

The Tenterden Terrier



Number 42

Spring 1987



Journal of the Tenterden Railway Company Limited
Proprietor of the Kent & East Sussex Railway

The Tenterden Railway Company Limited

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Registered charity 262481

DIRECTORS

D.T. Dunlavy
D.J. Felton
K.W. Lee

G.D. Pattison
P.C. Ramsden
D.M. Stratton (Chairman)

A.F. Webb
D.H. Wilson
G.C. Wright

SECRETARY & REGISTERED OFFICE

R. Williams, Tenterden Town Station, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6HE

Telephone: Tenterden (05806) 5155

MANAGEMENT

Finance Department Manager & Treasurer	D.J. Felton
Management Co-ordinator	A.F. Webb
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Civil Engineering Department Manager	P. Wilson
Clearance	A. Tebboth
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Colonel Stephens Railway Shop	D.S. Lindsay
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Historian	P.D. Shaw
Museum & Keeper of the Archives	E.J.R. Miller
Volunteer Resources	Vacant
Membership Secretaries:	

New members

N.A. Johnson, 10 Weald View,
Wadhurst, East Sussex. TN5 6EB
A. Piggins, 98 Warwick Avenue,
Thorpe Lea, Egham, Surrey.
Mrs. L. Johnson, 10 Weald View,
Wadhurst, East Sussex. TN5 6EB

A-K Renewals

L-Z Renewals

THE TENTERDEN TERRIER

Joint Editors	P.D. Shaw; P.C. Sutton
Assistant Editor	S.R. Garrett
Magazine Advertising	G.H. Benbow
Editorial Office	141, High Street, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6JS
Telephones	P.D. Shaw: Tenterden 3468 S.R. Garrett: 01-531 6458
	P.C. Sutton: Cranbrook 240236 G.H. Benbow: Tenterden 3477

The Tenterden Terrier is published by the Tenterden Railway Company Ltd. three times yearly on the first Saturday of March, July and November. Articles, correspondence and photographs are welcome from both members and non-members and should be received at the Editorial office not less than two months before the due publication date. ISSN 0306-2449

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The Castle is open every day from April till October, but weekdays only November to March, between 10.00 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. or sundown if earlier. Closed over Christmas. Built in 1385 as a defence against the French, ruined in the Civil War, it still has a magical effect on every visitor. Inside one tower an audio-visual display describes life in a castle 600 years ago, and in another, on video, a warrior is being dressed in a magnificent suit of armour. There is a café in the car park. *About 500 yards from the K. & E.S.R. station.*
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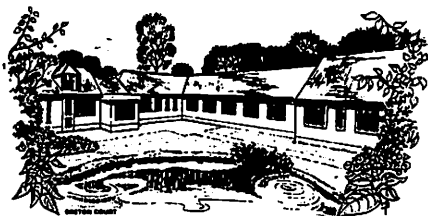
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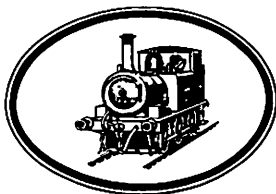
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Editorial

We're getting there

The push to Northiam is certainly a challenge, if not a calculated risk. Once started there will be no going back and when finished the miles will be longer and the bills higher. The budgets assume that net income all round will rise by about a quarter in 1990 with the new timetable and lead to a healthy surplus—not an unreasonable assumption given the current rate of progress and the attractiveness of a seven mile run. The problems are two fold—raising £225,000 to start with and then doing 90% of the work with unpaid labour. Nothing succeeds more than success and if members rise to the challenge, others will surely contribute. The rewards will follow and the benefits that we have brought to tourism in Kent will spill over the border into East Sussex.

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Graphics by Vandyke Design
Printed by L. & T Press, Luton
1987

FRONT COVER: Welcome back! 31556 and No. 24, Returning to Tenterden Town with the mid-day Santa Special, 13 December 1986.

[Brian Stephenson]

Lineside News

Compiled by Paul Sutton

Following on from the successes of the record breaking season that we enjoyed (and suffered?) last year, it is good to see that the momentum generated has carried forward into 1987. Everyone seems to be charged with a new supply of energy, judging from my visit to Wittersham Road towards the end of January. The area was alive with volunteers from the Permanent Way and Clearance Departments and, with not a little help from some mechanical aids, great progress was being made. There was a good turnout at Rotvenden too and I estimate that there must have been 70 to 80 people at work on the railway on that Sunday. However that in no way affects various Managers' appeals in these notes for some new faces to help out. Hopefully some of you reading this are now encouraged to come forward.

Included for the first time are some very welcome contributions from the Boardroom and the Operating Department; both will now be regular contributors.

Boardroom

Some members will have read in the local papers or railway press of our extension and reopening plans to Northiam. The timing of this decision unfortunately did not allow it to be announced at the A.G.M. in October or to be publicised in the last edition of *The Tenterden Terrier* so some background as to how the March 1990 target date was fixed will be of interest.

Between January and September 1986 the Directors of the Tenterden Railway Company commissioned reports from the Permanent Way and Signals & Telegraph departments and the Commercial Division. Permanent Way were asked to identify areas on the existing running section, including culverts, crossing, trackbed and relaying that would need attention to bring them up to a standard where, when finished, they required only maintenance. This report was produced and established that a three year programme of work was necessary, commencing in 1986 and at a total cost of £90,000. This would be completed before any attempt was made to start on the trackwork of the Northiam extension, costings for which were provided at the same time.

The Commercial Division submitted a paper on the policy required not only to keep passenger numbers up to their present levels, but to show a steady increase during the next three years and beyond. This was also accepted.

Finally, the Signals & Telegraph programme was reviewed and revised where necessary so that the operating staff can run a sufficient number of trains to cope with the people that the commercial report promises will come knocking on the booking office window. The Rotvenden signalling scheme is scheduled for completion next Spring.

Subsequently, the Northiam Extension and reopening was costed in detail and outline plans drawn up. It was interesting to see that the Permanent Way Department's estimate for the track material (by far the largest item in the total) differed by only £1,000 when all the written quotes had been received.

Board approval of the scheme was given and resulted in the setting up of two committees, one responsible for fund raising and publicity and the other to look after all the operational aspects. An article outlining the project, including the fund raising, is elsewhere in this issue. It was estimated that the work would take two years, commencing at Northiam Station in Spring 1988.

The November Board meeting is always "Budget Day" and Department Managers (at least those not being Directors of the Company) await with apprehension the outcome of their applications for the money required to keep their Departments in business for the next twelve months. On this occasion 90% of all such requests were met in full. Progress is reviewed half yearly in July and, dependant on income to date, authorisation for additional expenditure granted if the Department concerned can give assurances that the work will be completed by the end of the financial year.

Car parking has always been a problem on the K.&E.S.R., originally for lack of space, and then, when land was acquired, it presented difficulties in wet weather. Until recently we had only temporary planning permission, but last year this was changed to Full status. As a result, the Board authorised an initial sum of £5,000 to create hardstanding in the car park field, the work to be completed before the start of next season.

Some short term objectives have been identified and agreed which will give added interest and

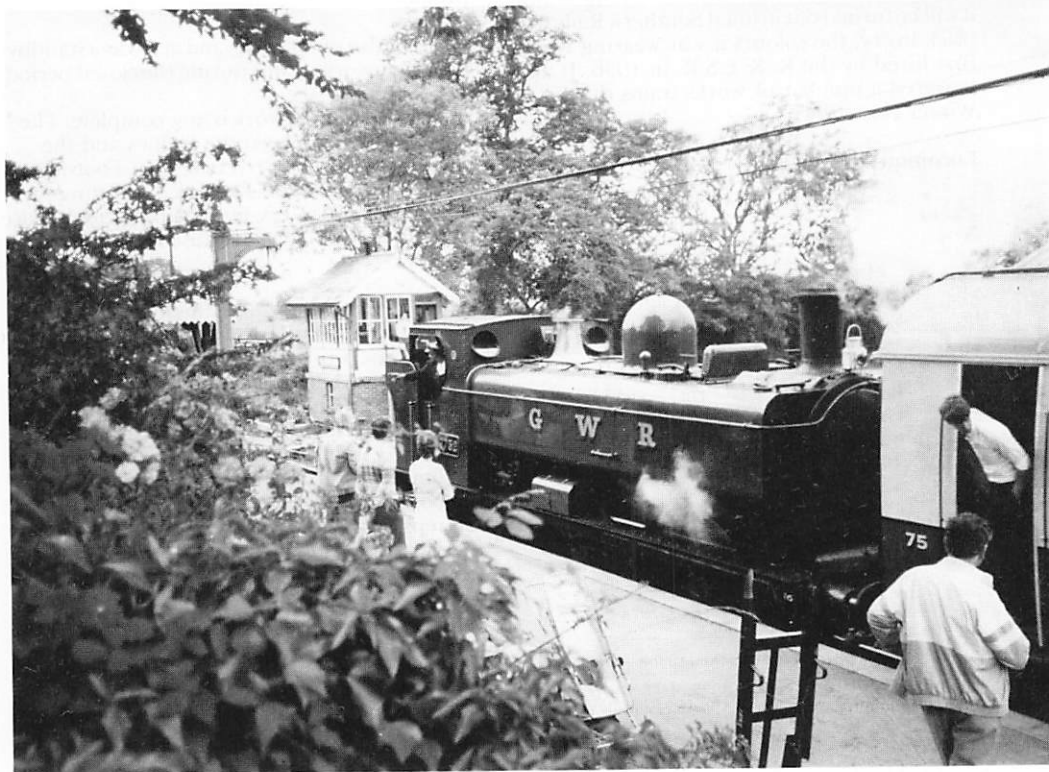
activity for the public within the Tenterden Station area. The locomotive exhibit (detailed elsewhere) and a pump trolley, together with a vintage "row boat" permanent way vehicle will appear as new items, the latter two being set up on a short piece of ballasted track. The existing study school project building will be closed and moved to the area by the present sleeper wall, where it will reopen as an information centre and First Aid post. We have been given a splendid "Terrapin" building which will be the new Study Centre on roughly the same site as the old one.

Towards the end of last year a small committee was set up to undertake a thorough review of the railway's coaching policy. Its two major tasks were to recommend a priority list of stock requiring restoration and to identify any further vehicles that would be needed to run the additional services to Northiam and Bodiam.

Locomotives

1986 saw the unprecedented total of eight steam locomotives and one diesel appearing on passenger services which, apart from the Severn Valley Railway, must be a record amongst preserved lines. Total steam mileage, including works trains and light engine movements, was 9448, an increase of 14% on 1985. The individual figures are given in the accompanying table. It will also be noted that total locomotive mileage was into five figures for the first time. Generally few problems were experienced during the running season, perhaps as we were spoiled for choice some of the time. However as a sage on another railway once remarked, when reviewing the locomotive situation "Next year may well be different!"

No. 3: Following a boiler inspection it is apparent that repairs to the inner firebox are required. This is a highly specialised task and it is likely that the remedial work will be carried



A delightful reminder of last summer Tenterden, 26th July 1986. Unless a sponsor is found there will be no visiting locomotive in 1987.
[A. C. Cooke]

out away from the railway. When this is completed the boiler will be retubed.

No. 10: Many tasks were tackled during the closed period. They include a thorough overhaul of the Westinghouse pump and remetalling of both sets of slipper blocks. Work has also been carried out on the safety valves, springs and draw gear. As a complete change, and to provide a further touch of variety, the Board has agreed to the locomotive being repainted in Southern Railway olive green; its present livery is starting to look a little shabby.

No. 11: At long last! It entered traffic on 30th November and was allowed to operate a couple of two-coach trial services. It is an interesting little engine and it did not take long for footplate staff to acquaint themselves with the unfamiliar, but easy to use and very efficient, South Eastern steam reverser. During its first four months of service few problems have manifested themselves. In this coming season it will be turned out in lined Southern Railway black livery, the colours it was wearing when first hired by the K. & E.S.R. in 1936. It also powered a number of works trains during the Winter close down.

Locomotive Mileages

No.	Name/Other No.	1986	1985	Total since 1974 or return to traffic
3	32670	—	1973	4425
10	Sutton	1101	1608	9636
11	31556	336	—	336
14	Charwelton	496	—	1032
22	30065/Maunsell	176	766	9146
23	W.D. 191	1058	914	13439
24	William H. Austen	2561	1570	12162
25	Northiam	710	1022	7166
40	Bo Bo DE	163	—	163
43	Fowler DM	307	347	1546
45	Vulcan DM	255	78	1082
*7752	GWR 0-6-OPT	3010	N/A	N/A
TOTAL FOR YEAR		10173	8278	

133	Taylor & Hubbard 10T Steam Crane	185 hours
145	Grafton 10T Steam Crane	61 hours

*On loan from Birmingham Steam Museum mid-July to end September

No. 14: Has been running well after a sealing ring was fitted to the smokebox to stop it drawing air. It now requires a 5 yearly hydraulic

exam before re-entering traffic.

No. 19: The valve and piston overhaul has been completed. The defective frame stretcher has been welded back in place and the whole locomotive given an initial steam clean. Once all accumulated "gunge" has been removed it will be jacked up and the axleboxes can then be inspected. No progress has taken place on the tender tank and it now seems likely that this will be completed by an outside contractor.

No. 22: Awaiting a retube—may return to service this year.

No. 23: Serviceable but requires the refurbishment of both trailing axle springs which are presently rather weak.

No. 24: Available for traffic but requires attention to a blowing regulator valve. It passed its annual visual boiler inspection without any problems.

No. 25: Also serviceable, and acted as a standby for heavy works trains during the closed period.

No. 26: All motion work is now complete. The boiler is back between the frames and the smokebox has been rivetted to it. Footsteps, brakegear and other fixtures and fittings are being replaced. Very little painting took place early in the new year because of the poor weather.

No. 27: During December this locomotive, our only genuine WWII Austerity, was hauled out of the waterworks siding and taken to Rolvenden where it was given a thorough inspection and lubrication prior to being taken up to Tenterden where, once cleaned and repainted, it will become a static exhibit and an additional attraction for the general public and school parties. It has been given the same set of steps that were used when No. 23 performed similar duties at Rolvenden in the early 1970s, where so many people went up for a look round the cab that the steel floor quickly became very shiny.

No. 40: It is disappointing to report that the BTH has been temporarily confined to Rolvenden yard. During the commissioning of the locomotive all the wheels were weighed and the bogie springs adjusted as required. Unfortunately some of the latter lost their tension and the locomotive has derailed. New or reconditioned springs will therefore have to



Boot Magna Halt alias Wittersham Road Station. Setting up for filming LWT's "Scoop". Denholm Elliot, with bowler hat, watches the activity. 6th October 1986. [Paul Sutton]

be fitted before the commissioning programme can resume.

Both the Fowler and Vulcan diesels have continued to perform adequately. No 47, one of the Drewry shunters, has had some further mechanical work done, plus painting on the cab sides. However as both the people who are carrying out the major part of the restoration have been busy elsewhere, progress has not been very swift of late.

The Department is most grateful to all those who answered the appeal in the last *Lineside News* for a supply of rags. However further quantities are still required so please don't hesitate to bring them to Rolvenden. Why not plan your day in advance and whilst coming out to deliver the old shirts etc, stay and give the regular volunteers a hand, there is always plenty to do, whether you're skilled or not.

Carriage and Wagon

The 1938 built S.R. CCT which is used by the Locomotive Department was taken into the shed during the late Autumn and repainted in Southern olive green and lettered accordingly. Minor body repairs were carried out and a full set of step boards and brackets refitted, the originals having been removed by B.R. It was released for further use at Rolvenden on Sunday, November 16th. A fortnight later the L.N.E.R. ballast hopper came in for overhaul.

Both ends were lifted for attention to the axlebox journals as one had previously run hot, so new bearings purchased from B.R.E.L. Doncaster were installed and a set of fresh oil lubrication pads fitted. The bottom discharge doors which had been giving trouble for some time, were eased and made operational again. The handbrake was also dismantled and overhauled. Various holes in the body sheeting were patched with welded platework. Finally it was repainted in authentic L.N.E.R. Engineers Department Oxford blue and lettered "N.E.", "Southern Area," and "Empty to Wittersham Road". Release back to traffic was on New Year's Day.

The G.E.R. 6w coach was taken out of the shed on the same day to make way for the annual Mk.I overhaul session. The bodywork is now watertight and presently is in brown undercoat. The L.N.W.R. Saloon accompanied the former on its short journey having had much body repairs during the previous four months. All exterior panels were removed and replaced with marine plywood, together with new sets of mouldings. The roof covering was taken off and brand new canvas put on, using a proper bedding compound; a fresh set of rain strips was then fitted. The vehicle can now be seen opposite the platform in L.N.W.R. livery of Lake and White, although a final coat has yet to be applied, together with the transfers, lettering, numbers and varnish. The

underframe and running gear still require cleaning down and painting.

The ancient was then replaced by the modern; Mk.1 SK No. 63 and BSO No. 73 took the places of the vintage pair. The bodywork on 63 is in good condition considering it has been in service more or less continuously for the last 8½ years, only minor repairs being necessary. However, the doors were a different matter with five out of six requiring new skins. When they had been stripped down extensive damage and corrosion was found on the frames, and it was necessary to order new timber and steel sections to remedy the situation.

The BSO's bodywork is in fair condition and four doors will require reskinning. These also have corroded frame members.

Recently, work has been delayed by the severe weather but now we have thawed out we greatly need extra pairs of hands to help with the backlog of work, especially painting, so more volunteers will be most welcome.

Building

The area to the left of the buffet building has been concreted in preparation for a new access from the platform to the buffet and picnic areas. The path and ramp for disabled people leading from the Buffet was edged with the same bricks as those used on the building. This was then surmounted with some locally made railings. Finally, to complete the work a vintage oil lamp and post were installed on the corner.

Frost precautions were carried out before Christmas, mainly lagging pipes. Secondary double-glazing was also fitted over the louvres

of the toilet block. This gives a better looking and more permanent finish considering that an assortment of timber had been used previously. With hindsight, these precautions proved invaluable when the icy blasts from Siberia arrived three weeks later.

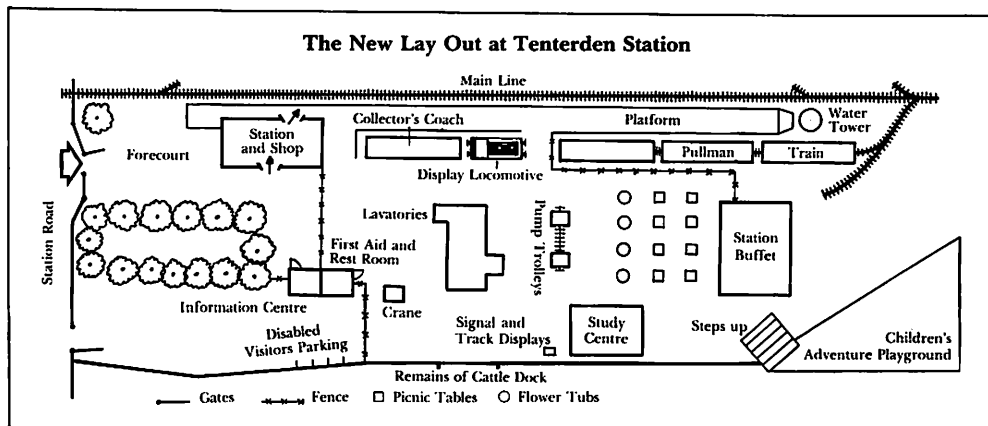
A start was made on the construction of Rolvenden signal box in January. This will be of brick and timber and will be built using a sub-contractor as well as volunteer labour. Further details of the building and signalling system for Rolvenden will be the subject of a future article in *The Tenterden Terrier*.

Catering

A magnificent 50% increase in turnover compared with 1985 was achieved last year. This was realised with only 5 months contribution from counter sales in the new Station Buffet. The offering of "proper" hot meals, only started since the move, was organised with two or three choices and proved enormously popular. The menu will be expanded and developed as time goes by, and our customers' favourites become known. It is intended that the buffet be open on a daily basis between May 1st and the end of October, and as there is room for two more tables and eight chairs, these have been purchased.

The mono-coloured carpet has proved very susceptible to marking and will be given a thorough steam shampooing before reopening for business. Some of the dirty shoes problem should disappear when staff meals are consumed in one of the ex S.E.C.R coach bodies at the rear of the buffet. The interior, looks extremely attractive now that all the notices are

The New Lay Out at Tenterden Station





Replacing the dry culvert with plain track, near the Oxney Straight, 11 January 1987. [Brian Stephenson]

in place and suitable period pictures hung on the walls.

A mind-boggling statistic:—During the Santa Special running 5,500 mince pies were served together with 750 litres of Punch! On the busiest trains ten staff were on duty on the catering side alone.

Clearance

Members of the Clearance Department returned to their proper work in January; controlling the trackside undergrowth. After two years of helping the building department a large back-log of maintenance work has built up. The main task for 1987 is to re-clear from Wittersham Road Station to Newmill Bridge and afterwards to proceed in the Northiam direction as far as Hexden Bridge. When the Permanent Way Department starts work on the Northiam extension culverts and gullies will need clearing before rebuilding, so we will slot in with their arrangements as required. A small programme of tree and hedge planting is planned for Tenterden site before the new season commences. There are also a couple more small building jobs to be carried out in the vicinity of the new Station Buffet. New helpers are always welcome; male and female, any age, we can find a suitable task for anyone. Please telephone Allan Tebboth for further details on Tenterden 3011.

Commercial

Our final figures for 1986 have proved it to be a second consecutive record season, passenger numbers being 57,360; an increase of 14% over last year. Several factors helped us with this tremendous achievement, the envy of many of our competitors in the leisure field, not the least of which was the aggressive marketing campaign ably organised and lead by Mark Toynbee.

Major attractions which helped us were, the visiting Pannier Tank from Tyseley, the new Station Buffet and an improved educational package, to say nothing of the weather which, by being fairly poor in the high season was a significant contributor to our success. The greater passenger numbers was also reflected in a higher level of turnover in other areas, notably the catering where a 50% increase was experienced over 1985 and in Colonel Stephens' Railway Shop where an improvement of 7½% was achieved. Similarly, a rise of 10% in diners carried on the Wealden Pullman provided a 15% gain in ticket revenue, plus a related amount in bar takings and donations.

Our target for filming and special trains was finally achieved by a contract on December 15th for BBC TV who hired a train and Tenterden Town Station to film sequences for a forthcoming television series entitled "The Album" due to be screened in the Spring. Our

slightly disappointing figures for Colonel Stephens' Railway Shop are probably due to the fact that at peak times there is simply not enough room to serve all the potential customers. This was emphasised during our record breaking Santa Special season last Winter when, although we booked nearly 8,000 passengers over the nine operating days, we had a drop in turnover in the shop. However we aim to remedy this situation in 1987 by a major re-fit. The Information Centre will be re-located outside the station building thereby releasing the whole of the shop area for retail sales, much of which will be on a self-service basis to capitalise on the space available. Additionally, an improved range of goods will be offered which should appeal to a broader clientele and therefore help our turnover. Needless to say, our popular items from the "Thomas the Tank Engine" series, through to our vast range of specialist transport books, will continue to be available. However, commercial activity will only improve and increase if we have enough volunteers coming forward to help sell. There must be many members, particularly on the operating side, who have wives, girlfriends and even older children, who are at a loose end when their partner is at the Railway...why not come too? We have many vital jobs at Tenterden in the new buffet, the shop or information centre, in our new First Aid post or on the Wealden Pullman; in fact a whole range of essential and enjoyable tasks. Remember, the more staff we have on duty, the longer time we are able to give our valued customers. If every visitor goes away saying how happy the occasion was, there are potentially five more family groups who will visit us on the strength of each recommendation, and we WILL be at Northiam by 1990!

So please consult *The Rooter* and see whom to contact...a warm welcome awaits you.

Membership

It is some time since a report has appeared on this vital but "backroom" activity. As at the end of 1986 the membership stood at 2521, comprising 1789 full and 732 family members, a net gain over the previous year of 70. In 1985 a scheme was tried whereby in July membership for the remaining six months was offered at half the annual rate. This proved to be uneconomic in as much as many people claimed their privilege rides and received at least two mailings and then failed to renew for 1986. Last year a different tactic was tried—from July

onwards people taking out membership were offered the remaining months at half price, providing they also paid in full for 1987 as well. This was accepted by no less than 95 out of the 114 approached—a success rate of over 83%. Well done to all those concerned.

Marketing

The very gratifying passenger figures for the 1986 season reflect the increased number of trains as well as the great improvements made in recent years to the product we offer and the professionalism of the marketing strategy. Fresh initiatives for 1987 are hoped to produce an overall increase in business of 8%, giving a budgeted target of 62,000 passengers to be carried. With Easter moving from late March to Mid April, we end up running on 3 fewer days in 1987 and this, plus the decision not to hold a major event because of the great financial risk, could be negative factors in our ability to meet the target.

It is believed that our ordinary passenger business will continue to grow with the very high level of visitor satisfaction, improved facilities and carefully targeted advertising supporting this theory. Two "Steam Galas" in the Spring and late Summer will boost carryings over the quiet May Day Holiday weekend and off-peak September. These low cost, low risk events show the Railway off to best advantage.

Schools traffic, which grew by 41% in 1986, shows potential for a further increase. A larger Study Centre is to be constructed which will permit bigger groups to be accommodated. With the continuing sponsorship of the publicity material by the Woolwich Building Society our costs are minimal, the largest item being a mailshot to every school in Kent, Sussex, Surrey and South London. Attendance at the annual "School Visits Fair" in March and a series of Teacher's Open Days and Evenings at Tenterden make up our Schools' Marketing Strategy. However, we do need more willing volunteers to welcome school groups and show them around the railway. Offers of help please to Education Officer, Gerald Siviour.

It is Group Travel where the greatest potential for growth exists. At present, only a pathetic 6% of passengers fall in to this category and great effort is to be made to increase this figure. Inclusive tour packages in conjunction with the White Lion Hotel and Tenterden Vineyards, plus "Steam 'n' Scones" and morning coffee



Erecting new gates for Tenterden Station, 26th January 1987.

[Paul Sutton]

ideas have been mailed to more than 1,200 tour operators in Kent, Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire, Essex and London. To improve booking procedures, an exclusive telephone "Hot Line" has been installed in a private office in Tenterden, where we can guarantee an answer during working hours, to deal with enquiries and monitor bookings. Free meals for coach drivers and couriers has proved to be a popular inducement to operators, only possible since the new buffet opened in August.

A distribution company will ensure that our leaflets are in every Tourist Information Centre throughout the South East, plus for the first time, nearly 200 major camp and caravan sites. But it is up to every member to do their bit to publicise the Railway, even if only by enthusing about it to friends and relatives. Come on, let us enjoy a "double figure" percentage increase in 1987! It's over to YOU!

There is a substantial marketing input into the Northiam Extension planning, in particular on the fund raising side. A presentation was prepared early in December prior to the successful visit on the 15th by the two County Councils', the two District Councils and South East England Tourist Board. The next project is designing, writing and producing the appeal prospectus, support sales material and the Bond Certificates. A high profile appeal launch is being arranged, advertising schedules planned and booked and various avenues explored to ensure that the target is achieved in the shortest possible time.

The Marketing Committee has been disbanded.

Instead, a number of individuals have responsibility for specific projects. Overall policy and its implementation is planned and co-ordinated by Public Relations and Marketing Officer Mark Toynbee who also handles all advertising and liaison with other tourist attractions, local authorities and tourist boards on a day-to-day basis. Tim Stanger organises exhibitions, window displays and membership marketing. Gerald Siviour looks after Education and co-ordinates the steam gala weekends. Messrs Toynbee and Stanger serve on the Northiam Extension Committee with specific responsibilities for the prospectus and advertising.

Of importance to our visitors is the Information Kiosk, valiantly manned by Daphne and Graham Summers. They are shortly to be moved from somewhat cramped quarters in the shop to the old Study Centre, itself relocated on the station forecourt. With more spacious premises and hopefully a larger team to support them, the Summers' will be busy dealing with the thousands of queries received every season.

Museum

Following the success of the East Kent Railways and Coalfields exhibition, the archives section has been able to acquire the scratch built '00' gauge model railway items borrowed for the display. These will be renovated and used in due course for a new diorama of the East Kent.

At the end of the coming summer, it is planned to mount a display covering hop-pickers trains in Kent, particularly on the K. & E.S.R. and Hawkhurst branch. This will be supported by

information on the hop growing industry and on the vanished breweries of Kent. John Miller would welcome offers of items for display and any information on the subject.

New Steam Crane

During the latter part of January it was learned that our bid for a 36 ton steam breakdown crane had been successful. The vehicle, which had recently been the reserve at Stewarts Lane, was built by Ransomes and Rapier Ltd. of Ipswich in 1926. It was one of a pair called for by the Southern Railway on order No. C553, both being delivered to Nine Elms works in 1927 and re-erected. It seems that ours, as SR No.81S, was initially allocated to Brighton Shed before going to Fratton (Portsmouth) in 1946; a final transfer took place to Stewarts Lane, London in 1963. Its original B.R. number was DS81 and latterly ADRR95201.

The crane has a jib reach of approximately 36ft and the boiler a working pressure of 100 lbs/sq.in. The carriage is mounted on three rigid axles with a 4 wheel swivelling bogie at the rear. Total weight in working order is approximately 75 tons and the match wagon 36 tons.

It was due to be delivered in one load to Rolvenden during the first week of February with the match wagon conveyed separately. Apart from any recovery duties, it is envisaged that its main task in the not too distant future will be relaying the Northiam extension as it is capable of handling 60ft panels of track. It will require a boiler test before being steamed, however the certificate covering the ropes is valid. An article on the new crane will appear in a future edition of *The Tenterden Terrier*.

Operating

The so called "quiet" time of year for the Operating Department did not prove to be so this year. Various charters and other specials through October and November kept things busy and interesting, including two lunchtime Pullmans, for which paths were made in between service trains, thereby keeping all Operating Staff on their toes. On Sunday 30th November the freshly outshopped 'P' Class No. 11 worked a couple of trial two coach trips which, despite adverse weather conditions it hauled up Tenterden bank unassisted. This will be its load limit when working trains on its own.

Heavy bookings for December's Santa Special trains led to the running of 6 coach formations

which made for some very interesting traffic arrangements. Three locomotives were in use on each day right up to Christmas Eve. Two handled the actual service whilst the third was Station Pilot at Tenterden, primarily to shunt the coaches during the run round in order to accommodate as much of the train in the platform as possible, and also to enable the service locos to take water after each trip. New Year's Day saw the 'P' Class as Yard Pilot at Tenterden when, in connection with close season work on the railway, extensive shunting operations took place. Included was the movement of Loco 27 "Rolvenden" from Rolvenden to Tenterden for static exhibition. It has been placed in the siding behind the platform in the space formerly occupied by Theodora. During the manoeuvres that followed, she was briefly marshalled into the Wealden Pullman set. Richard Osborn, who happened to be watching, decided however that Theodora was not up to the required standard of appearance and she was quickly hidden in one of the sidings! However, once restored, we all look forward to seeing her flourishing again in her correct environment.

Signals and Telegraph

The department has of late greatly increased its output of restored equipment for the Rolvenden scheme as a result of utilising part of the old Carriage and Wagon workshop at Tenterden. A substantial proportion of the signal and point fittings and all the ground signals have been completed, and work on the construction and restoration of signal posts has started.

The S & T Department will be assisting Dave Stubbs's Building Department in the construction of the new 30 lever signal box at Rolvenden. Weather permitting, it was anticipated that work would commence in February. Further signals will be "planted" at Rolvenden as appropriate, following the completion of Permanent Way works in the station area. Various signal post telephones were installed there by Nick Wellington and Clive Norman late in 1986.

During the Winter close down period Graeme Richards has rewired the box at Tenterden. Various disconnections and alterations to the department's equipment at Rolvenden and Wittersham Road have been carried out in conjunction with the winter permanent way works. These included the removal from pole

No. 99 of one of the four remaining strut poles on the operational section, replacing it with a stay wire.

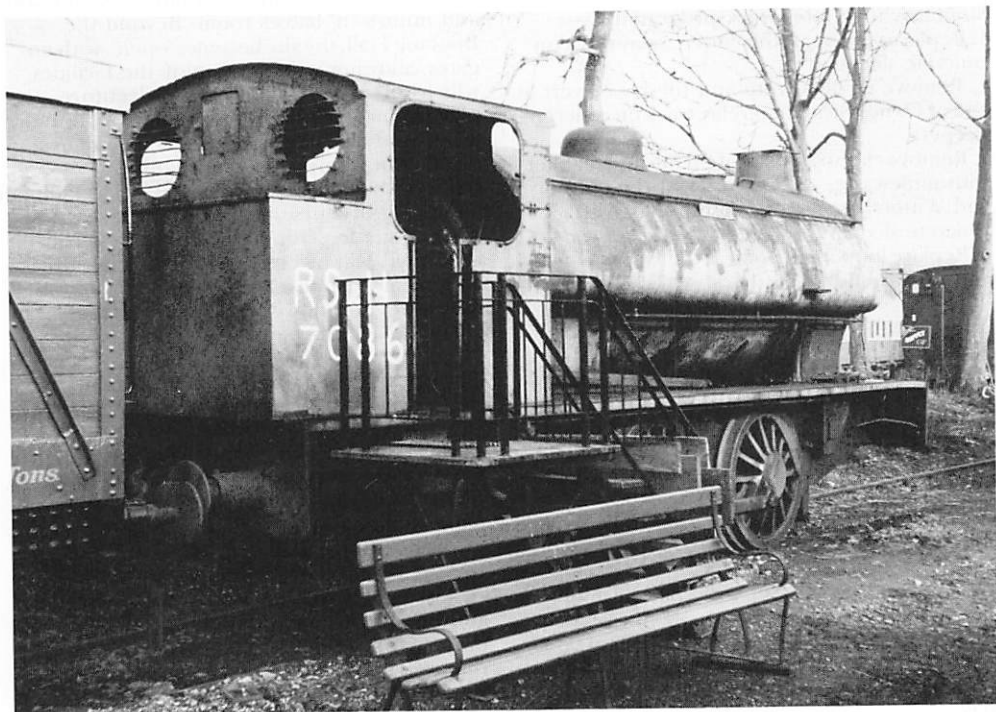
Towards the end of 1986 Chris Lowry and Alan Sampson completed the running of an additional overhead wire between Wittersham Road and Hexden Bridge in connection with the Heppers staff instrument in operation over this section. This task necessitated the installation of 12 additional crossovers.

In late November a splendid Southern Railway lattice bracket signal post was obtained from Canterbury West where it had been the down starter for the platform and through roads, these last being removed from between the platform tracks about six years ago. It has been bought for use in the Rolvenden signalling scheme. Many thanks to the P.W. Department who gave much help with dismantling and transport. A further S.R. lattice post complete with fittings was acquired on 31st January from Reeds Down sidings at Aylesford.

Permanent Way

The drainage scheme through the Wet Cutting (above Cranbrook Road level crossing) is now complete and everyone has been amazed at the quantity of water flowing through. The trackbed is drying out and once relaid no further problems will be experienced with track sinkage. A mini-Hymac was hired to dig French drains on the cutting sides, these being filled with beach to allow surface water to drain away.

The Winter work programme set off at a blistering pace, which proved very fortunate with hindsight. By Saturday 10th January the pipes had been set in concrete to form a new culvert at Rolvenden, and the whole covered with a protective layer of minewaste. Sunday 11th January saw Rolvenden and most of Kent covered with 6in. of snow. This was a very lucky escape; had the weather changed earlier the concrete could not have been cast. By a magnificent team effort this work had been completed in four days. On the following Saturday water flowed through the new culvert



Awaiting the paint brushes, No. 27 stands at Tenterden prior to taking up a new role as a static exhibit, 26th January 1987.

[Paul Sutton]

pipes into the river. This allowed the 1000 gal/min. pump to be returned from hire—a great relief as it was costing £300+ per week. By Sunday 18th the loop line had been reconnected, giving access once again to Rolvenden yard.

Also on Sunday 11th January the girders were removed from the dry culvert at the end of the Oxney Straight as they were rotten and now unnecessary. The gap was filled with minewaste and the track will be relaid on concrete sleepers.

By the beginning of March the relaying at the bottom end of Wittersham yard should be well underway. Approximately 180 yards of embankment has been dug out to a depth of 2ft. 6in. and minewaste put in to prevent the clay from 'pumping' into the trackbed, a problem on this particular stretch for a number of years. Whilst we had the Hymac on hire the opportunity was taken to make ready the ground for the new siding to be installed between Rolvenden level crossing and Orpins Farm crossing.

Summary of Winter work programme:—

1. Replace culvert at Rolvenden, relay track on concrete sleepers.
2. Remove girders from and fill dry culvert at end of Oxney Straight—relay track on concrete sleepers.
3. Remove clay to a depth of 2ft 6in and blanket with minewaste, 180 yds track at the bottom end Wittersham Road station; relay with concrete sleepers.
4. Replace loop/main point at the Water Works end of Rolvenden Yard.

Although this may seem a daunting task, it is already well underway. The more help that arrives the faster the work will progress. Don't sit there thinking you live too far away—volunteers already travel from Scotland and Somerset to help! One or two days of your time this Winter will help considerably. Hot food is provided on site at only a small charge—consumed in the comfort of the Permanent Way mess van.

Bring the lady in your life with you, she might like to help cook the food for us! If you can help at all, ring Paul Wilson on 0843 586617 (or 0580 241448 at weekends)—he will be delighted to hear from you, even if you can spare only one day.

Finally, many thanks to everyone who has (and

still is) helping the Permanent Way department to make such remarkable progress, particularly to those dedicated few who put in many hours during the week and at weekends doing an enormous amount of work.

Stations

The public presentation of Tenterden Town Station is being transformed this winter to offer a more attractive, interesting and entertaining environment for our visitors. At the same time, site security and our own revenue protection will be improved. The station layout has not allowed us to close it to passers by, nor have any control over the flow of people. As we install more facilities, we find these being used increasingly by "browsers" who make no direct contribution to their costs. As an example, Sunday ramblers passing by the station were using our lavatories. After much thought and discussion, it was decided to fence in the station forecourt, making the Booking Hall the only entry point to the rest of the site. The old Study Centre will be relocated on the station forecourt to serve as an information point, first aid post and mum's 'n' babies room. Beyond the Booking Hall, the site becomes 'open', with no gates, allowing visitors to enjoy the facilities which will include a children's adventure playground, free video presentation in the new, large Study Centre, static steam locomotive, displays of pump trolleys and other paraphernalia, The Collector's Coach, Pullman Train plus of course, the buffet and lavatories! A small site fee, 10p and refundable against a train fare, will be charged to non-travellers. New picnic furniture is being provided outside the buffet and flower tubs will be arranged to create an attractive environment.

The gateways between the station building and the Collector's Coach and adjacent to the Mess Coach have been widened to allow unrestricted flows of visitors. This work is being carried out by Mark Toynbee, Ken Lee, Graham Pattison, Jackie Poole, Nicola Hukins, with assistance from Building Manager David Stubbs and the Clearance Department.

At Rolvenden, Station Agent Ernie Stockdale and his wife Wendy await the construction of the new Booking Office, the old one being removed to Tenterden where it will serve as an ice cream kiosk! The new office will be better located and have improved staff facilities and a sales area. Ernie and his team are repainting the station when the weather improves and

under the watchful eye and green fingers of Gar and Tony Pearson, the flower beds and tubs will be full of colour.

The Wittersham regulars, Station Agent, Gerald Beck, Jill Edwards and Robin Levett, are delighted with their new gas lighting in the Booking Office and completion of the platform oil lamps. However, "The criminal classes" have twice stolen the gas bottles and a new, more secure, store is planned. Phil Edwards has relaid the paved path from the Booking Office to the platform which had become very uneven. Quantities of pea beach will be arriving shortly for re-surfacing the platform, all of which will have to be moved by wheel-barrow.

Wealden Pullman

Amongst many other jobs, André Freeman and Bob Sheridan rewired the B.S.O. No. 53. The replacement of main cable runs was carried out fairly swiftly but the supply of power for lamps at each table has proved more tedious as the interior panelling at the rear of every one had to be removed to enable the wiring and sockets to be fixed. This latter modification will be a great improvement not only to the interior appearance but will save staff having to light up and blow out the candle lamps which had been used up to the end of last season. No. 69 Diana has had her kitchen cleaned out in readiness for the Carriage & Wagon Department to carry out some urgent repairs to the catering equipment.

As the new Wealden Pullman season starts on Saturday 18th April, the weekend before (10th/11th) will be devoted to giving the train set a thorough cleaning. Why not come along and help?—there will be endless supplies of hot drinks available!

This year, scheduled Friday evening Pullmans will be run in May and June only, however—specials and charters could well be fitted in on Friday nights in other months. By the end of January nine trains were fully booked including the Hogmanay Special on 31st December.

New "heavy" EPNS traditional lighthouse style cruet sets will be in use throughout the train from the start of the Season—these were really the final items required to make our table settings complete. Manager Richard Osborn made an expedition to London in February to find some Pullman type table lampshades; our existing fabric ones, although attractive, are not

correct. Another item on his shopping list is a selection of good quality kitchen knives—this last will be greeted with great relief by our chefs to whom sharp knives are essential basic equipment. A change this year is that the cheese course will be provided by silver service which will be quicker and further enhance the total presentation. A revision of food ordering and menu planning will also have taken place by 18th April.

Finally staff roster clerk, Duncan Buchanan, is always looking for some fresh faces to help out the band of stalwarts; jobs are available as Attendants, bar staff or working in the Still room (washing up, coffee making, etc.)

Please call at the station and ask for Duncan or give him a ring on 0634 377837—you are assured of a warm welcome.

News from Area Groups

Ashford. The final part of the Ashford carriage bodies has been moved to Tenterden. This comprises the end compartment of the 5-comp. L.C.D.R. 3rd class Brake, vintage 1879, which has been saved for eventual display in the museum to show just how austere travel could be in those far off days. The compartment was separated by Ken Masters who now knows that it takes two hours to saw completely through a wooden carriage by hand! The bungalow site has been cleared with help from the Manpower Services Commission, who converted the remains into firewood for elderly people.

Group activities since Christmas were directed towards our Model Railway Exhibition—the eleventh one that we have run—held on 7th March at the Centrepiece, Bank Street, Ashford. Meetings are held on the third Wednesday in the month at British Rail Social Club, Beaver Road, Ashford and all visitors are very welcome.

Croydon and Sutton The 1987 season of meetings got off to a fine start in January with a Members Slide Evening at The Ship, with both slides and films taken by Area Group members being shown. This type of entertainment is always great fun with some quite professional pictures being presented; it makes the lack of support for the abortive photographic competition even more puzzling. Details of the programme for 1987 will be published in *The Rooter*.



Alice in Wonderland characters at the annual Pullman Staff Dinner, White Lion Hotel, Tenterden, 6th December 1986.
[Mike Esau]

For a long time members had felt that there was a need for a visitors' book at Tenterden, so in 1986 they provided the money to buy one. A handsome red binder inscribed in gold leaf disguises a loose-leaf format that contains easily replaceable pages that can be exchanged for blank ones as they fill up, preventing the dog-eared effect that visitors' books often quickly acquire, thus spoiling their appearance. It had been intended to present it to the Railway in time for the start of the 1986 season but the problem of finding a suitable position precluded this. However, now that the Station Buffet is fully operational it is hoped to place it there. A suitable table has been purchased at a very reasonable price and this will be restored to a high standard.

The Group hopes that information gleaned from visitors' comments will help to channel their advertising campaigns in the right directions, if this is not already the case. Publicity will almost certainly be the main theme of activities in 1987 as has been the case in the past, as currently this seems the best way we can help. There is no doubt that the group has been very successful in this respect but much remains to be achieved, particularly in South London and every effort will be made to distribute advertising material in this area. Anyone living in South London is invited to contact the Area Group Publicity Secretary to see what can be

done to introduce leaflets, talks etc. into local libraries in particular. The various women's organisations make splendid audiences—has your wife or girl friend booked a talk yet?

It had been hoped to repeat the 1986 Pump Trolley display in the Whitgift Centre, Croydon in 1987 but, unfortunately, a change in the promotions policy at the Centre makes this event unlikely. However, it is possible that a smaller exhibition can be mounted and Clive Grewcock has made initial enquiries at Croydon Central Library with a favourable reaction being received to a display being mounted at or around Easter, prior to the start of the operating season.

Correspondence is regularly being received from R.A.I.L.—Railway Associations in London—and it is hoped eventually to attend their regular meetings at St. Pancras Station and a volunteer is needed for this role. The two Group Secretaries are already fully committed, but perhaps a member living or working near St. Pancras could help? Details of R.A.I.L. Meetings can be obtained from Allan Sinclair.

Allan will shortly be contacting the secretaries of all Area Groups with a view to establishing a central index of speakers. The job of preparing a programme for the year's meetings is probably the biggest single task facing

secretaries and it is hoped such an index will make their life a lot easier. Whilst on the subject of talks, Allan is always on the look-out for audiences for his presentation on 'The Kent & East Sussex'. Unfortunately one 1987 booking had to be cancelled due to internal problems within the organisation concerned. However, to compensate for this loss, a booking has been made far away on the Essex coast by the Harwich & District Railway Society. How the word is spreading!

The Area Group meets on the last Tuesday of every month, except August and December, in the upstairs room of 'The Ship' public house, High Street, Croydon—a few minutes walk from East Croydon railway station. There is plenty of parking space outside the premises and excellent bus services, including Green Line. A modest £1 attendance charge offsets costs. Further details can be obtained from Allan Sinclair on 01-777-8025.

Maidstone Over the past years, most of the area group's £10,000+ revenue has been raised by the sale of waste paper, collected and stored in a trailer at Tenterden until such time as it was full when it was taken to the Maidstone paper mill and unloaded by volunteers. That was the routine until the end of last year when we were informed by the mill that they could no longer allow us this facility, nor could they take mixed loads which included magazines, comics, etc. Instead only newspapers and computer paper, packed separately, would be accepted which they would collect by skip. We therefore ask all those who kindly provide waste paper to observe the following procedure so that we may continue to fund various projects:— Please unload your newspaper and computer paper bundles into the trailer which will remain at Tenterden to allow for tidy storage, although it may shortly be moved from its present location to a new site to make way for improvements to visitor facilities in the station forecourt. Paper should always be put into the trailer even if a skip lies alongside.

Revenue from waste paper in the past six months has been distributed as follows:—tables and chairs for the Station Buffet £800, a donation of £144 towards the cost of construction of a drain at Wittersham Road water tower and the purchase of three wall mounted heaters, which were kindly supplied at cost by Mr. Florey of Florey-Hunt Electricals of Tovil, Maidstone, again for use in the new

buffet.

Open meetings continue at the Kimberly-Clark Social Club, Tonbridge Road, Maidstone at 7.30 p.m. on the last Wednesday of the month. Wednesday 29th April will be particularly interesting when a Quiz will take place between the K. & E.S.R. and Severn Valley Railway. The Quiz Master will be Mr. Paul Chantler of Invicta Radio and well known personalities of the K. & E.S.R. will be present. Ample car parking and refreshments are available so come and support the home team.

Sussex Last year ended on a very encouraging and cheerful note with the news that trains are heading to Northiam in 1990 being most welcome. The "housekeeping" work continues and despite there being no trains, there are many jobs requiring attention. In fact if there were any services they could well be a distraction! Cattle grids are being installed temporarily on the farm crossing to the east of Northiam Station and the boundary along the North side of the site is being cleared and the fence repaired. With major works starting here in the near future the group's commitment will increase.

The A.G.M. was held at the December gathering, with only one change being made. The Meetings Secretary, Robin Thorne, stepped down after five years hard work, his place being taken by Clive Goble. Many thanks to Robin for all his efforts during his period of office. The Group had a good financial year in 1986, slightly increasing funds to top £1,000, which is a healthy start for redevelopment. Following a short A.G.M. Nigel Menzies gave his traditional holiday talk. This year it was his visit to the Chinese Railways. Unfortunately time was all too short, but the presentation was very good and well received by an audience of more than 40.

A full range of meetings is planned for 1987—details in *The Rooter*—and work is already in hand on the 1988 programme, which may include a talk on "The Cuckoo Line" (Eridge Junction to Polegate) of which the final part, Polegate to Hailsham closed in September 1968.

Thameside Many members of the Group were involved in helping the Railway during the Santa Special days in December. The arrival of the close season meant no let up either as the permanent way programme got well into its

stride, as did the operating duties associated with it. Work on the G.E.R. 6 wheel coach has been curtailed since it has been shunted outside the carriage shed. However progress should speed up once the better weather comes.. Grateful thanks are recorded to members of the North Norfolk Railway who very kindly supplied us with some parts and fittings.

The Group's meetings at The Albany public house in Slade Green during last year were most enjoyable and details of the programme for 1987 will be found in *The Rooter*. News of other Group activities can of course be obtained from Secretary, Sue Jarvis on 0322-54201 (Note correct code, not as wrongly printed in the last issue!)

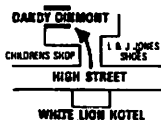
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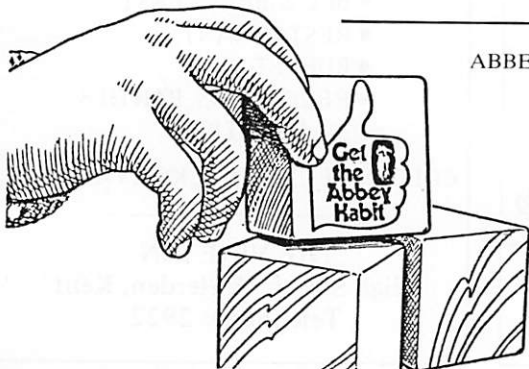
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The recently outshopped L.N.E.R. Engineers Department ballast wagon, 11 January 1987.

[Brian Stephenson]



Southern Railway 12 ton "fitted" open wagon on Orpins Curve, 26th January 1987.

[Paul Sutton]





People in Profile

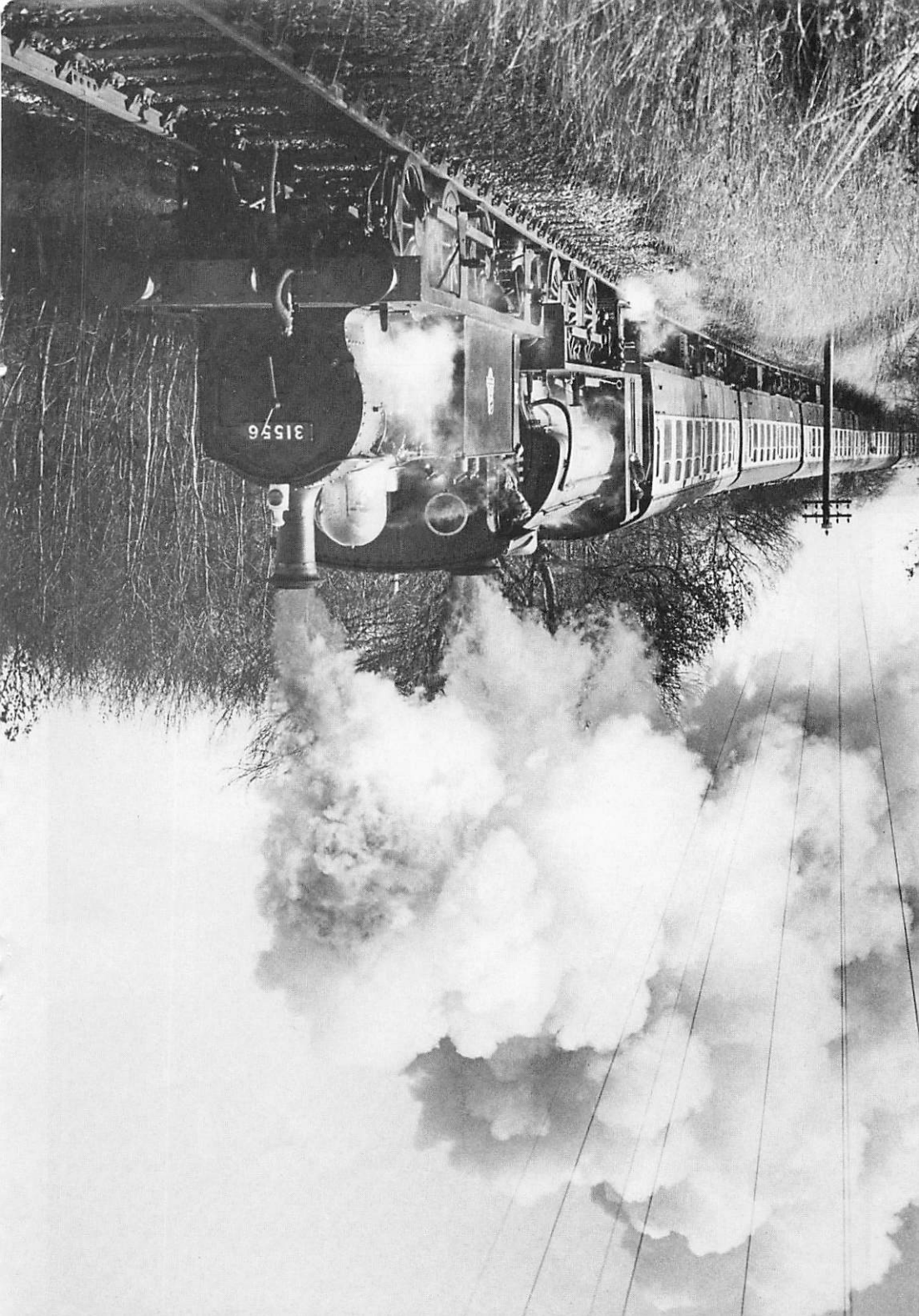
8: Charlie Masterson

Charlie Masterson was introduced to the Railway by Director, George Wright in 1976 with whom he had family connections. In the first instance he assisted with track laying, but a fascination with steam engines led him to join the cleaning roster, progressing to fireman in due course and passing out as a driver 2 years ago. In recent years he has taken a particular interest in steam cranes and is one of only five Kent & East Sussex drivers authorised to drive these magnificent machines—two at present and shortly to be joined by a third. Nevertheless he still finds time to drive diesels, repair water columns and maintain gas equipment on the pullman train, for which he is well qualified. As

a service technician with a local firm, he travels all over Kent & Sussex attending to appliances.

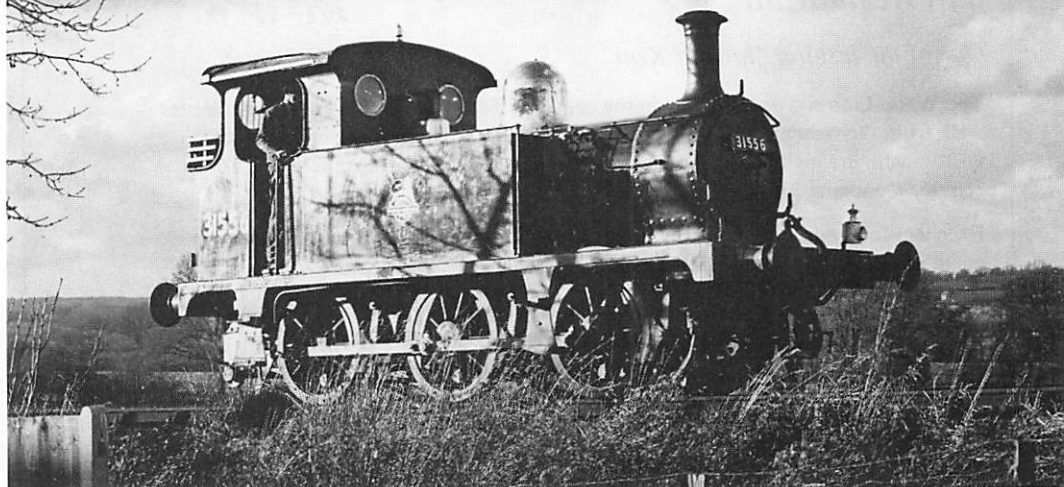
Charlie Masterson was a considerable athlete in his time and has a wide collection of trophies for football, cricket, squash and swimming. Nowadays, he confines himself to the more leisurely pursuits of pheasant and clay pigeon shooting. Always a connoisseur of good food and in particular the traditional fare of Old England, he seems as contented “cooking up” in Brian Stephenson’s portraiture as he does “oiling up” during a busy day on the steam crane.

P.D.S.



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Former S.E. & C.R. O-6-OT No. 31556, which previously worked the mill sidings at Robertsbridge, returned to service on 30th November 1986, temporarily in early B.R. livery, eventually to be restored to S.R. lined black.



Top: Approaching Tenterden Town, light engine, 13th December 1986.. [Brian Stephenson]



Left and bottom: Double heading the 10.45 and 12 noon Santa Specials with WD 191 on Christmas Eve 1986.

[Mike Esau]

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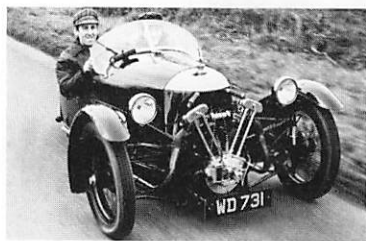
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Passengers carried in 1986 and an outline of services planned for 1987

1986 was another record year with numbers of fare paying passengers up by nearly 14% on 1985. There were 9 additional operating days and 67 extra trains, but average loadings were similar at only 84 persons per journey. Santa specials were, as usual, very popular and increased by 5%, but we have just about reached saturation point and a number of potential passengers were turned away. Suggestions of a two train service with two santas must surely be wide of the mark, as even the most naive child waiting on the platform would not be deceived for long and parents might, with some justification, be less than pleased. A conveyor belt system as practised by some others must be avoided. Bookings from our two intermediate stations continue at negligible levels, despite the good parking facilities at Wittersham. The schools study days were deemed to have been a success and will be repeated in 1987. The Wealden Pullman ran to capacity throughout

the year and two more trains were squeezed into an already hectic timetable. Platform tickets fell for the second year running from 1778 to 1367 and, believe it or not, the number of dogs at 354 was exactly equal to those carried in 1985—were they the same ones? The 1987 timetable will start two weeks later in order that essential track repairs can take place. Services will commence at Easter, on Good Friday 17th April and there will be an extra week of daily running during the spring bank holiday; an additional train will run on Sundays during July and August. In total, it is expected that 614 trains will run compared with 609 in 1986. Fares are being maintained at 1986 levels, despite an expected rise in costs and it is essential that higher net income is generated through a marked increase in train loadings, which have remained remarkably consistent in recent years.

John Emmott.

1985					1986				
	Op Days	Trains	Passengers	Av per Train		Op Days	Trains	Passengers	Av per Train
March/April	10	45	3189	71		12	50	3679	74
May	10	55	4684	85		12	59	4601	78
June	19	72	5644	78		17	82	6290	77
July	19	87	6519	75		20	98	8786	90
August	31	156	12313	79		31	157	12894	82
September	9	33	2668	81		14	63	4027	64
October	10	32	1652	52		11	37	1898	51
November	5	16	505	32		7	21	947	45
Dec/Jan	14	46	8058	175		12	42	8245	196
	127	542	45232	83		136	609	51367	84
Wealden Pullman		40	2705	67			42	2835	67
Charters/Specials		7	267	38			3	222	74
		589	48204	82			654	54424	80
Privileges & Passes			2441					2946	
Total		589	50645	86			654	57370	85
Bookings from:-									
Tenterden			42366					48980	
Rolvenden			1123					661	
Wittersham			292					365	
On Trains			1451					1361	
			45232					51367	

Bad Day at Biddenden

Stephen Garrett relates the story of an accident on the K. & E.S.R. in 1915 which made legal history.

When the Kent & East Sussex extension from Tenterden to Headcorn was authorised by the Rother Valley Light Railway Extensions Order 1902 the line was permitted to choose whether to erect gates at its level crossings or not. Stephens chose not to do so and relied instead on erecting warning notices on the roads concerned together with a requirement that trains should slow down and whistle twice before crossing. This system was inspected and approved by Major Pringle for the Board of Trade before the extension was allowed to open. Not only did it avoid the expense of erecting gates but also that of replacing them after trains had inadvertently run through—a circumstance occurring four times between 1905 and 1914 on the gated section of the K.E.S.R.! The system also avoided any need to employ gatekeepers or to stop trains while the train crew opened and closed gates.

Unfortunately this also carried with it a higher degree of risk and on 22nd April 1914 the inevitable collision occurred. The accident and its consequences are recorded in a bulky Board of Trade file now in the keeping of the Public Record Office under the reference MT6/2398/2. The file opens with a number of different reports on the accident including the following by Charles Palmer, the Station Agent at Biddenden:

I beg to report that the 9.11 am train here this morning collided with a Motor Car on the Level Crossing at Biddenden Station. The Motor when I first saw it, was travelling at a fast speed, and on the Engine Driver whistling again just by the signal, the car seemed to swerve across the road towards our fence, and then come gradually to a standstill, with the two front wheels over one of our metals, and the Driver looking Halden way. The car seemed to be still about a second before the engine buffer hit the bonnet, turning the car round and hitting the body up against the fence, which fell to pieces, and appeared to pitch 3 men out — one man was dragged about 20 yards by the Motor which was caught on the guard which is fixed to the front of the Engine.

I rendered every assistance and procured a Doctor at once from the Village, who said he must have assistance, also a car, so I telephoned to Tenterden Agent to fetch Dr. Skinner and a motor from Simmison's to take the injured to Maidstone Hospital.

The car belonged to Marchant & Tubb, Outfitters,

Maidstone. The occupants were — Geo. Bowles, Driver, Lewis Matson, Herbert John Bowers and Clarence H. Cole.

The injuries were as follows :—

Geo. Bowles—Fractured skull and was delirious.

Lewis Matson—Scalp wound and back injured.

Herbert John Bowers—Face and knee slightly injured (Allowed to go home from Hospital).

Clarence R. Cole—Nose scratched and hand (This man did not go to Maidstone Hospital).

The Driver of our train was Brazier, Guard, J.

Stanford, Engine No. 4

I have names of witnesses—Mr. Tuscon, Bishopsdale

Farm, Biddenden; Gun, Guy House, Biddenden;

Capt. Hall, Birchley, Biddenden; Pinnock,

Wagstaffe, Biddenden; H. Seagrave, National Sanatorium, Benenden.

I also beg to state I judged the speed of our train at 3 to 5 miles per hour when the accident happened.

(Signed) C. Palmer)

Other reports on the accident add that the fireman was William Meggett and that the train hauled by 0-8-OT "Hecate" consisted of ex-LSWR carriages 1, 2 and 19. The train drew to a halt in 38 feet and the speed of the car was estimated by one witness as 40mph. Several witnesses reported the car driver as looking in the direction of Biddenden Station, the opposite direction to that of the approaching train. On a subsequent inspection of the site Major Pringle was satisfied that it was in much the same condition as when he had reported it as safe for the line to open. He suggested that larger warning notices should now be erected and that some shrubs and trees obscuring the view of the crossing should be levelled. Stephens undertook to erect new signs but had some difficulty in removing the shrubs and trees as they were not on railway property. Eventually their owner was persuaded to remove the shrubs "but he did not feel disposed to cut any trees."

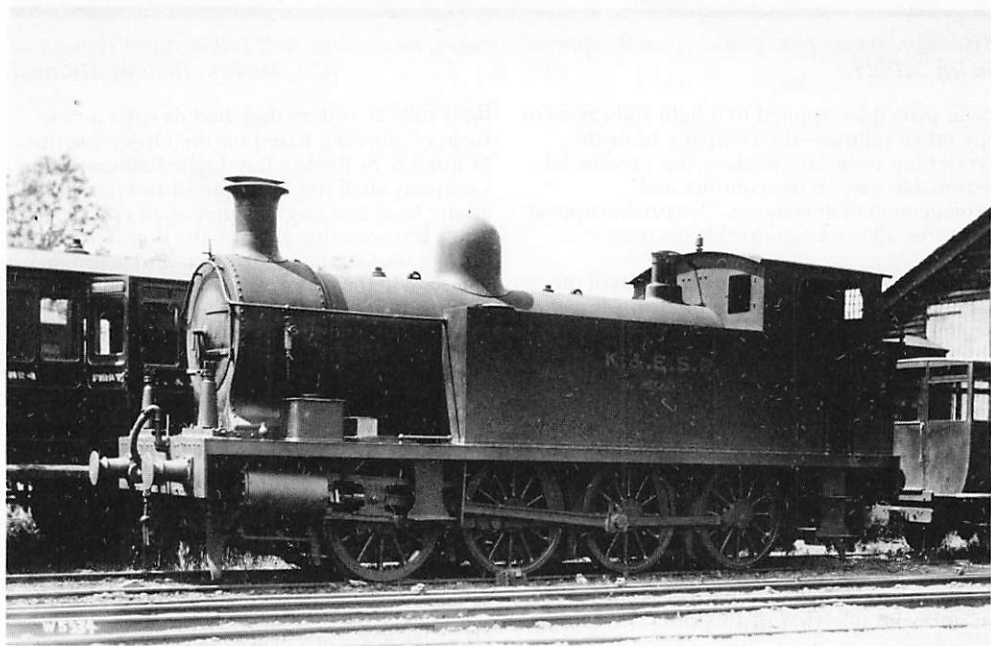
With the Board of Trade happy that the KESR had fulfilled its obligations under the 1902 Order the whole incident might have ended there and then had not Mr Bowers, one of the occupants of the car, decided to take the KESR to court. The basis of his claim was that the Railway had been negligent in failing to provide gates at the level crossing, negligent in failing to provide a watchman at the crossing and negligent in failing to give sufficient warning

of the approach of the train. The case was heard before a jury at the Cranbrook County Court in September 1914. In vain did the KESR argue that since the Board of Trade did not consider gates necessary then the Railway had done all it needed to do to maintain a proper standard of care. The jury were not only persuaded that the car was only travelling at 10mph but also that the Railway should have provided both gates and a watchman and had failed to give adequate warning of the approaching train. On the latter point it is not clear whether jury felt that the warning was given but insufficient or that the train had in fact not whistled as required. The amount of damages awarded against the company is not known.

The KESR was naturally very concerned at losing the case and gave notice of appeal. They were not the only ones to be worried. The Light Railway Commission realised that the whole basis on which light railways operated was at stake. In October they communicated this concern to the Board of Trade making the point that, "It will be seen that if due compliance with, and the statutory authority of, the Order are no defence against charges of negligence, the

steps taken under the Light Railway Acts in the direction of economical methods of working are made of no effect; and it results that the governing conditions may be those to be laid down in a County Court rather than those fixed by the Board of Trade under the authority of Statute." In addition to seeking the observations of the Board on this issue in general the Commission also suggested that the Board might be disposed to assist the Railway in conducting its appeal.

The Board did not assist the Railway with its appeal. Reading between the lines the Board seems to have been afraid that such a step would unleash a torrent of requests for their assistance. They were, however, able to justify their inaction on this occasion with the excuse that the Railway had not actually asked for its help. Unfortunately, the appeal, heard by the King's Bench Division in January 1915 served only to strengthen the original decision. Not only did the judges see no reason to overturn the jury's verdict but they clearly emphasised that compliance with a light railway order was no substitute for stringent safety precautions. Mr Justice Ridley put it quite unambiguously: "The



"Hecate" the locomotive involved in the accident, seen here at Rolvenden c.1925. It was rarely used because of its weight and sold to the Southern Railway in 1933. [Real Photographs Co. Ltd.]



*Biddenden Station photographed from the approximate site of the accident. Note Station Agent's bungalow on left, c.1925.
[Col. Stephens Railway Museum]*

same principles applied to a light railway as to any other railway—the company must do everything necessary to show the exercise of reasonable care in the conduct and management of its business.” No further appeal was to be allowed against this decision.

At this point one of the other occupants of the car, Lewis Matson, initiated an action for negligence against the Railway. Citing the absence of gates, watchman or adequate warning he claimed the cost of a new suit and £20 medical fees. This time Stephens seems to have unsuccessfully sought the assistance of the Board of Trade as the file contains this uncharacteristically modest letter from Stephens enquiring, “Why it was not thought considered advisable that the Company should have the benefit of the assistance of the Board of Trade herein? It is regretted if any action of the Company caused the Board of Trade to take an unfavourable view of this case.”

To be fair the Board was not entirely ignoring the situation. To avoid such problems in future

light railway orders they had devised a new form of wording based on the Order for the Milford & St Bride's Bay Light Railway: “The Company shall not be required to erect gates at any level crossing but they shall erect gates at any level crossing at which the Board of Trade require the Company so to erect and maintain gates.” Whether the jurors of Cranbrook would have accepted this as sufficient excuse for not erecting gates must remain open to doubt.

Matson's case was not, however, heard at Cranbrook County Court but at the Kent Assizes before Mr Justice Darling in June 1915. The result was such an overwhelming victory for the Railway that Stephens had a transcript of the judge's summing up printed and distributed it to railway companies throughout the land. Much of this transcript was quoted in *The Tenterden Terrier* No. 10 but the following extract gives the flavour of the judge's views:

“Here the Board of Trade has taken this matter in hand; but the plaintiff says: “It is negligence if you do not put gates, and you must put them.” Suppose

they are put. If they are put at every crossing, it might very well be that the line could not pay at all; and then what is the use of it to the people who construct it? People will not run these trains as philanthropists. If you make the line so expensive that it will not pay, the line will become derelict, and the farmer will not be able to get his goods to the market; and all those services which the line performs will not be performed."

A naturally jubilant Stephens could not resist a gentle rebuke to the Board of Trade. Heading his letter "Strictly Unofficial" he sent them a copy of the transcript with the added comment: "We were successful off our own bat. I think, however, if we had had the Board of Trade's

assistance, we should have probably secured the "execution" of the plaintiff!"

Matson did not appeal against the decision and no further case was brought against the Railway in respect of the accident. The threat that had been posed to the legal status of light railways passed but not without some lingering doubts at the Board of Trade. The file concludes: "In view of the conflicting decisions it seems doubtful whether Mr Stephens is justified in saying that this matter is now closed."

The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the Public Records Office in making available documents in its care in the preparation of this article.

Video Review

TRAINS TO TENTERDEN. Running time 56 minutes, from Online Video in V.H.S. or Beta, price £19.95. Available from Colonel Stephens Railway shop or from the producer (see advert).

There are so many amateurish videos offered for sale these days—often at very high prices—that one hesitates to buy without seeing the product first. Happily, "Trains to Tenterden" is far from being an amateur production, and although it is a fascinating compilation of material spanning no less than 50 years of K.&E.S.R. history, it has been produced to a high standard and duplicated from a professional quality original on High Band Umatic.

Recent recruits to the Tenterden railway scene will be fascinated by the rare archive shots taken in the early days of the preservation venture, showing such scenes as the last steam train from

Robertsbridge in 1967, the delivery by road of the U.S.A. tanks, and the celebration of the 100th birthday of No. 3 'Bodiam'. Long standing members will find this record of the early days of the preservation scheme full of nostalgia with, for example, a fine shot of the famous Morris 20 Railcar which operated briefly in the 1960's. Of interest will be the opening scenes taken from rare archive film of the 1930's, 1950's and 1960's which give a fascinating glimpse of the Railway in its commercial operating days.

An economical commentary by David Coleman (of B.B.C. TV fame) links the various events to produce a delightful 50 year history of the Railway. Mostly taken from 16mm originals, plus some early scenes on 9.5mm film, this is a video which can be thoroughly recommended to every member of the Tenterden Railway Company.

Robin Doust

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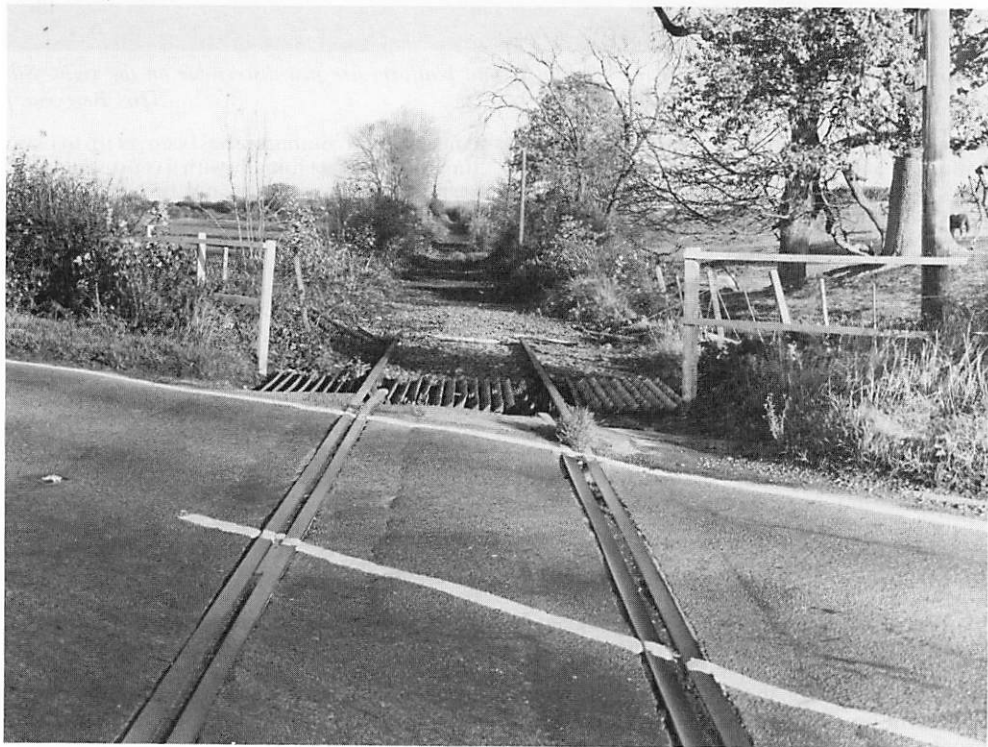
Northiam 1990

Philip Shaw outlines plans to reopen the line from Hexden Bridge to Northiam by March 1990.

Ever since the first section of the Kent & East Sussex Railway reopened on 3rd February 1974, it has been the prime objective of The Tenterden Railway Company to reach the ultimate goal of Bodiam at the earliest opportunity. Many would have hoped that this could be achieved quite quickly; indeed in 1977 our then Chairman, Stephen Bennett outlined the possibilities of "Bodiam by 1980" in this very journal. However, the need to consolidate and expand the facilities of our operation—workshops, toilets, catering etc, proved to be the first priorities for the successful operation of the Railway. In 1982, the Company successfully raised £20,000 through the medium of an issue of bearer bonds, the first such issue in this country since the War, for the purpose of laying sidings at Wittersham Road, renovating the track between there and

Hexden Bridge and restoring the bridge over the River Rother. With a span of 66 feet, this is by far the largest single structure on the line. All this work has been carried out and the next step of extending services from Hexden to Northiam is now within our grasp. Present plans envisage the expenditure of some £225,000 on materials and services, with volunteer labour doing 90% of the work over a two to three year period.

The costs of reopening fall under three main headings. Firstly, permanent way work involving the purchase of 9,100 tons of ballast, 3,700 sleepers and some rail. Secondly, civil engineering mainly the rebuilding of 6 small bridges. Thirdly, improvements to Northiam station itself, including toilets, refreshment facilities and car parking.



Awaiting Relaying—The trackbed looking towards Hexden Bridge from Northiam level crossing, 8th November 1986.

[Jim Berryman]



Northiam Station: the remains of the original second platform are just discernible on the right, 8th November 1986
[Jim Berryman]

Work will commence initially on the Northiam station site and bridge rebuilding early in 1988; track laying will take place in the summer of 1989. It is intended to utilise 60 foot track panels consisting of 95lb rail and concrete sleepers. These will be delivered in kit form to Wittersham Road and assembled on site by the supplier using our steam cranes. These will then be transported by rail. At Northiam, the existing station building will be refurbished and the waiting room converted into a shop/café; purpose built toilets will be erected. It will be necessary to re-align the main line and loop and to reinstate the second platform. Both platforms will need to accommodate a five coach train plus locomotive and a bay is envisaged for coach berthing.

In anticipation of Department of Transport requirements it is proposed to re-erect the footbridge recovered from Robertsbridge at the Bodiam end of the station. Water towers will be needed on each platform and a signal box will be located on the north side of the site against the boundary fence. Car parking will be provided in front of and to the side of the station and traditional gates will be maintained across the A28.

An extension committee has been set up to plan the whole project initially with 6 representatives responsible for publicity and fund raising and 4 more for operational work. In order that the project can be completed it will be necessary to raise £225,000 of which 50% will be required by December 1987 to enable the work to proceed on schedule. The largest single item of expenditure is ballast, which is estimated to cost £90,000. Full details of the fund raising plans have yet to be worked out, but the project does have the support of the English Tourist Board and Local Authorities. Representatives of these bodies attended a presentation at Tenterden in early December last year, when the scheme was also unveiled to the press.

The main source of participation for individuals will be an issue of approximately £100,000 bearer bonds, probably carrying a coupon rate of 7% and with a redemption period within the years 1998 to 2008 at the Company's option. This has been phased to follow our existing loan payment commitments. Unlike our earlier issue, the new bonds will be in several denominations of £25 upwards and care will be taken to ensure that the quality of design and printing will make them treasured collectors pieces.

The remaining capital requirements will be raised from a combination of grants, covenants and bank borrowings, but we cannot be precise as to the allocations at this stage. The bond issue will be launched on 19th September 1987 and will be accompanied by a prospectus, which will set out in detail the financial arrangements. It will be extensively advertised in order to solicit maximum support, but we shall need a very substantial commitment from our members if

it is to succeed. The importance of the success of the bond issue cannot be over emphasised. "Northiam 1990" as the project will be known, is the most ambitious programme of work that this railway has ever undertaken. If it were to fail, not only will some heavy initial launch costs be entirely wasted, but the opportunity of getting to Northiam and thereafter to Bodiam will surely be sacrificed forever?

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Management by Memo and the Penny Post

Paul Sutton looks at some recently donated paperwork from the Snailbeach District Railways.

It all started, as it often does, as another of those coincidences! If, Archivist John Miller had not rung me up and asked if I would mind helping to unload an item for the Kent Coalfield Exhibition in the Tenterden Museum I would never have met John Roberts of British Coal's London office. After he and I had struggled upstairs to the exhibition room with an illuminated coalmine display, John Roberts expressed a wish to look at our exhibits on the ground floor. Had we not gone down just then, I would not have found Adam Sowen admiring some railway items. He had come up from the station after taking his family on one of our morning services. Overhearing me talking to John, he asked if I were connected with the Railway. When I pleaded guilty, he said he had acquired a collection of papers on the Snailbeach and would we like them? Knowing that our Archives were not exactly overflowing with such material, I accepted his offer gratefully.

In due course a large parcel arrived, the contents of which consisted mainly of memos dating from the late 1920s to the mid 1940s, together with a goods inwards register and a traffic returns log of minerals transported.

The line opened in 1877 to serve the various quarries which were established in an area of hills south west of Shrewsbury known as Stiperstones. As is often the case, grand plans were drawn up for a large network, but in the end only Railway No. 1 was built, consisting of 3¼ miles of 2ft 4in. gauge flat-bottom track. This ran from Crowsnest at the top end of Snailbeach village to exchange sidings at Pontesbury, a small station on the G.W.R. Minsterly branch. Mineral traffic out to Pontesbury consisted mainly of roadstone with some lead in the early years, and supplies of coal, oil and permanent way materials etc. in the other direction.

Like many another obscure railway, after the first few years of reasonable business, it started on the downward path of little trade, high overheads and no profit. Shortly after the end of the first World War this inactive organisation aroused the curiosity of Col. H. F. Stephens, so much so that he took it over in 1923. Immediately he started to return the railway to

good order. Fresh locomotives and rolling stock were acquired and repairs and improvements carried out to the permanent way. New business was actively sought and in 1929 10,000 tons of freight were carried, leaping to an incredible 26,000 tons in 1938, most of which came from Callow Hill quarry, owned and operated by Shropshire County Council. However, as freight gradually faded away after World War II, so did steam operation and a road tractor became the motive power. This coped adequately for several more years until closure finally came in 1959.

Colonel Stephens was renowned for his memos, which were always brief and sometimes curt, almost to the point of rudeness. His protegee, W. H. Austen, was quick to follow suit and produced some "classics" after Stephens' death in 1931. One has visions of the two of them barking out dictation or leaving a scribbled note to be typed and signed in their absence by one of the male clerks. There were no women employed at the hub of the Stephens empire, Salford Terrace, Tonbridge.

Many of the 'Snailbeach Memos' are typed on odd scraps of paper or on the backs of other Stephens Group forms, thus yielding some useful information on other lines as well.

Typical of Col. Stephens economy memos was one to Wm. Jones at Snailbeach: "Yours of the 6th Instant. Cannot we get this timber *locally* so that we can get something done?"—showing his frustration at the length of time taken to accomplish simple jobs in these far away places. Another three weeks later to Jones, this time at Pontesbury, was distinguished by a rubber stamp heading "Snailbeach Railway, Tonbridge, Kent" and gave instructions regarding the recycling of old rails". . . They could be cut and used for repairing places. The rails at Pontesbury Junction can be used for siding purposes." Waste not, want not?

Yet a third in the same month was typed on headed notepaper, giving the Salford Terrace address and such impressive details as the telephone number (143), boxes for references and a telegraphic address: 'Stephens—Tonbridge Station'. Another to Jones in January continued the money-saving theme "I

have told Carpenter Jones to get some timber locally after *consultation with you*. I also told him to use some timber out of the old trucks".

Another Stephens masterpiece, was dated 12.1.26: "Your telephone wire is touching the branches close to the office. You must get the branches cut otherwise it will stop you speaking." After W. H. Austen took over the management Wm. Jones was always referred to as "Junction Man Jones".

In the early Thirties conditions on some of Shropshire's minor railways was primitive, illustrated by a memo written on Shropshire & Montgomeryshire notepaper, with Snailbeach District Railways, in capitals, typed over the top, dated 18th May 1933. It ran:— *Earth Closet Yours* of the 17th Instant. We are arranging to erect an earth closet at Snailbeach and this is in course of preparation." Let's hope J.M.J. was more comfortable after that. As can be seen from the above, correspondence was attended to immediately and the post really was "first class" in those days. Time sheets and stock returns were studied carefully and if figures did not

reconcile, a memo was despatched at once demanding an explanation.

On 11th November 1938 there was a request for permission to buy two bags of cement to effect repairs to a bridge. Austen replied by return, saying 2 cwt. of cement would make a large quantity of mortar and would enable Junction Man Jones not only to repair the bridge, but also the stone retaining wall just below the blacksmith's shop. He asked to be advised as soon as both jobs were done and instructed that the cement be kept in the dry. He added a P.S. by hand after signing, saying the proportions should be mixed 1:4 and initialled it. It seems not much was left to chance!

Austen used to visit the line annually and in May 1939 he was accompanied by Mr. Ramsay, General Manager of the nearby Shropshire and Montgomeryshire Railway. A shock awaited them. They found a G.W.R. lorry delivering goods in Snailbeach village! On his return a memo was rapidly despatched urging Junction

SNAILBEACH DISTRICT RAILWAY TONBRIDGE, KENT

S.B.

AJ.

16th May 1939

Junction Man Jones,
Pontesbury.

Scrap Rails for Disposal

We have received an offer for the 20 lengths of 80lbs per yard, D.H. Iron Rails lying at Pontesbury. The offer is subject to the web of the rails being free from holes, other, of course, than the usual fishplate holes. Will you please carefully look these over and let me know if there are any holes in the web of these rails.

Please reply by return.





Snailbeach locomotive shed showing Baldwin No. 3 on the right, mentioned in the text as receiving spare parts from the Ashover Light Railway. [Col. Stephens Railway Museum]

Man Jones to find out who the recipients were and "see if we can get the traffic by our route. No doubt arrangements could be made for a local contractor to deliver on reasonable terms, if we can only secure the traffic." Austen must have made some enquiries whilst at Snailbeach because he went on to say that he understood the appearance of the G.W. lorry was an almost daily occurrence. J.M.J. was ordered to "look into the matter and write me early".

Early in World War II all U.K. stations running in boards and name plates, like road signs, were obliterated when it was feared a German invasion was imminent. On 28th June 1940 Austen replied to a query from J.M.J. saying that he didn't mind the words "Snailbeach District Railway" being painted out, but he doubted that, as the words were made up of raised letters, any amount of painting would obscure them. He suggested therefore that the sign be taken down and stored until the end of the war. I wonder if it's still there somewhere?

A plaintive plea for rubber boots for Platelayer Rowson was answered by Austen saying he would endeavour to get a permit to buy a pair. However, what was the size? They turned out to be sevens, but poor old Rowson apparently had to buy his own as, armed with the permit, Austen demanded a postal order for 9/- (45 pence today)! Wm. Jones fell ill in January 1946 (from overwork?) and apart from one memo sent to him at home, all further correspondence was addressed to "Rubber Boots" Rowson and Fitter Driver Edwards.

The Traffic Log or daily work sheet seemed to consist of entries written in a series of desk diaries bought from Boots the Chemists. The following is a typical day: Monday October 31st (which Boots noted as All Saints Day, a Holiday on the Stock Exchange and the start of Fox Hunting).

Shunting at Pontesbury
6 wagons for Haywards
6 wagons for Edwards
2 wagons coal for loco
2 timber wagons for platelayers

All entries in the Goods Inwards Log were dated and allotted a number. Suppliers names and addresses and tonnage were recorded and, for coal, a note made of the main line company's truck number. An interesting example was: July 28th 1941 No.704 Received from Ashover Light Railway, Clay Cross, complete set of side rods with knuckle pins and bushes for left side of Engine No. 3. Presumably this was another of Wm. Jones's many tasks.

Finally the age old question of wages. By the Autumn of 1939 Junction Man Jones felt he was being underpaid for all his responsibilities and asked for a rise. Two weeks later Austen wrote back to say that, after due consideration by the Directors, he would get a further 2/6 a week (12½p.). Those were the days!

The author gratefully acknowledges the donation of the Snailbeach Documents by Adam Sowan of Reading.

SNAILBEACH DISTRICT RAILWAY TONBRIDGE, KENT

S.B.

22nd November, 1945

Junction Man Jones, Pontesbury.

Fitter-Driver Preece.

Resignation

Yours of the 21st instant. We will take on G. Edwards on the same conditions for working as Preece, and at the same rate of pay.

It would be well, however, for Edwards to send us a letter saying he is prepared to take service with the Company on these terms, to put the matter on a proper footing.

P.S. Can Edwards do the fitting work required on the engines? You mention he has been a fitter.



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NORTHIAM 2117

Evenings: **TENTERDEN 4128**

We are nearly there - aren't we?

Paul Sutton takes a quizzical look at the *Railway World* Independent Railway of the Year Award 1986.

Interestingly, this is a competition in which the K. & E.S.R., and all the other participants visited by Mr. Ian Allan, takes part involuntarily. "Competition" is perhaps misleading; it is really a league table of excellence, proficiency, cleanliness, etc. as judged by one person on one day which is, maybe, the way it should be done. Marks are awarded out of ten for each of sixteen aspects ranging from Scenery, Railway Atmosphere and Cleanliness to Staff Appearance and "Special Merit".

Last year we were placed seventh out of 26 "entrants"; in 1985 fourteenth out of 21 and in 1984 we were not included, so it can be seen that we have moved up the table considerably. (See Letters to the Editors). Our highest mark in any one section was 9 and the lowest 7, which gave a grand total of 129 out of a possible 160. In classroom terms this would seem to mean 7=Fairly good, 8=Good, 9=Very Good and 10=the yet to be attained Excellent. The 1986 winner, the Bluebell, scored 140. It is good to know that in all but one of the 16 sections we improved ourselves by up to 3 points.

Here then is a quick run through our scores with some very serious comments, which hopefully will provoke some correspondence in the near future: (1985 figures in brackets).

Scenery 8 (7)—We seem to have changed the landscape sufficiently in 12 months to be awarded another point! Perhaps this time the early Summer visit was made when the oil seed rape had been harvested (nauseous-looking stuff) or the few remaining lineside pastures were full of sheep and half-grown lambs.

Locomotive interest 7 (5)—This is a bit better, however it is well known that at the moment we are restricted by certain factors on the weight of locomotives. Who knows, perhaps we will reopen to Northiam with some semi-fast services powered by West Countries, S 15s and Ivatt Class 2s? Perhaps he came on a day when no Austerities were running? We did, at least, run six different classes last year, including a guest engine.

Stations and Lineside 9 (8)—This is one of our four 9s. As each year goes by our station sites gradually improve and mature. Our lineside tidiness is generally good; perhaps the pole route helps as well.

Locomotive Action 7 (5)—Another reasonable improvement. Some of the comments in 'Locomotive Interest' apply here as well. I would have thought a good thrash up Tenterden Bank would have satisfied most. The three railways that scored 9 or 10 in this section have the mileage to put up some good speeds, although one of them scored only 5 for their track, so it must have been a frightening experience!

Refreshment Facilities 8 (5)—Ken's pies had been sold out, as well as airborne cream buns, so the mark went up 3 points. The visit was made in June, prior to the opening of the new Station Buffet, so next time we must be awarded at least 15 out of 10.

Toilet Facilities 8 (6)—I. A. has made comments about our loos before—friendly ones on the last occasion I recall. However the toilet block has been up for only 3 years so we should have done better. More efficient hand driers and toilet rolls in the Ladies perhaps?

Cleanliness 8 (7)—of what, I wonder, as this subject could really be covered in most other sections, but I suppose it's probably marked on the litter dropped by our visitors (never the staff). Perhaps there should be an entry for number of wastepaper baskets at each station?

Track 8 (6)—Paul Wilson and Co's efforts are paying dividends and surely it can only get even better. There were two 5s and one 4 on other lines! But we must not rest on our laurels although diners drinking coffee on Wealden Pullmans from babies' feeding beakers has now been stopped.

Friendliness 9 (6)—Come on, who's been flashing those big smiles to everyone? Well done the Station Staff, Footplate crews, Guards, T.T.Is., Booking Clerks, et al. Where have all the sourpusses gone?

Railway Atmosphere 9 (6)—This is good, another 9, an improvement of 50% on the 1985 figure. Have we got rid of our early image at last, when there were weeds everywhere, decrepit coaches, wheezing locomotives and water-eyed, geriatric staff shuffling about with dew drops on the end of their noses, reading three line memos. What can we do to get that extra point?

Rolling Stock Interest 7 (6)—Hmm... What can be said here? Plenty of restored wagons scattered about and the Mk 1s generally look clean and smart outside, but are they *interesting*? What improvements can we make this year—a rake of 'blood and custard' stock perhaps? Roll on the G.E.R. 6-wheeler and a couple of 'Budgie boxes'.

Signalling 8 (8) The only "no change", which seems a shame as our system is always in use and is very well installed. Signal posts are upright and arms clean, bright and shiny; bells ring, the brass is polished and most Signalmen wear a uniform of some sort. Perhaps he came when Tenterden box balcony was being rebuilt. Just wait until the Rolvenden scheme is finished!

Gift Shop 8 (7)—I wonder what the score will be after the reorganisation; it depends if you like supermarkets or not. However I am told on good authority that all trolleys will have brass number plates, lined out wheels, and air powered whistles—entry to the cash check outs will be controlled by colour light signals.

Efficiency/Professionalism 8 (7)—Another small improvement. How many trains left/

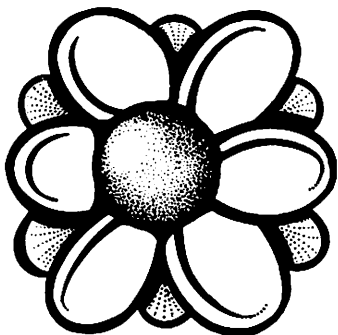
arrived late? However the number of boards giving information and our clear and concise P.A. announcements must be pluses.

Staff Appearance 8 (7) again.—Less people on duty wearing jeans and more with clean shoes etc. The first three railways and two others scored 9 for this, so more Brasso on the buttons.

Special Merit 9 (this was not a section in 1985)—Our fourth 9 which was awarded for 'On-train catering' (The Wealden Pullman surely?) and 'Enterprise'. I'm not saying anything about this one—let's hear some ideas from the membership as to what it means.

This year, from the way things are going on the railway, we must surely go even further up the ladder. The difference between 1985 and last year's scores was 29 points—only half that increase this year could put us out in front. There is talk of the 'League Table' being discontinued, which would be a pity as I am sure it helps to keep us, and most of the others, on our toes and trying that little bit harder. So, come on Ian Allan and *Railway World* take courage, keep The League going until at least 1990 when we reach Northiam!

THE FLOWER HOUSE



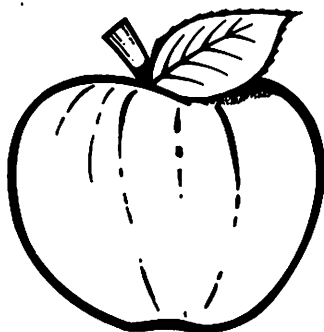
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Catering, 1930's Style by John Miller

Plans for the Tenderden station site were outlined in the Spring 1983 issue of the *The Tenderden Terrier* and envisaged both a purpose built buffet and a museum incorporating the old Maidstone & District bus station office, the components of which had been donated and held in store for a number of years. Unfortunately, with so many calls on the Company's capital, these plans had to be deferred, despite the fact that the catering facilities in pullman car "Theodora" were grossly inadequate for the number of visitors to the line.

It was with this in mind that I put forward

proposals to the Board for the bus station premises to be re-erected as a temporary buffet on a limited budget of some £12,000, including fitting out costs, until such time as the permanent premises could be erected. This was accepted and despite some initial scepticism that the components had deteriorated too far and that the task was beyond the competence of inexperienced volunteers, work commenced in November 1985 with a target date of reopening the following July.

From the start we had the assistance of Gary Tollerfield, Quantity Surveyor and Peter Blackham, Civil Engineer, but the project was



Winter scene at the Station Buffet; the efficiency of the loft insulation will be noted, 11th January 1987.

[Brian Stephenson]

essentially managed by a triumvirate of Allan Tebboth organising the labour, David Stubbs the building and myself as Co-ordinator. Many others worked long hours, including Bob Sheridan and a heavy contingent from the clearance department led by Robin Dyce, Peter Tutt and Vic Griggs; Peter Broyd advised on the layout of the kitchen, Andre Freeman did the electric wiring and Charlie Masterson the plumbing.

It was agreed that whilst the building had to be adapted to modern day needs, we would keep the spirit of the original structure alive. A 1930's decor was chosen, with chocolate and cream interior finish, bentwood furniture and art deco lighting. The exterior is very much as it always was, although doors and windows have been moved and the glass canopy which formerly provided additional shelter has not been reinstated as it would have no practical value and had, in any case, deteriorated beyond repair. The frame is constructed in pitch pine, which is very durable timber and comparatively little had to be replaced. However, many of the roofing tiles were damaged during demolition and it was deemed sensible to have the roof completely re-clad, whilst selling off the sound second hand tiles for which there is a ready market. A professional bricklayer was employed to replace the angled brick infill below the waist line. The project was largely completed on time and opened for business on 2nd August 1986, although some of the external painting remains to be done, having been held up by the winter. Furniture has been provided, at considerable expense, by the Maidstone Area Group and a 1930's teashop atmosphere has been created, despite the fact that for practical purposes it has to be 'counter service'. Since opening,

turnover has increased by about 50% and we now have the capability to take on party bookings and functions.

With so much achieved, it is sad to end on a discordant note. Without discussion with any of those involved with the construction project, an arbitrary decision was approved by the Board to call the building "The Colonel's Kitchen". Whilst no doubt a splendid name for a trendy hamburger bar, it does not fit in with the image of a traditional teashop in a railway setting. A huge sign board proclaiming this title was fixed to the building, which totally filled the space between the dormer timbers. It is hoped that further thought will be given to this issue, as the building deserves a greater degree of sensitivity both in the context of its own history and in the development of the station site. Possibly the simple word "refreshments" in the style of the Maidstone & District Bus Company's old logo, but in Tenterden Railway Company colours of maroon and cream would create a suitable identity.

*Commercial Director, Donald Wilson, writes:-
I am sorry that the bus station project has ended in controversy. The large name board between the eaves has now been removed and replaced by a smaller one positioned to the side of the building. Whilst "The Colonel's Kitchen" will be used as a marketing logo for the catering services on the Railway generally, the Tenterden building will be known simply as the "Station Buffet" and all the signs and publicity material will reflect this. I should like to record the Board's thanks to all those who were responsible for this tremendous achievement in providing a superb buffet at a modest cost, for which we can be justly proud.*



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ESTATE AGENTS

Letters to the Editors

Railway of the Year Award

Sirs—I was delighted to read in the December edition of *Railway World* that the K. & E.S.R. has done so well in Ian Allan's Independent Railway of the Year Award 1986. To mark this achievement I have pleasure in enclosing a cheque for £10.

I wonder if any of your readers would be able to help me complete my collection of *The Tenterden Terrier*. The missing numbers are 1-4, 7 and 11. I should be delighted to hear from anyone who is willing to part with these on 0962-64292.

A.C. Cooke
Winchester, Hampshire.

We came 7th out of 26 "entries"—see further details in a separate article—Eds.

The Rye and Camber Tramways—An Appeal

Sirs—I am completing for publication in 1987 my long-promised monograph on "The Rye and Camber Tramways Company Limited 1895-1948". In order to make this work as complete as possible I would be grateful if anyone who has any relevant records—tickets, timetables, posters, photographs, plans, drawings etc—would contact me as soon as possible. Technical information such as the dimensions of any item of rolling-stock and any alteration, or extension of the track would be invaluable. Any assistance received (no matter how small) will be greatly appreciated and duly acknowledged. Please write to me at 'RYA', 1 Eagle Road, Rye, East Sussex, TN31 7NB.

Kenneth Clark

Brennans Gyroscopic Monorail

Sirs—I enclose two postcards depicting a very unusual railway. This was known as Brennan's Gyroscopic Monorail. It was designed, developed and built by Louis Brennan, an Irishman born on 28th January 1852 whose family emigrated to Australia in 1861.

Before Brennan built this railway his main claim to fame was the design of a torpedo which the Admiralty purchased for £110,000. 0s. 0d. in January 1887.

In 1896 Brennan started to work on a monorail system suitable for rapid construction, with a view to selling the idea to the War Office. It culminated in 1909 with the running of this full size unit at a site in Pier Road, Gillingham,



amidst much public and press attention.

Apart from a demonstration at the Japan-British Exhibition, White City, London in 1910 the railway was never used, either commercially or militarily. The units were scrapped, one of the cabs being used as a public shelter on a recreation ground in Rochester until c1930. A 1/8th scale model of the vehicle is in the custody of the Science Museum in London.

Any connection between this railway and the K. & E.S.R. seemed remote until I read 'Colonel Stephens—The Twilight Years' (*The Tenterden Terrier*, Summer 1983) which stated that the Colonel spent a certain amount of time at Pier Road, Gillingham as a recruiting officer between 1914 and 1916. The difference between the completion of the experiments and the arrival of Stephens presumably at a nearby military establishment, was four years.

One can only speculate on what the Colonel would have thought of Brennan's railway had their paths crossed, but a gyroscopic vehicle coming up Tenterden Bank would have made an interesting sight!

Gillingham public libraries have collected a substantial amount of information on Brennan and this is kept in the Archives Room at Central Library, High Street, Gillingham.

D.J. Stubbs
Rainham, Kent.

Steam to Victory etc.

Sirs—As last year's Chairman I would like to express my grateful thanks to the members of the Events Committee of the past three years who through their very great efforts, have raised a five figure sum to help the railway.

I would especially like to mention Mark Yonge, John Liddell, Alys Jones and Peter Baber.

We have also been fortunate to receive excellent support from all departments of the railway in making these events a success.

Many members have expressed disappointment that we shall not be having a major event this year. There are a number of themes that we could use for low cost events without an admission charge but within the immediate station site at Tenterden. Some of our most popular exhibits cost very little to put on in particular crafts, music, fair-ground, vehicles of all sorts and possibly even a gardening display.

Dr. M.S. Wolfson
London, SE20.

Taking Stock

Sirs—In the letter on p.31 of your Winter 1986 issue, Mr Jones is incorrect in stating that the photo in the Summer 1985 issue shows ex-LSWR saloon 09 (SR 073S). It shows in fact No 1S, an ex-LSW bogie saloon built in 1885 for the Directors. 073S was a six-wheeler; it was unusual in that it ran on LSWR livery until 1932. It was at Paddock Wood in August 1932 bearing a paint date of the previous April, presumably at Ashford. It differed very much in style from No. 010 whose body is depicted on the page mentioned above of the Winter 1986 issue, having a door at one end only, and five square windows; it was also much shorter and weighed only 12 tons, raising the question of whether 010 had a Cleminson's or other flexible wheel system. Another question: if 09 was the Royal Saloon and 010 the equerries' saloon, how come the latter was allowed to be a longer vehicle; not Queen Victoria's style I think? Mr. Jones says that it was built as a directors' saloon, but its apparent division into two saloons each with its own door would make it more suited to royal companions and servants (the latter at the smaller end).

R.W. Kidner
Great Hinton, Wilts.

Rolvenden Rules

Sirs—In your item "Rolvenden Rules" *The Tenterden Terrier* No. 41, you refer to the absence at nationalisation of a Rules Book for the K. & E.S.R. I would remind you that we have in the company archive a copy of the Rother Valley Railway Rule Book, apparently issued to H.I. Swaine on 27th May 1904 and later re-issued to A.L. Whiteleg. This is a Standard Book 'agreed to generally by the Companies party to the Railway Clearing House System' and therefore probably remained in force following the change of company name on 1st June 1904. Certainly, our copy seems to have been re-issued after that date. Nominally, the old Rother Valley Rule Book was probably still in force in 1948!

Incidentally, the Rule Book covers many aspects of railway operation, such as signalling, operation of trains, duties of stationmasters, carriage of goods, but not instructions relating to the running of the Locomotive Department. I doubt that standing instructions such as these would have been included in any other company's Rule Book.

John Miller
Tenterden, Kent.

Railway Letter Service

Sirs—In the November 1986 issue of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* published by the Post Office there is an article on the above subject. One paragraph is headed "Kent and East Sussex Railway" and reads "This Company seems to have put the service into mothballs. There have been no new stamps since May 1981 and requests for information have gone unanswered. It is likely that the service has not been withdrawn but has simply become moribund."

I suggest a response would be appropriate. The editorial address is: National Postal Museum, King Edward Building, King Edward Street, London, EC1A 1LP.

Eric Eavis
Colyton, Devon.

A statement on the K. & E.S.R. letter service will be made in the next issue of The Tenterden Terrier—Eds.

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