10th Mr C J Alliez	No. 668	£10.00

### March 2017

1st Graham Voce	No. 321	£90.00
2nd Nigel Thomas	No. 362	£80.00
3rd Keith Howell	No. 534	£70.00
4th Mike Dawes	No. 686	£60.00
5th Lance A T Banks	No. 763	£50.00
6th B P Germain	No. 244	£40.00
7th T J Heaslip	No. 484	£35.00
8th L J Edwards	No. 442	£30.00
9th Stella Dow	No. 744	£20.00
10th Beryl Goodwin	No. 765	£15.00
11th Clifford Freeman	No. 832	£10.00

### April 2017

1st Boris Perkins	No. 113	£70.00
2nd Tom/Judy Featherstone	No. 134	£60.00
3rd Paul Sayce	No. 112	£50.00
4th Peter Roberts	No. 077	£40.00
5th J Cheswright	No. 467	£35.00
6th Mrs A P Crawford	No. 525	£30.00
7th Mark Warr	No. 350	£25.00
8th Maggie Remnant	No. 248	£20.00
9th Paul Mineham	No. 825	£15.00
10th Robin Taylor	No. 700	£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.

# Back to the 1940s

*The railway enjoyed fine weather for the 1940s Weekend on 20th/21st May.*



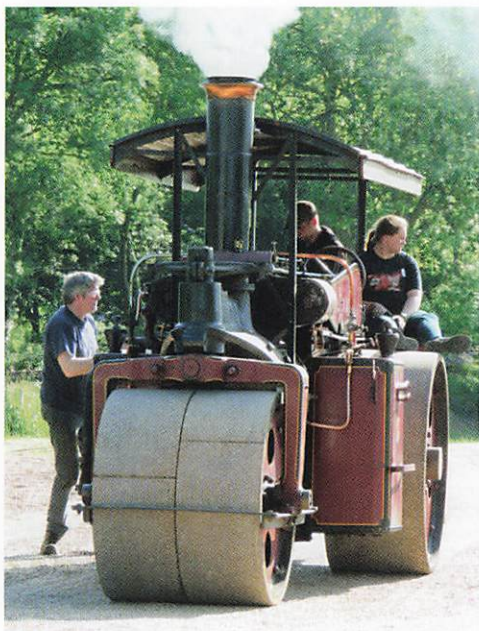
*Fireman Neil Sime with appropriately dressed daughters Helen (left) and Claire.*

*(Phil Edwards)*



*Coupons, nylons, fags –  
the ever-popular Viv the Spiv.*

*(Keith Edwards)*



*Steam on the road?  
Must be petrol rationing.*

*(Keith Edwards)*





*A picture that somehow captures the pathos of wartime.*

*(John Wickham)*



*To prove we did run trains as well, No.19 with the 'B' set.*

*(Phil Edwards)*



# A Matching Pair:

## Our Metropolitan District Railway Carriage and our Metropolitan Railway Carriage Visitor

*For this season and into next year we have on loan, courtesy of our friends at the London Transport Museum, the beautifully restored 1st Class Metropolitan Railway carriage No.353, usually kept at the LT Museum's Acton store. It should be a wonderful addition to our vintage train on high days and holidays.*

### Our Metropolitan District carriage

We have long been host to a steam underground railway survivor, carriage No.100. This was a very early example of a body rescued and restored to run again on a heritage railway. The history of this carriage is uncertain, and was for a time controversial, but it is the sole survivor of the carriages of the Metropolitan District Railway – the deadly rival of the Metropolitan Railway (Met). The body was found at Dymchurch in 1976, where it was in use as a storage shed. It is thought to have been moved there from Ashford.

There was never any doubt that the vehicle had been a 1st Class one, as the carriage compartments are of the right size. It was numbered 100, for the number was found painted on the doors in gold leaf, and recently the number was found stamped on a door pillar. It was for a time, however – even as late 1999 –

conjectured that it was a longer Met rigid 8-wheeled carriage, sawn in two.

The body was internally restored in rather basic fashion as a third-class carriage mounted on a cut-down PMV underframe (from No.1225, built at Ashford in 1936) and ran for the first time in August 1980. The District, unlike its rival the Met, only had four-wheeled carriages in steam days and, despite developing theories to the contrary, it was lettered accordingly. In those early days of restoration little was done by way of 'archaeological' investigation or seeking documentary evidence. Recent research has confirmed that the carriage closely fits a description of a batch of District carriages built by Ashbury in 1884, including some 1st Class four-compartment examples.

As part of the current extended overhaul, deep investigation (involving stripping away much



*District Coach No.100 in Tenterden Yard.*

*(Nick Pallant)*



panelling fitted in the 1970s) has confirmed that it is indeed a single four-wheeled District 1st Class body, and the number 100 was again confirmed.

The present overhaul is being undertaken by a small dedicated team with the intention of fully restoring the carriage to its original 1st Class internal condition. This has been hampered by the very limited funds available from company resources, but generous donations from individuals have ensured that many replica fittings have been manufactured. Work is only being held up by the need for funds to source the correct – expensive – upholstery, for which we have the specifications. We are going to do it right this time.

The original 1980 varnished livery proved of poor durability, so for much of its K&ESR life the carriage has carried a brown livery, which it was thought might be the colour which the District Railway latterly used. However this turned out to be false, as even the Underground had faked this finish for a 1920s exhibition. The present intention is to restore the carriage to a semblance of its correct teak finish by the use of scumbling and modern varnish over the plywood which has been used during restoration.

### **The visiting Metropolitan Railway carriage**

Our visiting carriage has a detailed, thoroughly researched and fascinating history. Although beautifully restored to its original Met condition, it only served as such for 15 years and its longest service period was actually on Col. Stephens' Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway.

The carriage was built by Cravens Ltd of Sheffield in 1892 for the Met's then-new extensions to Rickmansworth and Aylesbury. It was one of a second batch of what were known as 'Jubilee' carriages following the delivery of the first batch in 1887, the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. For some reason now lost, these were built to an already outdated four-wheel configuration; when the change to electric traction came in 1905 the Jubilee stock was rapidly declared obsolete.

The Met's Stores Committee minutes for 16th July 1907 report the sale of seven 'Jubilee' carriages to the WC&P. The numbers of the carriages were listed; four were five-door 3rd brakes, and the remaining three were 1892-built 1st Class four-door carriages. The original Met livery was varnished wood, and when they came

into the ownership of the WC&P their livery was unchanged. They acquired screw-on ownership plates and cast numbers. Our loan carriage was numbered 7.

An opening was cut at the end of each carriage, just five feet high and guarded by a locked door, to enable the guard to make his way from carriage to carriage to collect fares. Inside the carriages a passageway was cut through the compartments. This measure, seemingly so typical of Stephens' methods, was in fact carried out quickly, and was alluded to in the local press in September 1907 – some four years before Stephens took over the running of the line. Our carriage was a 'floater' which could be joined to fixed sets of carriages to provide more accommodation at busy times.

1st Class carriages on this light railway were largely superfluous and, at some point, seating from redundant stock was used to replace the interior. Wooden benches were placed down the sides looking inwards and at both ends a two-seat bench was installed. This work may well have been done in conjunction with a short-lived experiment in 1922 when it was tried as a trailer for the railway's first Drewry petrol railcar, but this was called off after one unsuccessful trial trip to Weston; it was clearly too heavy for the Drewry to pull or stop.

In 1940, when the railway closed, the stock was taken over by the Great Western Railway and went to Swindon for sale or scrapping. No.7 was sold with two others and taken to the nearby village of Shrivenham where close-by Barrington Hall was a training camp for newly commissioned army officers. It was used by Walters of Oxford, a major military tailor, for the supply of new uniforms and the final fittings. Later it became an American Air Force social club and was later a home for a succession of families, a cobbler's and an antique shop.

The carriage, like many other such bodies, was by now forgotten by all but local people. However in 1974 the London Transport Museum collection received an offer. A Mr Gould of Faringdon, clearly an enthusiast, asked if they would exchange an ex-Metropolitan Railway carriage body for a platform seat for the lady on whose land it was. A swap was arranged at the nominal cost of £39.50 for a seat from Amersham Station and the carriage body was retrieved on 29th August 1974. After some inconclusive debate about how it might be displayed – including





*Metropolitan Railway No.353 in Rolvenden Carriage Storage Shed.*

*(Phil Edwards)*

cutting it down to one or two compartments – no work was undertaken, and the body languished at Ruislip and subsequently Acton.

It is no disrespect to the LT Museum authorities that they did not appreciate the carriage's significance as a light railway artefact. However our own museum now came into the frame through one of the author's researches (See 'A Question of Attribution', *Tenterden Terrier* No.94 – Summer 2004). Although its WC&P identity was definitely 7 its Met identity was thought to be No.337. Research in the Met's sales archive showed that it could be either that or 353 or 354, as these were three 1st Class carriages sold to the WC&P. The identity was only finally resolved several years later when it was concluded that it was Met No.353. Even then careful stripping of the paint from one door revealed WC&P No.12 painted over 353; clearly the WC&P was partial to swapping doors between vehicles.

The 2004 investigations had stirred up interest in the carriage and the LT Museum decided to restore it as a running example of the last remaining Met four-wheeler. Before coming to this decision Tim Shields, the Vehicles Curator at the Museum, visited the K&ESR to look at how we ran old carriage bodies. As a result funds were obtained from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

A contract was awarded to the Boston Lodge works of the Ffestiniog Railway, and in August 2012 the carriage was transported to North Wales. Work was completed in 2013 for the 150th anniversary of the Underground, and once more the carriage was pulled along the rails by a steam engine through the underground. Metropolitan Loco No.1 and Carriage 353 – together with the Bluebell's 'Chesham' carriages – celebrated the anniversary by recreating a Victorian underground journey on Sunday 13th January 2013.

Close relationships had developed with the LT Museum, not least through our mutual interest in the sole remaining District carriage. Pairing the two was frequently discussed, particularly in the context of the imminent 150th anniversary of the opening of the Metropolitan District Railway in 1918, but shortage of funds at this end slowed progress too much. Nevertheless a window of opportunity arose to at least put the two carriages together as a result of the extended loan of Met 353 for 18 months being agreed. This carriage must necessarily be confined to singular runs in our vintage set for this year, but gives the chance for generous donors to pull together the funds to complete No.100. Who is to say the two might not run together in 2018?

*Brian Janes*



# THE NEXT GENERATION: Samir Oussalah

*In this series Anthony Ramsey has tried to feature as many different departments as possible. This time, however, he makes no apology for returning to Rolvenden, where so many of our young volunteers are based, to meet Samir Oussalah.*

Railways are in Sam's blood (his grandfather was a wagon builder at Ashford Works) so it is not surprising that his first encounter with the K&ESR was attending a Thomas event as a child. He is even the proud owner of a photograph of himself, aged three, on a Terrier. Indeed, so enthusiastic is he about this that I am surprised he did not sign up as a volunteer there and then!

Instead, he subsequently joined the Romney Marsh Model Engineering Society (presumably, for Sam, size is not important) and he might never have been seen here again had not quick-thinking fellow-member Brian Remnant spotted his potential and encouraged him to join us.

Thus March 2016 saw him join the Loco Department as a Cleaner because, as he put it, he "wanted to get his hands dirty". He recalls his first day: "I helped to clean No.2 Road. There was so much sludge it was very tiring and very dirty. But it looked so much better at the end that it was also very rewarding."

I ask him how he had found his first year with us. There was a pause, but that, he said, was "because there are so many things I could say. It is certainly much more involved than I expected. I thought lighting a fire meant simply striking a match, but there is a lot more to it. Really, it is like a science. It has been a brilliant experience, and everyone is so helpful in showing me things. I've learned how to take advice, how to be more understanding, how to learn from others and how to take opportunities. I've also learned a bit



*Samir in the cab of Norwegian.*



*Learning workshop skills at Rolvenden.*

about loco maintenance and how the Workshop functions. I came as a kid wanting to play trains, but hopefully I'm emerging as a mature adult. It's hard work but, if you put in 100%, you get 100% out."

I also ask Sam whether there were any negative aspects to his role. "Well," he says, "wet mornings with cold hands are not much fun. And I could do without looking at Thomas at ten past five in the morning. But the most frustrating aspect is waiting for breakfast: you get the cleaning done, you're looking forward to going up to Tenterden, and then find the engine is not ready!"

It would be good to include some amusing stories in this article. Sam tells me several but 'discretion is the better part of valour' (and journalism). However, I can narrate the time he and Ben Goodsell were on the Saturday evening Pullman. The train was not even due to leave Tenterden, but they felt hungry, so he put some

frozen mozzarella sticks on the shovel and then, realising he had no cooking oil, added some 220 oil in order to fry them. "They were delicious," he assures me!

Sam, who is now 22, lives in Ashford with his parents and sister. After Swadlands School in Lenham and Ashford College, he gained an apprenticeship as a maintenance engineer. He now works as a toolmaker for Jubilee Clips in Gillingham, where he services the machinery to ensure the reliable production of hose clips.

He continues to be a member of the Romney Marsh Model Engineering Society, where he helps to service, fire and drive the model locos. Meanwhile, back at the K&ESR, he hopes to progress through the grades to become a Driver and then perhaps explore other roles as well.

Finally, I invite Sam to sum up his experience. "The K&ESR is brilliant," he replies simply. "It's like a second home." Enough said?



## Robin Dyce 1942–2017



*Robin Dyce, suitably attired, at the 2016 Hop Festival.*

*(Richard Smith)*

It is with great sadness that we report the recent loss of one of our most hard-working and respected members, Robin Dyce, who passed away quite unexpectedly on 11th February following a major, yet routine, operation.

Born in London in 1942, Robin qualified as a Chartered Civil Engineer and eventually became Principal Senior Engineer for the London Borough of Bromley, following time with the Metropolitan Water Board and Beckenham Council. He met his wife Carol at work; they married in 1980, moved to Tonbridge in 1981, and had two children, Andrew and Sarah.

Robin had been involved on our railway since the 1970s when he joined the clearance department. He subsequently became Clearance Manager following on from John Miller and Allan

Tebboth. It was John who encouraged Robin along with Carol to also join the Wealden Pullman team, with whom they regularly worked on the bar in *Barbara* in the early days of the Pullman service.

Robin was also very much involved with our Steam and Country Fairs of the late 70s and early 80s, where his 'forté' was organising the massive task of car parking and marshalling exhibitors as well as the thousands of visitors we had on those occasions.

There is no doubt that Robin's organisational skills, and his ability to engender support for any project he was involved with, made him an exceedingly popular member of our management team. He eventually became a Board member and was our Chairman from

1995, taking us through the years leading up to the opening of the Bodiam extension in 2000. His leadership and 'can do' attitude was tested to the limit in getting us there on centenary day and achieving a goal we had been striving for for many years.

Robin continued to serve as a Director until 2003 following a change of Chairman and he became a leading personality in the twinning arrangements with the Baie de Somme railway, where he had attended the first Gala weekend in 1997. It was his endearing enthusiasm and humour that engendered much support for exchange working parties with our French friends as well as all the projects he got involved with on home soil.

Another of Robin's major activities was the revitalising of Bodiam Station, started by John Miller in 1990 as a prelude to our opening ten years later. Much work was undertaken by the team prior to obtaining Lottery funding which included the total clearance of the area, which was no small task in itself, then the refurbishing of the station building and the erection of the complex which formed a workshop and the all-important Hoppers' hut.

Following John's passing Robin assumed control of Bodiam site maintenance and organised the highly popular annual Hoppers' Weekends, which are now part of our regular attractions.

In recent times he had been the leading light in the planning and erection of the new Bodiam waiting room complete with hop exhibition, a major task which he managed with a small regular team of volunteers. He was also responsible for the maintenance of the Cavell Van while at Bodiam, ensuring it was available and ready to receive the many visitors; indeed he appeared on TV when Michael Portillo visited the station.

There is no doubt that the railway owes much to Robin, and to Carol for her forbearance in having a husband who must have spent as much

time at the K&ESR as he did at home! So many projects and events that we have had, and still enjoy, have had an input from Robin, it is incalculable how much we have all benefited from Robin's strength, energy and enthusiasm. Much of this we will continue to enjoy, as will our passengers and future members, when one considers perhaps the waiting room at Bodiam, which is just one of the permanent reminders we will have as a memorial to him.

Robin was a tower of strength. He spent much of his time on the line, even more so following his retirement from full-time work in 2001. The K&ESR's volunteers are many and varied. Some join and stay for a short time, others become a real part of our community and form a family of the hardened and dedicated – Robin was certainly one of the latter. It is this railway family who will miss Robin in so many ways, for his hard work, for his humour and for his undivided support for what we are achieving in the restoration of the line.

This last statement was born out by the vast number of railway personnel who attended his funeral on 21st March at Tunbridge Wells Crematorium, where we overwhelmed the normal space available and an extra room had to be provided with a digital link-up to accommodate the crowd. Robin's choice of music for his service was also quite unusual in being three well-known numbers by various pop artists of his era, this again reflecting his unique taste for the unusual!

Thereafter there was a gathering at Tonbridge Rugby Club where his many friends and relations were able to join together to speak about the life of someone who meant much to the K&ESR, and even more to his family.

Our thoughts, memories and condolences go to the whole of the family, and we hope that Carol will continue to attend the railway where we will welcome and support her as she adjusts to a different lifestyle.

*DSL*

## **Brian Gooch 1936–2017**

It is with much sadness that we have to record the death of Brian Gooch on 25th January at the age of 81, following a short illness.

Brian was a stalwart member of the Wealden Pullman team, and had worked in the kitchen

area on virtually every lunch-time train since 2001 and also on many of the evening trains – almost up to the time of his death.

Brian was a long-standing resident of Tenterden, although he was born in Woodchurch and



worked there for many years. He and his wife Margaret purchased one of the bungalows at the top of Rolvenden Hill.

Colloquially known as 'Tintown', these were originally built by Colonel Stephens using his favourite material, corrugated iron, for K&ESR staff members.

When Margaret died in 2000 Brian moved to Wayside Avenue in St Michaels, with its easy public transport links to the centre of Tenterden.

He was a distinctive figure, well known in the town, and could usually be seen each day in the High Street, where he was a regular patron

of some of Tenterden's many coffee shops.

Brian worked in agriculture during his younger years but subsequently joined the staff of Rother Valley Timber at Rolvenden, where he became skilled at wood turning. He also adopted this as hobby during his retirement, and his wood-turning equipment has now been donated to the railway's Carriage & Wagon Department workshops.

Our sympathies go to his daughters Meg, Jo and Sarah at this time. Meg is, of course, a key member of our Wealden Pullman team.

*PDS*

## Michael John Hoad 1934–2017

Michael (Mick) Hoad died on 18th February, after a long and full life. He was a supporter of the K&ESR over three decades from the late 1980s, and was well-known as a Station Master at both Bodiam and Northiam. He was an active volunteer up to the time of his death.

Michael was born in St Leonards-on-Sea into the family of a leading local builder, and was brought up in the business. Following National Service in the Army he moved to Southampton to work for the Ordnance Survey, where he was employed for several years.

In 1956 he married Pam and moved to Croydon, where he worked as a surveyor with London County Council and subsequently the Greater London Council. He retired in 1989.

In his very active life Michael belonged to several groups involved with church music, including the Rye Wurlitzer Organ Society and the Bexhill and Hastings Organ Society. He was also Secretary and an active member of a hand-bell team, and was a member of the Senior Men's Forum and gave frequent talks and slide shows to many other groups.

Michael was a leading member of the St Leonards-on-Sea Methodist Church, where a Service of Thanksgiving for his life was held on 20 March. The church was full to capacity for the occasion, which was attended by a group of volunteers representing the railway.

Michael leaves his wife Pam and three further generations including his son Kevin, daughter Lynn, daughter-in-law Kate, son-in-law Nick,



grand-daughters Emma and Francesca and great-grand-daughter Maggie, as well as an extended family.

We can remember Michael with gratitude for a life well lived.

*CL*

# THE TOVIL GOODS BRANCH

*Tovil today is little more than a residential district of Maidstone. There are few visible remains of the industries that dominated the area until the late 20th century, and fewer still of the railway that once served them. By Tom Burnham.*

The Loose stream rises near Langley church, south of Maidstone, and is lost underground at Brisling (perhaps the origin of the name Loose), only to surface again at Boughton quarries. It then flows down through a steep-sided valley, under Telford's stone viaduct of 1830 which still carries the A229 road, and through Loose village. At the end of its journey it joins the River Medway at Tovil, some three-quarters of a mile above Maidstone bridge. Its steep descent made it a very suitable location for water mills, and at one time there were 12 or 13 of these along the stream.

The main purpose of these mills was originally the fulling of woollen cloth woven in the Weald of Kent, but when the weaving industry of the Wealden villages started to decline by the 17th century the mills were converted to other uses. Paper making became particularly important, and was carried on at several sites along the stream by the late 17th century. In its natural state the water of the Loose stream was very pure and suitable for this purpose (before the paper mills began to discharge their effluent into it). The history of the Loose watermills has been well described by R.J. Spain (*Archaeologia Cantiana*, lxxvii, 1972, p.43 and lxxviii, 1973, p.159).

The four paper mills in Tovil all grew to be substantial enterprises during the Victorian period, and installed steam engines to supplement or replace their water wheels. They were J. Barcham Green's Hayle Mill, constructed in 1808; Upper Tovil Mill, which as the Tovil Straw Paper Mills Co. pioneered the use of straw as a raw material for paper in about 1860; Lower Tovil Mill, latterly owned by Henry Allnutt & Sons; and Bridge Mill, which had its own wharf frontage on the Medway. Bridge Mill had been a gunpowder mill operated by a Mr Steinmetz in the earlier part of the 19th century, but from around 1858 was used by Thomas William Brook (T.W. Brook & Co.) for crushing oil seeds.

This concentration of industry relied on horse-drawn carts to bring in raw materials and send out finished goods, either by barge from Tovil Wharf on the River Medway, or through the congested town centre and across Maidstone

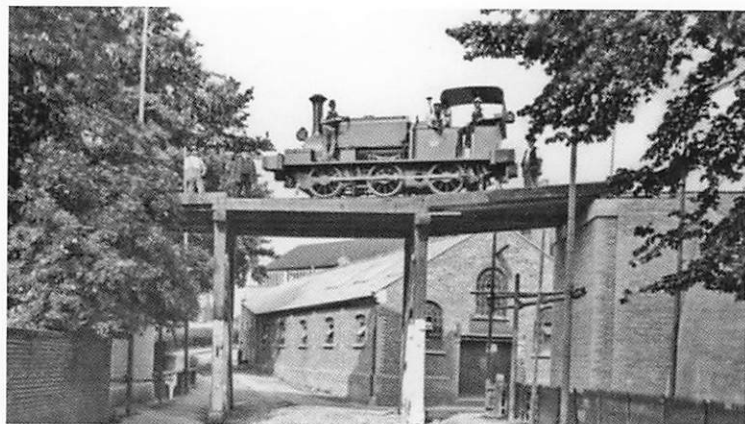
bridge to the goods yard at the South Eastern Railway (SER) station (now Maidstone West).

At the time the Upper Medway Navigation was held in low esteem by those who had to rely on it for their cargo, because of its poor maintenance and the company's obstructive attitude to anyone's barges but their own (see *Tenterden Terrier* No.71, Winter 1996). Shippers had once had the consolation that no tolls were charged for traffic over the short section of the Upper Medway Navigation from its commencement in Maidstone to the Tovil Wharf, as the distance was less than one mile. However, in 1874/75 a lawsuit had established that the Navigation Company was entitled to charge a toll for use of this section of the river, and it then began to do so, also claiming arrears of tolls for past use. This encouraged its users to seek alternative means of transport.

The Loose valley had already attracted the attention of railway promoters. In 1856 a scheme for a railway from Maidstone to Headcorn and then to Cranbrook and Tenterden had failed to attract support from the Weald (see *Tenterden Terrier* No.12, Spring 1977 and No.128, Winter 2015). However, the same promoters deposited plans for the 1857 parliamentary session for a Maidstone & Loose Valley Railway, following the first part of the proposed route. This would have served the various mills along the valley, as well as the Boughton quarries; but, like so many other railway projects of the period, this one came to nothing. The deposited plan of the line is reproduced in the paper by R.J. Spain mentioned above.

However the idea of a railway to serve the Loose valley mills did not go away, and the Loose Valley Railway Bill was introduced in the 1877 session for a line nearly two and a half miles long, starting in Maidstone with a connection with the SER line to Paddock Wood near James Clifford's ropery, crossing the Medway to Tovil, and terminating near the Chequers Inn in Loose village. There would be two level crossings of public roads in Loose parish, and the cost was estimated to be £44,636. The Loose Valley Railway Act received the Royal Assent on 2nd August 1877.





*A contractor's locomotive makes its way across a temporary bridge over what is now Tovil Green, with Allnutt's paper mill behind. The loco is probably Manning Wardle No.865, new to Lucas & Aird in 1883 and now on display as Aldwyth at the Leeds Industrial Museum, Armley Mills.*  
(Andy Hardy collection)

The Act authorised the Loose Valley Railway Company to make an agreement with the SER to work the line. Although (according to railway historian Adrian Gray) the SER was at first dubious about the viability of the scheme, the prospect of paper traffic led to negotiations being started, and by April 1880 SER shareholders were asked to approve an agreement under which the SER would work the Loose Valley Railway, once it was built, for 50% of the gross receipts and would guarantee a return of 4% on its capital. It was announced that the line would be started as soon as possible and that it was "intended eventually to go on to Charing and Ashford if it could be carried out", as the Loose Valley line "would avoid a great deal of residential property, and would be much cheaper than any other way of getting to Maidstone". This was no doubt intended as a counter to the rival London, Chatham & Dover Railway (LC&DR), which was about to extend its Sevenoaks and Maidstone line to Ashford. Meanwhile the Loose Valley obtained an Act of Parliament in July 1880 to extend the time limit for construction to start.

Negotiations with landowners proceeded in a rather desultory fashion. In May 1881 it was reported to the SER directors that Mr Brook was demanding £5,100 and the provision of a siding for his use in exchange for nine poles of land (less than one-tenth of an acre) which were needed for the line and it was resolved that "having regard to this and other claims made upon the Company, the Directors of the Loose Valley Company were requested to decline the

same, and to discontinue further negotiations with the landowners".

However some activity continued, with a view to building the line across the river and into land owned by Mr Wigan (presumably Lewis D. Wigan (1820–1886) of Oakwood, Maidstone, who was a partner in the Kentish Bank). Work got under way in November 1881, when the foundations at the Tovil end of the new bridge over the

Medway were started under James Farrow. Mr Farrow had come to Maidstone to supervise pile driving for the rebuilding of Maidstone Bridge in 1879, and stayed in the town as a contractor until his death in May 1896. The girder bridge itself was supplied and erected by M.T. Shaw & Co. of London. The plan was to complete the bridge before the rest of the line was started, in expectation of successful negotiations with the landowners.

The SER Chairman, Sir Edward Watkin, had visited Maidstone in August 1881 to inspect property required for the Loose Valley Railway and for the enlargement of Maidstone station, following which it was resolved to agree terms with Mr Clifford, the owner of the rope walk, and also with Lord Romney and Mr Bodkin, the lessee. Purchase of the rope walk for £983 including legal costs was confirmed in October 1882.

In March 1882 another deputation of SER officials visited at the invitation of the Maidstone Local Board to discuss progress. Sir Edward Watkin, Lord Brabourne (Deputy Chairman), James Whatman (a SER director and a former MP for Maidstone), John Shaw (Company Secretary), and Francis Brady (Engineer) arrived at Maidstone station at 12.15, where they were met by the Mayor (Edwin Barrow Smith) and a number of aldermen and councillors. The party then proceeded by train to Tovil, where Sir Edward promised that the level crossing would be replaced by a footbridge, and they inspected work in progress on the Medway bridge.



*The Medway bridge with the branch descending towards Tovil on its embankment, and barges at the Bridge Mill wharf.  
(Andy Hardy collection)*

Afterwards the party were conveyed from the Tovil side of the river in carriages to Mr Smith's house in London Road, where they were entertained to luncheon, followed by toasts and speeches, when the Mayor pressed the need for a new SER station in the town and for a train to and from London each day which would make the journey within an hour. The Upper Medway Navigation Company had complained that the new Medway bridge was not being constructed in accordance with the Act of Parliament, and the SER party also found time to meet a deputation from that company. Following the visit the SER engineer was instructed to prepare working drawings and plans for the Loose Valley Railway.

Towards the end of 1883 and in the early months of 1884 the SER board considered the possibility of completing the Loose Valley line from Maidstone to Headcorn (under powers obtained by the Lydd Railway Company) and then extending it to Tenterden, but nothing resulted from this proposition, other than discussing it with Lord Cranbrook.

In early 1885 four acres of land near Ivy Mill were purchased for £800 plus legal costs from Lawrence Green and William Lawrence, and conveyed to Lord Brabourne and James Whatman, two SER directors, as trustees. The railway also paid £475 in lieu of building a new mechanic's shop for the mill, as required by the agreement for purchase.

The catalyst for the SER to begin work on completing what was then referred to as the Tovil Extension Line, across the Medway to a goods depot, was the signing of a seven-year agreement

with four companies in early 1886 for them to pay a total of £150 per year rental to the SER – £65 from the Tovil Paper Company, £55 from T. H. Brooks & Co., and £30 in total from Henry Allnutt & Son and J. Barcham Green & Son. This was to commence from the day the depot was ready to receive goods. In addition the companies undertook to give the SER all their rail traffic to and from stations on the SER or railways in connection with it, at rates no higher than those offered by any competing company. Rates from Tovil were to be no higher than those from Maidstone (SER). Other firms would pay whatever rates the SER considered appropriate.

However, in May 1886 the SER declined to pay J.H. Hodsoll £1,000 an acre for little more than five acres of the Loose Court estate, which would have been required if the line were to be extended beyond Tovil.

The contractors for the part of the line beyond the Medway bridge seem to have been Lucas & Aird, who were also responsible for building the Maidstone to Ashford line for the LC&DR, completed in 1884. In October 1887 the engineer, Francis Brady, was able to notify the Board of Trade that the first section of the Loose Valley line, as far as Tovil, was ready for inspection, and Major-General C.S. Hutchinson arrived early in November to carry out this duty.

The new railway was just under half a mile (34.8 chains) in length and made an end-on connection with a goods siding in the Maidstone yard, not far from Tovil station (opened in 1884) on the Paddock Wood line. There was no connection



with any passenger line. The steepest gradient was 1 in 57, and the sharpest curve had a radius of 11.45 chains. There was a single track laid with the standard SER permanent way of the period – double-headed rails of 82 lb/yard, 24 ft long, laid on 9 ft red fir sleepers 2 ft 8 ins apart, on gravel ballast.

The bridge over the Medway had a main span 100 ft long of wrought iron lattice girders. Major-General Hutchinson considered it to have sufficient theoretical strength, and observed only moderate deflection when it was tested with a load of heavy engines. There were shorter spans either side of the main span, with wrought iron trough girders. Wrought iron girder bridges with spans of 41 feet and 23 feet carried the railway over two roads, and there was a brick-arched bridge over the Loose stream next to the longer of these bridges.

Both ends of the single line were protected by interlocked signals, worked at the Tovil end from a small cabin at the point where the sidings diverged from the single line. Permission was given for the line to be opened, worked by one engine at a time on the train staff system, subject to various conditions: moving a signal on the up (Paddock Wood) main line adjacent to the signal on the Loose Valley line, providing interlocked runaway points near this signal in case any vehicles got away from the goods yard and ran down the 1 in 57 gradient, and extending the footbridge at the Maidstone end of Tovil station over the Loose Valley line and eliminating the

footpath level crossing of both the main line and the Loose Valley line. The latter condition was never complied with, and pedestrians can still cross the Paddock Wood line at this point by either a footbridge or a level crossing to this day. The possibility of a runaway was taken seriously, however, and instructions were given that trains or light engines starting down the gradient should not exceed 4 mph.

The branch gradually descended to ground level and terminated in three sidings on the opposite side of Tovil Hill from the Upper Tovil Mill, with a five-ton crane for handling goods. In the late 1890s nine additional sidings were laid down, and a large, open-sided, iron-framed goods shed was erected, no doubt to allow finished paper to be loaded into wagons under cover. A second crane, of about one ton capacity, was also added.

The Tovil paper industry continued to expand at the end of the 19th century and for the first half of the 20th. Upper Tovil Mill was employing 300 hands and consuming 300 tons of coal a week when it was largely destroyed by fire on 25th June 1893. After the fire it was bought by Albert E. Reed & Co. and rebuilt on more modern lines, reopening in March 1895 for the manufacture of newsprint. Lower Tovil Mill had also been rebuilt, after a fire in 1889, and by the early 20th century it was producing fine white and specialist papers in the ownership of Henry Allnutt & Sons. Bridge Mill, alongside the Medway, was acquired by Albert E. Reed in the early 1900s to augment the output of the Upper Tovil Mill. Further up



*Southern Railway R1 0-6-0T No.A337 shunting at Maidstone West in 1932. The signal in the foreground controlled access to the Tovil branch.*  
(Andy Hardy collection)

the valley, J. Barcham Green's Hayle Mill specialised in high-quality handmade paper. A London printing company, Alabaster Passmore & Sons Ltd., acquired a site next to Reed's mill in 1907 and built a large printing works there.

In addition to handling coal and other supplies for the paper mills and taking away finished paper, the yard also dealt with other traffic including ragstone from the neighbouring quarries. A report in 1901 refers to an accident to a carter who had been sent to the sidings with a horse-drawn cart loaded with stone. Aerial photographs taken in 1929, after the formation of the Southern Railway, show a good number of wagons and vans in the yard. Interestingly they also show that one of the sidings was being used to stable a 14-coach set of ex-SER six-wheeled carriages, which were used for seaside excursions and hop-pickers' special trains at the period. Storing empty trains seems to have been a regular practice, as operating instructions issued in 1922 had required the guard of empty passenger trains descending the gradient towards Tovil always to ride in the rear brake.

An abortive proposal by Holman F. Stephens in the early 1900s, the Headcorn & Maidstone Junction Light Railway, would have seen K&ESR trains arriving at Maidstone West over the Tovil Goods branch (*Tenterden Terrier* No. 13, Summer 1977). Presumably some track and signalling alterations would have been required south of Maidstone West station to permit access to the station by passenger trains from the Tovil line.

The Tovil Goods line was worked as required by the engine used for shunting at Maidstone West, as was confirmed by the SR's Sectional Appendix to the Working Timetable for 1934. Until 1933, when Maidstone West engine shed closed, this

engine would usually have been an ex-SER R or R1 class 0-6-0T. Maidstone West had two of this type among its allocation for many years. One of these was No.337, which was transferred away from Maidstone in 1903, but returned in 1925 as Southern Railway A337. Later renumbered 1337, it was still at Maidstone in 1933.

After the Second World War the line continued to operate in much the same way under the nationalised British Railways. Diesel-electric 0-6-0 shunters of 350hp (Classes 08 and 09) eventually replaced steam locomotives. An unusual train on 24th September 1960 was the North Kent Rail Tour of the Railway Enthusiasts Club; H class 0-4-4T No.31177 propelled its three-coach train (including push-pull set 610, converted from Maunsell corridor coaches) across the Medway. Further details of the itinerary, which also took in Grain and Chatham Dockyard, can be found on the Six Bells Junction website.

A move to road transport by the paper industry and declining use of coal as a household and industrial fuel, together with the deteriorating state of the Medway bridge, led to the closure of the Tovil Goods branch from 3rd October 1977. Allnutt's Lower Tovil Mill had already closed in the early 1960s, and Reed Group's Upper Tovil and Bridge Mills lasted until 1983.

After lying derelict for a few years the goods shed, track and bridges were removed in the early 1980s. Demolition of the Medway bridge did not go smoothly – the main girder span collapsed into the river, completely blocking it to navigation. The railway has been incorporated into the housing and commercial developments that have changed the face of Tovil over the past 30 years. Part of the site of the sidings is now occupied by the Lidl supermarket and its car park. There is almost no trace of the former railway in Tovil, apart from some brickwork of a bridge abutment in Tovil Green near the corner of Allnutt Mill Close and a short length of embankment behind it.

On the other side of the river it is possible to follow the overgrown embankment from the point where it diverges from the Paddock Wood line by the Bower Lane footbridge to the surviving brick abutment of the Medway bridge, which is still maintained by Network Rail.

I'd like to thank Simon Green for helpful comments, and Andy Hardy for making photographs from his collection available.



*The loading shed in 1978, a year after closure. The chimneys of Reed's Upper Tovil Mill are in the background.* (Author)



# A Visit to a Swedish Light Railway

*Or how I ended up in a four-wheel coach being gingerly bumped along a decrepit railway track covered in vegetation by a wheezing old steam loco. By Albyn Austin.*

It was while I was attending a family wedding near the smart little seaside resort and ferry port of Ystad in South Sweden that I felt prompted me to look for preserved railways in the vicinity. Ystad, incidentally, has miles of sandy beaches, attractive architecture from the 1400s onwards, a daily train ferry to Poland, and was used as the setting for the Wallander TV shows. (Murders in Ystad looked about as likely as in those Home Counties villages that feature in Midsomer Murders.)

I found that there was a preserved standard gauge line about 45km to the north of Ystad, near the village of Brösarp, which had its penultimate running day of the year on the

Sunday after the wedding. Brösarp is about 80km north-east of Malmö. Nobody else in the family was interested, especially as nobody had got to bed before 2am the night before – the booze had flowed freely. The plan was to catch a succession of three country buses, with an 8.15am start. I might just catch the 11.00am train. I could also get back in the evening in time for a beach barbeque after seeing the 3.40pm train depart.

Being Sweden, where buses usually run to time, all went more or less to plan except I got on the bus going the wrong way at Brösarp, where the station is about 1.5 miles north of the village bus terminal, but the driver kindly dropped me off at a farm lane with an information map of the area.



*Originally a 0-8-0 of 1914, this loco was rebuilt as a 2-8-0 in 1948.*

*(Albyn Austin)*

I had a very pleasant two-mile country walk to the station, walking in the direction of puffs of steam and whistles. It had started to rain, but I had an umbrella. Much of southern Sweden is pretty flat with prairie style fields, but some parts are more rolling with wooded sandy heathland. It seemed rather like East Anglia, but with very American-looking farm buildings. The station was located in an upland area above the village in pine and silver birch woodland.

The line was built to open up a rural area between the railway along the coast running east from Ystad and the line that ran north from the same town. Both were operated by different small, independent railway companies. The line from Malmö to Ystad was owned by a third small company. Rural depopulation was considerable in late 19th century Sweden (current population 9.5 million) with a million rural Swedes emigrating to the USA and 2 million moving to the cities. Only main lines were built by the state. The light railway was built in 1901; it remained independent until nationalised in 1941, and finally closed in 1971, though the section beyond Sankt Olof remained in use until 1989.

The preservation society, Skånska Järnvägar (Railways of Skåne County), was set up in 1971. The line was rented by the society until 2002 when they bought the closed Tomelilla-Brösarp-Sankt Olof section. In 2006 they purchased the next section, beyond Sankt Olof to the junction with the still operational coast line, but later sold the section beyond Brösarp to the local council. The whole line was used occasionally for passenger trains until a 2008 derailment, due to poor track, on the section beyond Brösarp. Two coaches fell over, fortunately without injuries. The light track, in poor condition, was unsuitable for heavy trains. The section beyond the pretty village of Sankt Olof has only been used for occasional stock transfers and rail bikes since 2008.

The operating section from Brösarp to Sankt Olof is just over 13km (8.3 miles) long, passing through two more villages on the way. This was the first preserved railway in Sweden and many consider that it is located in most attractive countryside, running out of the woods through a rolling landscape with arable and pastoral fields as well as small copses. In places there are distant views of the sea. The line climbs from a dip at 22m above sea level 2km beyond Brösarp (40m asl) to a summit of about 137m asl near Sankt Olof. Just like Scotland I was told!

Certainly the line is on more or less continuous gradients, averaging about 1 in 80.

My little excursion into the country meant I missed the first train of the day by five minutes, but this gave me time for the first of several cups of tea and a cake in the station's buffet coach. There were only a couple of Swedish enthusiasts around, who had arrived by car at the same time as myself, plus a few volunteers having a late breakfast of hot dogs. Just as so often in the UK, they were mostly elderly. By the end of the day the buffet car staff had the kettle boiling when they saw me walking towards the coach, confirming their stereotype of an Englishman insisting on English Breakfast Tea (quite a good blend) made with boiling water, to which he then added cold milk!

They spoke a bit of English and I gathered the railway had had its best year for business in 2016. By our standards it was very uncommercial. The buffet car sold hot and cold drinks, ice cream, sweets, a small selection of cakes and a few open sandwiches. There was no shop as such but the rather grand station building had a ticket office, and in the waiting room was a drinks and confectionery machine, a pile of old society magazines and some mugs for sale. (K&ESR in the early 1980s? -Ed.) They also had a vintage delivery tricycle and some station trolleys on display.

Though you could wander round the site, the steam locos and most of the rest of the stock were securely stored in the goods shed, the loco shed and another large building. These were all shut. There was also a long single-line carriage shed which was empty when I looked inside. A 2-8-0 was being restored inside a plastic tent. (Present day Rolvenden! -Ed.) On view were several diesel shunting locos, the largest being an eight-coupled heavy shunter with a centre cab, used as a stand-in for the steam locomotive. There was also a collection of various goods wagons and cabooses, but most were in rather a dilapidated state. There were also large stacks of good-quality second-hand rails and sleepers.

As the next train didn't leave till 1.25pm I took the opportunity to find my route back to Brösarp bus terminal. I found the bus stop for the station was only on one side of the main road to serve a small hamlet, and the return bus left from there. It was a good job I checked. There was a pleasant walk along the old road to the village, now a cycle track, before turning off through a little





*Balconied vintage coaches.*

*(Albyn Austin)*

housing estate to reach the bus stop. Returning I found the train had appeared and the loco was taking water. Lots more cars were in the car park, and the site was really quite busy.

The train loco, another 2-8-0, was built in 1914 as an inside-cylindered 0-8-0 but rebuilt in 1948 as a 2-8-0 with a new boiler, piston valves and a 13 ton axle load. It had the typical all-round Scandinavian cab, designed to keep the crew warm in winter, so one couldn't see inside. It was in tidy condition but had a few steam and oil leaks and the tyres were well worn. The blower was in use quite a lot, and it never blew off in my presence, suggesting the crew were having a few problems with the steaming. I think it must be close to a major overhaul, having been in use for ten years.

The train consisted of a bogie dining car of 1946 vintage, a little drab on the outside but looking very smart within, though in a utilitarian style with light wood marquetry on the walls and individual metal-framed seats for the diners. It had 48 seats as well as a kitchen. If the food was

as attractive as the waitress it was no wonder that it was fully booked, even at £70 a head. Behind the dining car was a bogie brake third of 1942 with open saloons on either side of the brake compartment. The seats were similar to those of 1950s buses, with metal frames and covered in a green leatherette finish. The interior was very clean and smart.

Behind these bogie coaches were four very smart four-wheeled coaches with open balconies on each end. Three had the bus-type seats; two dated from 1909 but the third was built as recently as 1931. The fourth was a veteran of 1898 in varnished teak with curved wooden bench seats, and it even a solid-fuel stove of the type found in UK goods brake vans. The more modern four-wheelers relied on steam heating. They were all very clean and bright inside, with no litter or dirt on the floors. All were built for different small Swedish railway companies and restored to their 1930s or 1940s condition.

We set off a few minutes before the advertised departure time, perhaps to ensure we kept to

schedule. Generally the passengers travelled in the bogie coaches for some reason. However an intrepid few sat in the four wheelers or stood on the end balconies, the day having warmed up to the low 20s centigrade. Speed was about 20mph (maximum permitted speed was 40 km/h, about 25mph) with frequent slows to about 5mph for quite long stretches where the track was particularly bad. Looking out of the rear coach, a lot of track had fresh ballast and looked in a good state, but other sections were very poor indeed. The rails twisted about and were just visible amongst the weeds. A lot of the track in the sidings had very poor sleepers which were barely able to hold the rails. All those replacement track components were certainly going to be needed.

The riding in the four wheelers was pretty bumpy on the poor track, especially on the hard wooden seats. I was pleased to stand up and certainly felt I'd had my money's worth by the time we reached Sankt Olof after 40 minutes – an average of about 12 mph without stopping at the intermediate stations. The station was in the centre of the village and had an ice cream kiosk. I have to say I returned in the bogie brake, where the ride was much better. The line from Sankt Olof to the coast apparently has rail cycles for hire, but these are beyond the steam-operated section.

I think it was as near as I'll ever get to a ride on a run-down British light railway of the 1930s. The coaches just lacked the dusty seats and leaking roofs. Certainly one realised why bogie coaches were preferred, and why most people were pleased to take faster and more comfortable buses rather than trains.

The railway line wasn't fenced. Minor roads and tracks just had an American-style 'X' crossing sign and a bell which sounded when a train approached. Other roads had automatic half-barrier crossings. A couple of crossings near the intermediate stations were hand-worked by the station master, winding a device mounted on the platform and connected to the barriers by wires. I calculated that about 20 volunteers were needed to operate the line.

The last train of the day was lightly patronised and the engine took just the two bogie coaches. It even managed to slip rather spectacularly on the tight curve about 200m out of the station. My return journey by bus went smoothly and I had a very pleasant evening. Altogether a most interesting day out.

The railway society website has a section for blogs by its separate departments. Track is rather difficult to maintain as for two or three months in winter the temperature is below zero and the line is snow covered, making P.Way work difficult. As it operates in summer, the time when track maintenance is possible is only a few months of the year. The small team use mechanical equipment to spot re-sleeper, drill sleepers in situ, cut rails and relay track sections. In the last couple of years the priority has been to repair bridges and relay them with new track. In areas of poor track they are replacing about every third or fourth sleeper with a new one, concentrating first on the embankments where a derailment could be very serious.

The carriage restoration team had worked on stripping paint from the teak coach last winter, using an infra-red lamp to heat up the woodwork to enable paint to be scraped off in order to reveal the original teak. The coach had been in departmental use for many years, and a lot of skilled carpentry was needed to rebuild the seats and partitions over about four years.

The society's steam stock-list includes the two 2-8-0s that I had seen (both rebuilt by Swedish Railways from 0-8-0s), a couple of different classes of 2-6-4T, a smallish 2-6-2T and an 0-6-0T as well as diesels. All the locos are of types that worked in southern Sweden. I think only the 2-8-0 I saw is currently operational. Several of the locos came from the national railway's strategic reserve of steam locomotives, which was disbanded in the early 1990s.

The 2-6-2T was withdrawn for scrapping in 1972 as too small to be useful for the strategic reserve, but it was bought by a Danish company as a coal-fired steam generator when the 1973 oil crisis occurred. It then went to the Danish Technical Museum at Helsingør (Elsinore) which eventually sold it back to Sweden. The locos have all been used but all now seem to require major boiler work. Because of the strategic reserve all the bigger locos were acquired in good condition but now need major overhauls – a new challenge for them, I think. Also, with the steep gradients and the current size of trains, only the 2-8-0s seem big enough for the job, so efforts are currently concentrated on returning the other example of the type to use.

Several videos of the line can be enjoyed on YouTube: see for instance [www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9sUI2Ng2Rw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9sUI2Ng2Rw)



## Notes for contributors

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* majors 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: 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.

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 1,800 pixels (longest dimension) for A6/half a page or 2,700 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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