

The Tenterden Terrier



Number 78

Spring 1999



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.)

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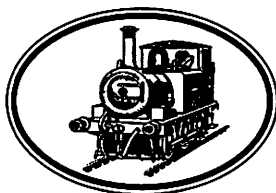
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The Tenterden Terrier



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FRONT COVER

USA DS238 nears Rother Bridge with the 11.30am train from Tenterden, 24th December 1998.
 (Alan P.Barnes)

FRONTISPIECE

Jinty 47298, on hire from the Llangollen Railway, awaits departure at Northiam with the 12:25pm train for Tenterden, 21st December 1998
 (Alan P.Barnes)

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Editorial

Looking Authentic

The plans for Bodiam outlined by Peter Davis highlight the importance that we attach to retaining our authentic K&ESR atmosphere at this, the most environmentally sensitive end of the line. Inevitably, the platform has to be longer than it was originally but dressed with chippings, surrounded by period fencing, hedges and embellished with period lanterns and a K&ESR style enamel running-in board, it should be as an effective compromise that we could hope to achieve. Re-instatement

of the former goods siding and wooden sleepers in the station environs will also help to create the atmosphere of a light railway station. It is vitally important that the same attention to detail is applied at other key sites at Tenterden and Northiam when changes are contemplated. The dismal failure of 'diesel' days to attract even a modicum of support shows that our visitors want steam; similarly they will not wish to be reminded of anything approaching the garish nastiness of Headcorn Station.

From the Chairman – Robin Dyce

Judging by early returns, the Railway has had another good year. Passenger numbers rose marginally and the balance has shifted slightly from general family visitors towards group bookings and the lucrative charter market. Indications are that we shall have a healthy surplus of income over expenditure, so progress towards our aim of reducing long-term borrowing as the key to financial stability has continued.

During the year there have been some remarkable achievements such as the rebirth of the carriage and wagon department, further progress with the award winning Colonel Stephens museum, the success of the Bodiam 2000 Bond issue which has at the time of writing almost reached the target of £500,000 and the progress of the Millennium extension to Bodiam. In highlighting these as outstanding examples in no way belittles the achievements of all the other departments that have contributed so much to our on-going success and vitality.

All in all, an excellent year for which your Board says "thank you".

So into our Silver Jubilee Year in which our priorities will continue to be to operate a safe,

quality attraction whilst maintaining progress towards financial security. Progress will continue on the Bodiam extension and we shall also celebrate a number of exciting events. We must not be oblivious to the growing number of alternative quality attractions on which "our" visitors can spend their money. Of most concern will be the opening, in mid March, of the Bluewater retail and leisure development near Dartford which will be offering an experience to attract all members of the family. Sunday trading has already had a significant effect on our business and we must redouble our efforts to ensure that the adverse effect of further competition is minimised. The celebrations to mark our Silver Jubilee year will help us to keep our competitive edge.

As we head towards the next Millennium, there will be much hard work in maintaining our existing operation, building the extension and planning for the challenges offered by the return of services to Bodiam next year. More than ever, additional volunteers are needed to ensure that the opportunities are seized and developed to the maximum benefit of the railway.

Our Silver Jubilee promises to be an exiting year for you and your railway. Ensure that you play your part in it.

Lineside News

From the Managing Director – Bernard Sealy

An old acquaintance of mine mentioned that she expected I may have more time now that the railway has closed for the winter. I began to politely explain that whilst we may not be running public service trains for a few weeks, everything is otherwise still going full blast over the full ten and half miles of railway.

By the end of January we had already run Railway Experience days, the first Wealden Belle charter of the year, another stretch of track had been relaid bringing the railhead nearer to the existing railway. In addition, training sessions had been undertaken, buffet kitchens had been upgraded and repainted, the shop reorganised and the commercial staff had been to trade fairs. Bookings had been taken for most of next year's events (yes even for Santa Specials), the membership team had been hard at work, the finance team had been busy counting up the pennies, and so the list goes on. Together we all run a real railway that lives and breathes all year round. It is part of the community that it serves and will shortly be extended along an unspoilt valley, where there is no road, to a medieval castle surrounded by water.

As part of our increasing involvement within the community that it serves (or is about to serve) the Railway, in conjunction with National Westminster Bank, is holding an Art

Compiled by Duncan Buchanan

Competition for Primary and Junior Schools within the Bodiam catchment area on the theme "The Railway returns to Bodiam". An exhibition of the work produced will take place at the Victoria Hall, Bodiam from 24th March to 11th April.

From the Company Secretary – Cathy Roberts

The Board had a less turbulent year than some in its previous history, only one resignation and one director who declined to offer himself for re-election. Three 'new faces' were elected at the June '98 AGM, so the Board now stands at 10.

The AGM this year will be at Tenterden Town Hall, on Saturday 26th June with David Stratton and Norman Brice due to retire. We are hoping they will offer themselves for re-election and anyone else who wishes to put themselves forward should complete and return the official Nomination Form by 15th May. Copies are obtainable from the company's offices.

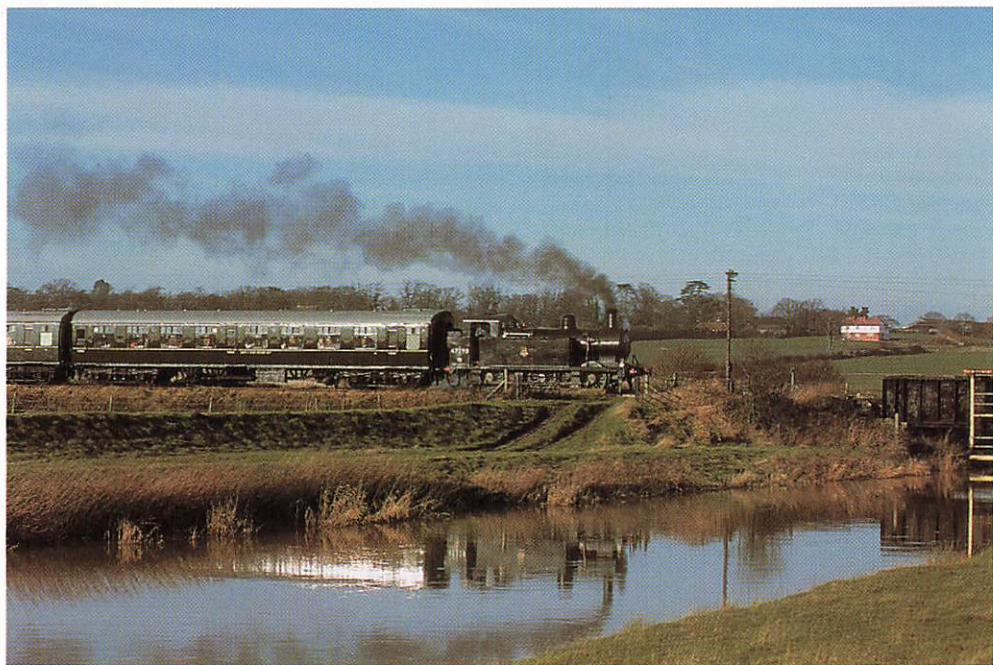
In the last 10 years the Company has had 33 different people on the Board and about two-thirds of those people are still active volunteers, so it wasn't dissatisfaction with the Railway that led to their retirement. It just goes to show that being a director is not such an easy job as many people imagine – and volunteers for the Co Sec job are also eagerly awaited.

Commercial

Final figures for the 1998 season reveal that 80,361 passengers were carried compared to 79,775 in 1997. Wealden Belle charters and groups visits again showed strong growth and the railway is no longer dependant on the two or three key income streams it has relied on for much of its recent existence. Now, in addition to the Santa Special Steam Trains and scheduled Wealden Belle services, we earn appreciable sums from passenger revenue, station and service-train catering, gift shop sales, Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine Fun Days, Steam Locomotive Driving Courses as well as charter trains. This "diversification" means our

budgeting is far more robust than ever before. Last year, the number of family passengers dropped slightly but this loss was more than covered by increases from the newer sources of revenue.

There is however no room for complacency, the railway needs a turnover of around £1m per year just to stand still and the Commercial Department have to earn the vast majority of that money. Accordingly there will be no let up in our high profile marketing and public relations campaign and a series of events have been arranged to celebrate, and take full advantage of our Silver Jubilee Year.



Jinty 47298 about to cross the Rother Bridge with the 11:30am from Northiam on 24th December 1998

(Alan P.Barnes)



'Elves' help to load up Santa's sacks at Northiam, 24th December 1998

(Alan P.Barnes)

Since November the railway has been represented at travel trade shows at Hastings, Croydon, Chatham and Olympia as well as a two-day consumer travel fair in Southend. The Wealden Belle and Group Visits leaflets were produced in November while the general timetable and information brochure was published in early December. Leaflets for the Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine Fun Days, and School Outings followed.

February saw the screening of the episode of BBC1's "Holiday" that included a brief glimpse of the railway. That, coupled with a front cover picture and full page feature on the line in the Kent Messenger's county-wide TV "What's On" magazine and a feature-length interview on BBC Radio Kent, served to keep the telephone lines very busy throughout the month.

Santa Special Steam Trains

9700 passengers travelled on these ever-popular trains in 1998, slightly down on the 1997 figure but this was mainly due to changes in the train formations with the Wealden Belle carriages not being used on Santa services but being kept for more lucrative evening trains and charters. Despite this, the income target was handsomely exceeded rounding off a very successful year. Vehicle RMB 1869 entered service on Sunday December 6th and was used on a total of 7 Santa days.

The revised working arrangements for the busiest days worked very well with three teams of on-train staff each working three trips rather than two teams doing four a-piece, which proved very popular with volunteers.

Around 30 new junior volunteers in the shape of Tenterden Primary School's drama club helped out as pixies during December and seemed to enjoy themselves – a number have indicated that they will return to assist with other events in the future.

Donald Wilson again made an excellent job of purchasing excellent quality presents and the co-ordinating team of Tim Appleton, Nicci Salmon, Kevin Goodsell, Paul Curran and Jim Price ensured everything ran smoothly throughout the month.

Wealden Belle

As mentioned earlier, the Wealden Belle continued to perform well in 1998 with the very high standards of food and service established in recent years being maintained. The train's excellent reputation has resulted in many repeat

bookings and a host of charter enquiries from passengers who have enjoyed their meals with us.

There were a number of special bookings in December and these went very well – although there was a close call on one day when our regular Chef, Bill Duff, was suddenly taken ill. Fortunately, Bill had purchased all the necessary ingredients and volunteer Carol Douglas, who regularly acts as Bill's assistant, and Commercial Manager, Graham Hukins, were able to prepare the four-course dinner for 40 very appreciative diners who were, and remain, unaware of the crisis behind the scenes!

BT073 and Restaurant Car 69 have been painted in Pullman livery and our luxury dining train is now smarter than it has been in years. It is a credit to the line and the carriage and wagon department in particular.

With barely time to pause for breathe, the first charter of 1999 was upon us, a surprise 60th Birthday party on Sunday 17th January. As the Restaurant Car was undergoing its repaint, the three-course lunch was prepared in the PMV and Station Refreshment Rooms with the train's running times being carefully controlled so that it returned to Tenterden just as the Puddings were ready! As the Permanent-Way gang were replacing 300 yards of track just beyond Rolvenden Station the train ran up and down the bank twice, top-and-tailed by No. 376 "Norwegian" and Class 14 D9525.

The season proper commenced with a sell-out Valentine's Dinner on Sunday 14th February and bookings for the rest of the year are also very healthy. Mothering Sunday Lunch was sold out in early February and every Friday in June has a confirmed charter. In all, 17 charters have been confirmed for 1999, compared with the 18 that ran during the whole of 1998.

Anyone interested in helping with this, the line's fastest growing activity should contact Wealden Belle Executive, Kate Debling, at Tenterden Town Station.

Colonel Stephens Railway Shop

Shop sales exceeded the 1998 target by over 10% and there will be a number of special 25th Anniversary items produced in an effort to maintain this trend into 1999. Polo shirts, sweatshirts, pen and pencils sets, bookmarks and coasters are just some of the items that will appear with the Silver Jubilee motif, so call into the shop and see the new range next time you

visit the line.

Work has also started on a Silver Jubilee Guide and 25th Anniversary video, both of which are being produced in-house and which should appear in time for Easter.

Catering

Receipts from station- and on-train catering ended the year 9% ahead of budget.

The quieter period in January and early February was used to refurbish the kitchen area in the station refreshment room and re-arrange the positioning of some of the appliances in order to improve working conditions.

The limited space available for diners, particularly during inclement weather when the outside picnic tables are not used, has caused a number of problems and certainly deters a number of visitors from using the facility. Accordingly, plans are being developed for a "conservatory" extension to the front of the building in a style to match the original building. It is hoped that this work will commence towards the end of this year.

Bearer Bonds

Continued publicity and the reduction in bank and building society interest rates has meant that the Bearer Bond Issue has continued to be well supported. In early February, £480,000 of the £500,000 target had been raised.

On December 4th, Janet Anderson MP, Minister for Tourism, Film and Broadcasting visited the line to perform a "Topping Out Ceremony" at Bodiam Station. She laid the final brick in the platform edging using a silver trowel and was presented with a coal model of a "Terrier" locomotive mounted on a brick of the type she had just laid.

Special Events

The final event of 1998 was Diesel Day on Saturday 28th November which featured four of the railway's diesels; Class 33 D6570, Class 14 D9525, Class 03 D2024, Class 08 D3174; along with visiting 07, number 07011 from our friends at St Leonard's Railway Engineering. The line's Class 108 DMMU was also in action for the event.

The 07 was moved to the railway in mid-November for a Stephenson Locomotive Society charter on Sunday 15th November. The special train started at Tenterden and then made several trips from Rolvenden to Northiam and back before returning to Tenterden. During the day all five of the above locos were used to haul the train.

Diesel Day itself included a variety of passenger and goods trains but despite the variety of motive power on offer just 126 paying passengers travelled on the seven trains that ran, meaning that the event barely covered its costs.

Motive Power

Over the winter months much work has been carried out in the area adjacent to the coal pile at Rolvenden. The yard has been excavated, drains installed and concreted. This work will mean that the Locomotive department stores in this area are more accessible and kept dry. The coal pile was extended somewhat to avoid coal being pushed all over the yard when delivered. Directly afterwards the original track remaining in No 2 road was removed, the area excavated, track relaid and concreted. The spoil from both excavations was loaded in wagons and tipped near Newmill Bridge. This work was finished by Jan 30th in sometimes appalling weather. Special thanks to Peter Salmon and Barry Holmes who maintained their enthusiasm for the project even when the rain was pouring down and thanks also to Alan Wood, (of steamroller fame) who drove the excavator.

The water supply to Northiam water column had to be removed in January to enable the contractors to extend the platform. When this work is completed the pipework can be reinstated, lagged and fitted with trace heating which will avoid the need to keep shutting off and draining the supply during cold weather to prevent freezing.

The department's want's list grows apace: metal cupboards or shelving, scaffolding for boiler repairs, filing cabinets, Portacabin office, rags, old coats, timber/packing wood, drills - straight shank up to ½", hand tools for the apprentices, lead sheet, waterproofs - coats/macs, Allen keys - hexagon. We also need industry professionals to carry out an independent management audit of the Loco department.

Yard security has been improved since the fitting of a burglar alarm system. Water softening for

the locomotives has reduced the amount of scale seen at washouts, although the variability of the supply at Rolvenden, where in Summer we often revert to mains water as opposed to river water, means further work is needed.

Two new sump pumps have been installed in the washout pit in the Shed, in place of the trailing leads used previously. A nominated suppliers list has been completed by Alan Wilcox. A continuing vacancy for a fitter at Rolvenden means that Richard Crumpling and Richard Moffitt have continued part-time employment.

Our apprentices have continued their good work, indeed John Waddington came top in his class in recent NVQ phases while Ben Swan has almost completed his workshop practice modules. Both have been receiving extra maths tuition from John Veysey.

Planning for the shed and yard extensions, into the field alongside, continues. This must be ready before money is committed to any projects.

Steam locomotives

No 3 'Bodiam': The Heritage Lottery Fund declined to make funds available for the restoration of Bodiam. The main reason seems to be that there are several other examples of this type of locomotive preserved already. The funds that are available have allowed work on the frames to be sanctioned by the Terrier Trust. The boiler has arrived from Israel Newton and the aim is to put the boiler into the frames immediately after their return from Ian Riley's works in Bury, Lancashire.

No 8 'Knowle': This locomotive is nearing completion – indeed it really does look like an engine again. The lubrication system plus miscellaneous pipework were completed late last year at the same time as fitting and lining the chimney with the blast pipe. The air receivers have been fitted below the cab to complete the air brake arrangements. It is hoped to commence running in this loco during the spring.

No 10 'Sutton': The loco continues to stand at Tenterden. In the meantime, with two other Terriers receiving attention, it is vital to emphasise our continuing long term need and commitment to the loco to the London Borough of Sutton, its owners.

No 11 'P Class': Strakes for the boiler barrel have

been rivetted and the eccentrics machined. The complete bunker reconstruction continues. A new outer firebox wrapper is to be constructed at Ian Riley's and the apprentices have been given a task around the axle boxes. The wheel sets have returned from Ian Riley's and must now be lined up with the frames.

No 12 'Marcia': The boiler is available to be worked on in the shed currently.

No 14 'Charwelton': In service having completed 88 turns and 3,000 miles last year.

No 19 'Norwegian': In service having completed 95 turns and 4,000 miles last year.

No 21 'Wainwright': this engine went on hire to the Buckinghamshire Railway centre (Quinton Road) late last year. The Whistle was damaged in transit and a new whistle is being made by Huw Phillips Engineering. A leading spring has been changed with one of a set of spares recently acquired.

No 22 'Maunsell': In service.

No 23 'Holman F. Stephens' The regulator valve went away for specialist repair.

No 24 'Rolvenden': No 24 was removed from service ahead of schedule due to boiler problems. Repairs are being fast tracked. The copper welding has been done and crown stays and tubes are to be refitted. Other stays and rivets have been removed to facilitate detailed inspection of the foundation ring. Washout plugs have been added to the water tanks.

No 25 'Northiam': Fitting out of No 25 has been completed followed by painting and lining out. Running in should start before Easter. With the loss of No 24 this loco has had priority of attention.

No 1638 Pannier Tank: Overall, the priority on this loco has increased with the realisation that it will be needed for the extension to Bodiam. Boiler progress at Chatham Steam Restoration is being pursued more vigorously while work on the axle boxes has been started. Castings for the slide valves are being prepared at the foundry, tyre turning is taking place and the crossheads machined. The regulator is being overhauled and the ashpan rebuilt.

47298 Jinty: Hired in from the Llangollen railway to cover the Santa Special services after No 24 was withdrawn, this has proved to be a

reliable performer. Unfortunately shortly before it was due to return there was a fire in the cab flooring. The problems were temporarily solved so as to continue service, but permanent repairs were not possible before the loco was returned. Primarily affected are the cab windows and the brake handle. It is hoped that we can see this engine again during the 1999 season.

Diesel locomotives

Diesel servicing periods are under review in light of the extra duties put in by these engines.

Drewry 03: Out of service while the injectors are overhauled. Some have been found to be in very poor condition.

No 48 Class 14: Further running in trials have been completed at the Nene Valley Railway. Where it is reported to have hauled a 6 coach train over the length of the line. It is hoped to see this engine in the Spring.

No 49 Class 14: In service though some remedial work is needed on the main engine which may be contracted out.

Crompton D6570 "Ashford": In service.

08 'Dover Castle': 'A' exam completed in December.

Cranes

10 ton Grafton: Laid up awaiting major overhaul.

10 ton Taylor-Hubbard: In service but needs attention to the Wylie Gear (safe working load indicator).

36 ton Ransom Rapier Breakdown crane: Operational though 2 springs need replacing plus work on the rear drag box.

5 ton diesel crane: This crane is up for sale though is reported to be in a working condition.

Rolling Stock

Administration

Various new administrative systems have been put into place and existing ones reviewed. These include stock taking of C&W's vast collection of spare parts. A new computer will be used to record the findings, and should eventually make it much easier to locate items at short notice (usually 10 minutes before train time!). The vacuum exhaustor now works – which allows a much more convenient brake system testing – and a suitable motor and belt drive enables carriage dynamos to be tested in situ in the shed. A higher-rated mains power supply to the C&W works will shortly be installed. The long history of trouble in the station building at Tenterden on electricity supply matters should now be over or at least C&W's involvement in it.

Mark 1's

Recently arrived Restaurant Miniature Buffet (RMB) No. E1869, formerly on the Llangollen Railway has taken the spare number 59 in the K&ESR list. This vehicle arrived with an electrical problem, which has now been sorted, and will need a re-paint later in the year.

Most of the Mark 1's have received some attention to their braking, water and electrical systems as well as a general purge on their door

locks. Most bogies have now been lifted for ride height adjustment and lubrication. In preparation for the Santa season, steam heating systems were thoroughly tested and various repairs carried out.

TSO No.64 returned from overhaul at St. Leonards Rail Engineering in time for the Santa Specials. Its new green paintwork looks a lot smarter than the previous (and embarrassing) blood, custard and rust.

Following the policy of contracting work out where necessary, Petros, the railway's saloon for people with disabilities, left for general overhaul at St. Leonards during February. As with No.64, there was no possibility that this vital coach could be fitted into the C&W schedule and be back in service when it would be most needed.

The most worn side of maroon TSO No.63 has been repainted experimentally using an uprated paint preparation schedule and paint from a different (and less expensive) supplier. The results can, of course, only be fully evaluated over a longish period. We were sufficiently impressed, however, to use the same method and materials when it came to repainting BSO No.73 into Pullman livery. (Don't shudder – this actually looks much better than you would imagine!) The objective is, of course, to give



Janet Anderson MP, Minister for Tourism, Film and Broadcasting "Topping out" Bodiam platform, 4th December 1998. (John Liddell)

some uniformity to the Pullman set, and this we have achieved. At the time of writing, RU No. Sc1955 (K&ESR No.69) is in the shed for repainting, also into Pullman car livery. It is due to emerge as 'Car No. 69'.

Maunsell BNO No.4432 (K&ESR No.53)
The general overhaul of this vehicle, which has been out of service for several years, began during the first week of January. Priority is initially being given to the bodywork in view of

the known presence of dry rot.

Maunsell BNO No. 4443 (K&ESR No.54) and CK No. 5618 (K&ESR No.56)

Both vehicles benefited from the bogie lifting programme set up for the Mark 1's. This should enable these popular and useful vehicles to perform reliably during the coming season.

Maunsell CK No.7400 (K&ESR No.57)

This coach, formerly the S&T mess coach, was found to be beyond repair above the sole bar level and the bodywork has been broken up accordingly. This exercise did, however, provide a reasonably sized haul of spare parts.

L&SWR invalid Saloon No.11 (K&ESR No.83)

After a number of years in a partly dismantled state, this carriage has been moved from the short workshop bay at the end of No. 3 road, structurally stabilised and generally made mobile. A purpose-made cover, purchased jointly with the Loco Trust, enables us to store No 11 outside if we wish, thus freeing up the short bay for work on other vehicles. It is still intended to restore this carriage when opportunity permits.

Victorian Train

District coach No.100 was the first vehicle to occupy the short bay after No.11 left. The time-expired drop lights were replaced, the items having been made in-house. No.100 is also due for re-varnishing. It is intended to bring all the vintage carriages in over the next few months for various work including attention to paintwork, replacement of worn upholstery and miscellaneous mechanical work.

Permanent Way

The Permanent Way department has been hard at work on both the extension to Bodiam and the operating section of the railway. The track laying on the new extension to Bodiam has proceeded at an incredible speed, with up to nine 60 foot panels a day being laid, despite some appalling weather conditions. Thanks to all the people that have stuck it out on those days when it would have been very easy to go home. For track laying from Bodiam towards Northiam, which it is currently planned to connect up at the end of March, we have been using the bail laying method i.e. the rails and

sleepers are lifted in from the side of the embankment (where they had previously been positioned) by a 360° excavator and assembled by a gang of between 6 and 10 using some 338 parts per panel. We have also spent some time at Bodiam finishing off the pointwork at the Robertsbridge end of the station and drilling and chairing up sleepers for the siding that will be installed later in the year.

We have also been working on the Sewage Works straight section near Rolvenden. Thirteen lengths of track have been relaid and whilst they

were out of the way a number of new drains were installed to prevent water ingress. This section, along with Orpin's curve (which was slowly moving inwards) has now been tamped and lifted. We have also replaced a number of the old two hole fishplates, re-drilled the rails and then fitted four hole skirted fishplates. This will hopefully prevent the problem of dropped joints in the future. We have also installed a flat bottom expansion joint on Tenterden Bank, which will enable a long-term temporary speed

restriction, caused by several welding issues, to be removed. It is believed that this is the first one to be installed on a preserved railway in Britain.

The junior gang has been hard at work renewing wooden sleepers in the Tenterden Station area and between Cranbrook Road and the Home signal. They have also addressed various day to day issues as they have come up. This has enabled the main gang to concentrate on the extension.



07011 and D8570 make an unusual pair at Tenterden on diesel day, before setting off with the 3:25pm train, 28th November 1998
(P.G.Barnes)

Bodiam 2000

Bodiam 2000

The track laying is going well. The working parties after Christmas saw the project half a mile ahead of schedule, leaving just 800 metres to go. The effort put in by all the track laying volunteers is reaping rewards in both quality and quantity of the completed product. The first mile out of Bodiam was laid in bullhead rail recovered from the original line at the rate of about 100 metres plus a day. When we started on the flat bottom rail using F19/SHC method, nobody in the gang had any experience of how these clipped up. The first sleeper clipped up relatively easily and, PWay Manager, Brian Muston started the rest. At first, little progress

was made, and given there were 26,000 clips to be hammered in, we thought we had a problem. Three panels later, a sharp learning curve, and a lot of tricks learned the hard way, progress resumed at the same 100 metres plus per day, 180 metres being the record.

There are more working parties planned for March and this should see the line connected back to Northiam. The track gang's attention will then turn to the installation of sidings at Bodiam, Thermit welding the rail joints and the hundreds of other smaller jobs. To help with this work a Wickham trolley is being brought back to life, with a reconditioned engine, the springs freed up, and the brakes overhauled.

The ballasting and tamping will be done in September after the main running season on the operating section. If you want to get involved there is still plenty to do and your efforts will benefit the railway not only in work done but as our portion of the funding. As ever a pot of tea awaits you.

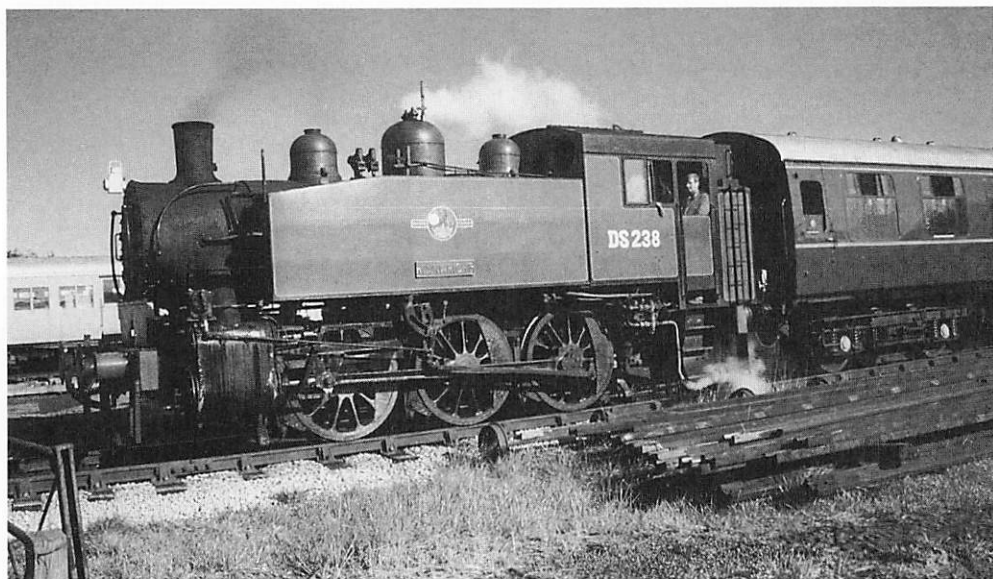
A big thanks must go to the volunteers who have helped with the track work. Not only has the quality of work been first class, the amount achieved is overwhelming. Below are listed some of the major inputs in days worked by the gang, though it must be noted that there are a lot of smaller jobs already completed that are not listed:

July/Aug. 97:	Track removal Bodiam station	16 days
Sept/Oct. 97:	Track removal Northiam-Bodiam	35 days
Oct/May 97/8:	Pre fabricate Bodiam points and sleepers	78 days
June/Sept 98:	Track laying Bodiam	38 days
Aug/Sept 98:	Laying out 9000 sleepers on formation	28 days
Aug 98:	Laying out new flatbottom rail	4 days

Oct/Nov98:	Track laying	30 days
Nov/Dec 98:	Bodiam track work	10 days
Dec/Jan 98/9:	Track laying	14 days

Work will soon be starting on the buildings at Bodiam and Northiam, incorporating the second platform at Northiam and extending the existing platform 1 at Northiam to allow locomotives to water without uncoupling. At Bodiam agreement has been reached to incorporate a toilet behind the station building, near the cattle dock, such that the view from Bodiam Castle remains unspoilt for future generations, in line with undertakings given to the local authorities and Parish Councils. These have been let out to contract, with the heritage group doing the internal decor of Bodiam station. Meanwhile at Northiam a definition for the new signalbox has been agreed and work is proceeding apace to let out a tender to complete this structure ahead of the self imposed tight timescale left for the S&T works.

Hoping not to tempt fate, to date the project has run to budget and no delays on the critical path have accrued. Although we are in a good position there is no intention of slacking off. We have a long way to go and we must keep focused on the project as a whole, but the outlook is good.



DS238 at Quainton Road on hire to the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre,
18th October 1998

(Graham Hukins)



No 23, Holman F Stephens, leaves the Wet Cutting and the steepest part of the journey on 22nd August 1998
(Tom White)

S&T

The latter part of 1998 and January of 1999 have seen much hard work by S&T staff, but often with little to be seen for it by the inexperienced eye.

The workshop itself is all but finished, but awaits external body filling and painting this year; once again a plea for assistance with this work, in order that it does not detract resources from other more important work on the signalling works at Northiam. Following a break-in in early 1998, it became essential to fully alarm these premises to prevent repetition.

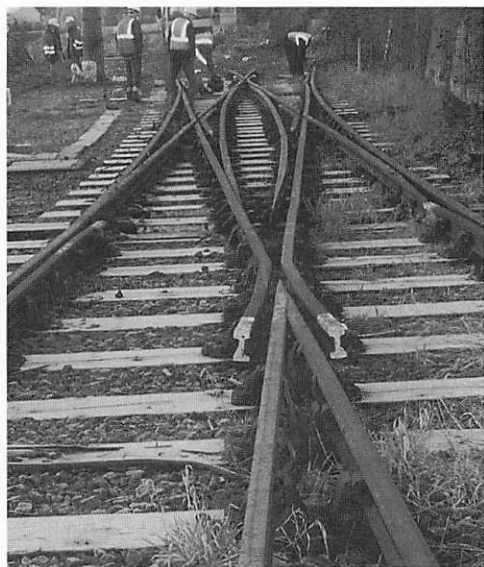
Steve Beastall constructed the final partition in the CCT van, which has allowed electrical installation to take place, followed by the fitting out of one compartment of this vehicle as a new store for the Operating Department. This enabled them to move all their stores into one dedicated facility at Tenterden, from a number of improvised arrangements. A second section of the CCT is now available to provide extra workshop capacity during the Northiam signalling project.

Although little is yet to be seen at Northiam

itself, much is taking place behind the scenes; planning of the scheme, and submission to the HSE has taken many hours, partly due to the need to rework the scheme several times due to unforeseen changes.

Detailed planning, and production of the specification for the signalbox design itself has been ably carried out by James Palk, to a very high standard.

Work is currently under way on the restoration of signal fittings, and the ground frame for Northiam crossing. One ground frame for Bodiam is complete, requiring little work following its loan to the Bluebell Railway for temporary use at Kingscote. The steel leadaway which supports the cranks and pulleys both underneath and in front of the box was built at Tenterden, and then transported to Northiam where it was slid into position using the 10t. Taylor Hubbard crane. The amount of work over the next 15 months is considerable, and offers of assistance will be welcome. There are, in fact, a number of jobs which are both suitable for, and are better done in home workshops over a period of time.



Removal of the double slip pointwork from Ashford PAD, 13th January 1999. This will be sited at Rolvenden in connection with the new running shed. (John Liddell)

If you are able to assist you should contact Nick Wellington on 01233 66 00 80 (weekday evenings).

We have been joined by Alex Cowley, who hails from Australia and is staying with relatives in the area for the coming months, also Ken Deans and Tony Cooke, both of whom are already

signalmen with the railway.

Peter Watson has been kept busy not only on the fitting out of the lounge area of S&T accommodation coach W21238, but also on the construction of shelving in the former breakdown support coach ADB975162, now in use as an S&T stores van. He has also renewed the staff crossing at Rolvenden, and fitted out a second hand shed at Rolvenden for temporary telecommunications stores accommodation at that site.

Planning and programming is also well advanced for a new telephone exchange for the Tenterden site to be introduced this Spring. This will be sited in a former storeroom in the main admin block, and will bring badly needed improvements in both flexibility and capacity. The room is currently being decorated and prepared for its new role.

At Rolvenden & Northiam, line amplifiers have been fitted to some circuits to improve speech levels on internal telephone calls between stations significantly.

Overhead line renewals are being addressed in several areas in a concerted effort as deterioration has been outstripping the pace of renewal; again assistance is sought for this interesting feature of the railway, no previous experience is necessary to assist on this work, as training will be given: contact Nick Wellington (as above).

Infrastructure

Buildings

The outside maintenance team, better known as the Tuesday gang, are struggling with depleted numbers. During much of the winter they have been down to two people, Graham Hopker and Derek Grieb. Under the circumstances they have achieved a great deal, having built a foot crossing for the Northiam Gate keepers and continued with restoration of platform seats during inclement weather.

This year the team will concentrate on Bodiam, constructing the platform fence as well as hanging gates and erecting the running-in board and lamp standards. A start has been made on assembling the platform fence but installation must await completion of the siding behind the platform. It is plain that this cannot be achieved

by two people working one day a week so if you are retired or otherwise have time to spare on Tuesdays give Graham Hopker a call on 01303-862811. You will find it rewarding, there is a definite work plan and each day something positive is achieved. Besides, every hour you work on a Bodiam related project is chargeable as a notional contribution to the overall costs.

If you really cannot turn out on Tuesdays why not support our Bodiam Working Week from 10th to 14th May? This is being organised in conjunction with the Museum Team, who have undertaken to refurbish the interior of the station as well as install the lighting and wiring. Details from Graham Hopker (see above) or Peter Davis on 01885-482404.



Jinty 47298 at rest in Rolvenden platform, December 1998

(Robert Berry)

Forestry and Conservation

January 1998 started with the group completing clearance work along Oxney straight. Tree stumps have been chemically treated to stop re-growth and it is hoped this will help manage the track side vegetation more efficiently in the future. In late February Tenterden received two visits tidying up various trees, removing brambles etc.

On April 5th nine members of the group had what is now our annual walk from Tenterden to Northiam, during which a visual inspection was carried out on most of the mature trees to ensure they were stable with no sign of decay or large dead limbs. Small saplings growing next to the track were removed.

Wittersham bank received its usual grass cutting during May and June, in order to prevent trackside fires. This was carried out by three members of the group with the remainder carrying out clearance from Cysters curve towards Rother Bridge. The group spent almost 4 months in this area.

We also assisted with the operation of the weed killing train during the early part of June. This involved a very early start to the day mainly due to the amount of work involved in setting up the

spraying equipment and tanks.

If you think you would like to spend a day or more helping to keep the vegetation under control please give Peter Thorogood a ring on 0181-859-5082. We meet on Sundays.

Museum

We regret to report the death on 2nd January of Roland White – he would have been 85 in April. Roland lived at Wye and was a regular attendant at the Museum last year. He was last on duty in December and we shall miss his cheery welcome to visitors.

The final number of visitors for the year was 7,258 of which 666 were complimentary. This brought in £6,830 in admission charges and £2,700 paid into the main shop. Outgoings for rent, insurance, electricity etc. were about £5,800.

The Museum was open on 142 days last year although the railway operated on 172 days. To cover the extra days this year we need more attendants to staff the front counter. An introductory session will be held in the Museum for new volunteers on Saturday 17th April – more details from John Miller on 01580-765350. Any commitment need be no more than one afternoon per month. Rosters are held by

Richard Wall on 01580-766997.

New acquisitions include:

- A timetable notice for K&ESR dated 21st September 1953 until further notice – probably the last timetable issued by British Railways for the line.

- A handbill issued at Orpington Station giving details of the last public passenger train run on

the K&ESR on 2nd January 1954.

- Four items of paperwork from 1903/1904 relating to the payment of a debt to H.F.Stephens in the form of bonds by the Board of the K&ESR.

- Some printing blocks made in the 1960's for publicity material issued by the old K&ESR preservation society.

People

Volunteer Liaison

The Santa Special season was well supported by volunteers with the revised "volunteer friendly" roster on the busy days being popular. Together with the "front line" people who make everything work on the day, we must not forget the "back room" people who do everything from wrapping all the presents to preparing the coaches and locomotives. Thank you to everyone who has helped – in whatever capacity in 1998. The "Santa Team" are in need of more people to wrap presents and people to co-ordinate on the day. If you think you could help, now is the time to make yourself known to us for next Christmas!

Volunteer support for the various departments in 1999 is best described as "patchy". In some there are very few volunteers but the duties are covered. In others there appears to be an army of volunteers and yet duties are often left uncovered. In order to try to understand why this is and to discover what can realistically be done to encourage more people to get involved, you will find a questionnaire enclosed. Please take some time to complete it. Also, if you have family membership please copy the form and ask your family members to complete their own. These should be returned by 22nd May 1999 as we intend to publish the results in July's Terrier.

In case anyone is in any doubt, we will be opening to Bodiam next year. Together with the extra mileage on Locomotives and Coaches, which will put additional loads on these departments, we will also need to ensure that Bodiam, Northiam and Tenterden Stations are fully manned. If you have ever fancied becoming a Station Master, Booking Clerk or Travelling Ticket Inspector, now is the time to come forwards. "Learning the ropes" this year will ensure that you can be fully involved in our

Centenary year.

Working Weeks, Special Projects and Events.

- Bodiam extension. Ongoing through 1999. Contact Graham & Karen Bridge on 01580 766771 (6-10pm).

- Sunday 2nd May, "Thomas" BBQ. From 7:30 pm at Tenterden Station.

- Saturday 24th July – 25th Anniversary Celebrations. Details to be posted around the railway nearer the time.

Operating department

In between rain showers and readymix concrete lorries we have been able to catch up with several administrative jobs including sending out availability sheets for the summer timetable, the printing and distribution of the working timetable and the continued update of the Emergency Manual. Staff have also assisted the Permanent Way and Civil Engineering Departments with the running of their engineering trains.

New operating Instructions have been produced for locomotives and Rolvenden Infrastructure in conjunction with the Loco Dept Manager and the Rule book is currently being updated with new instructions for operating staff.

Provisional timetable meetings have been held to draw up timetables for opening to Bodiam and we will soon be involved in installing the signage, whistle boards required on the extension as well as modifying the Rule book and other publications for 2000.

Training of Operating staff continues apace with Signalman's and Guard's courses starting in the spring and MIC classes for footplate staff running monthly. During the February half term week trainee drivers are being given special tuition and instruction. The final touches have

been finalised to the Basic Railway safety scheme ready for introduction in April.

We are currently looking for a volunteer to decorate the mess room at Rolvenden and the class room at Tenterden both of which have suffered a little since they were built.

If anyone is changing their kitchen please let us have the old kitchen units if they are serviceable. The ones in the mess room at Rolvenden were second hand when the building was erected 10 years ago and are now a bit tatty.

Carriage and Wagon

We welcome Ian Anderson to the permanent staff in Carriage and Wagon. Ian comes from the Wirral and is a trained coachbuilder. He has been a volunteer for many years on the Severn Valley Railway and is already putting his skills to good use. Meg Gooch, who hails all the way from Rolvenden, has been signwriting for the Railway for a number of years. The expansion in our requirements has allowed us the opportunity to bring her "fully into the fold".

Those who have visited the Railway recently will have noted the upturn in the quality of the

paintwork on our rolling stock. Very well done Meg, Alan Brice and all in C&W.

Wealden Belle

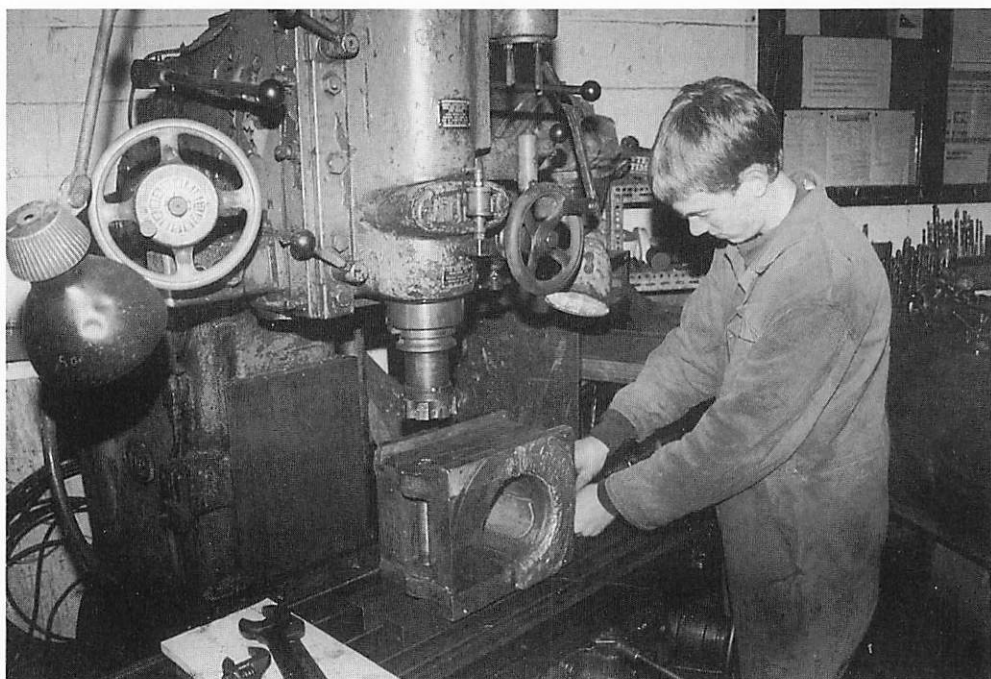
Kate Debling has been promoted to Executive in this part of the commercial division with day to day responsibility for Wealden Belle and Rother Valley Limited operations. The large number of enquiries already coming into the office for both these services and special charters are indicative of the value that our customers attribute to them.

Apprentices

Ben Swan and John Waddington, our Rolvenden Apprentices, are well into their second year and have proved to be such an asset that we are likely to enroll a further pair later this year. This would involve an initial year at college and the new "boys" would not begin full time at Rolvenden until the year 2000.

The Millennium Bug

Whilst our locomotives and signalling will not be affected, our office computers might be. Sandra Marsh has been given responsibility for making sure that our offices continue to operate after 1st January 2000.



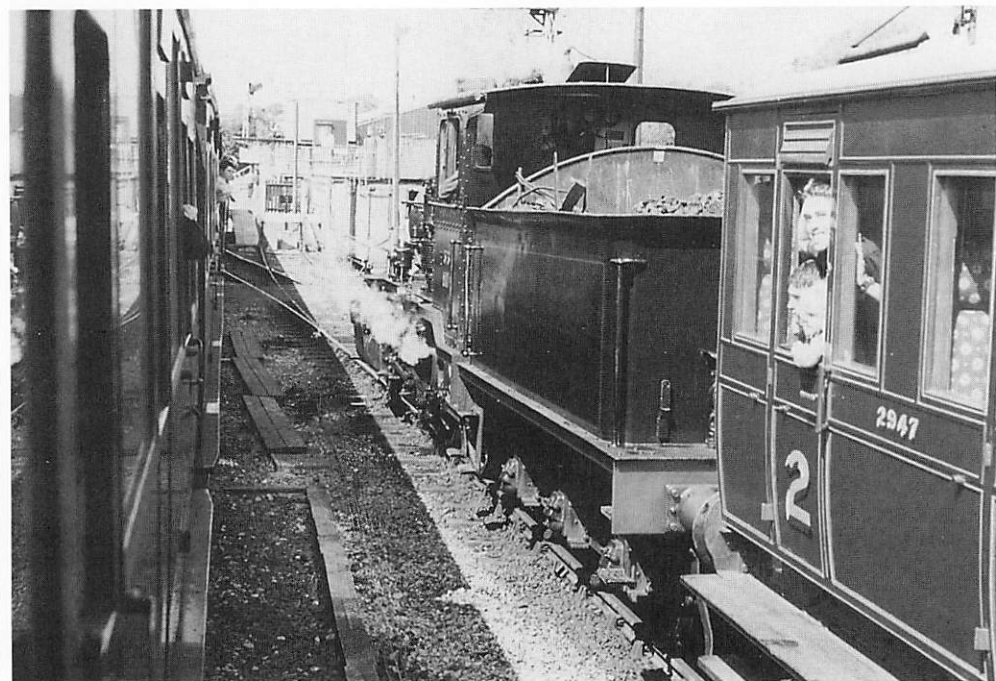
*Apprentice, John Waddington works the milling machine at Rolvenden
12th January 1999*

(John Liddell)



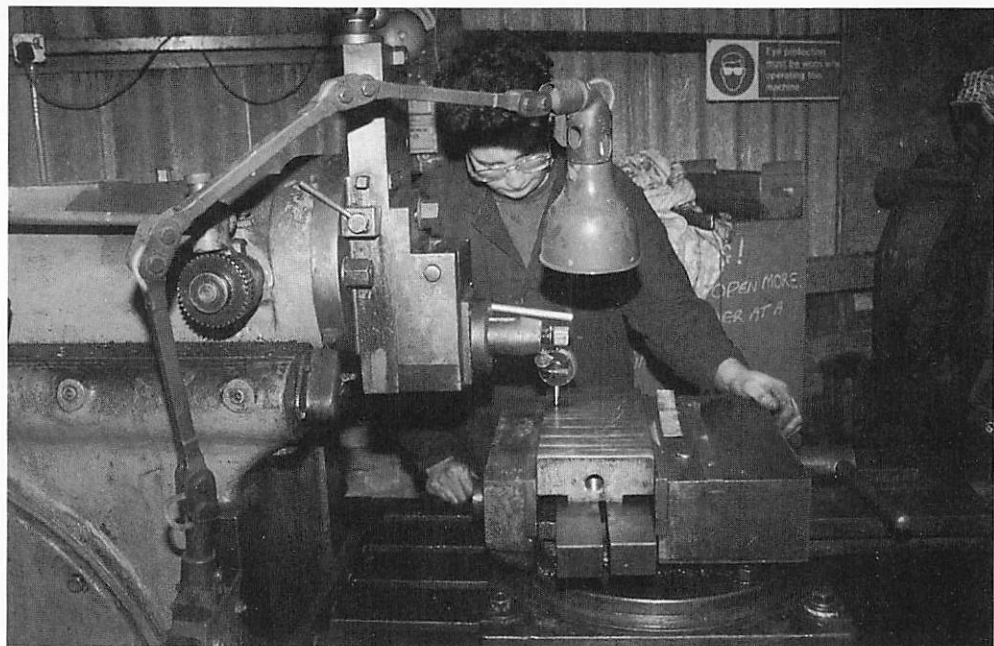
No 65 crosses Northiam level crossing in August 1998

(Robin Doust)



As No 19 awaits to leave Rolvenden loop, passengers look out from the Ashford coach at the other service, August 1998

(Robin Doust)



Apprentice, Ben Swan operating the shaping machine at Rolvenden 12th January 1999 (John Liddell)



*Meg Gooch applies the finishing touches to the Pullman livery on Car No 69
1st February 1999*

(John Liddell)

Other Groups

Our French Connection – News from the CFBS *by Philip Pacey*

Despite or because of poor weather, the number of visitors to the CFBS has again broken previous records; 77,257 passengers had been recorded at 17th October, when the season had ended, and then the 'Père Noël' train which ran on the 12th and 13th December brought the final total to 77,808. Trains have been full to capacity; longer trains are not possible because the quay at St Valery will only accommodate 7 or 8 carriages.

The Haine St Pierre 2-6-0T returned to service in mid-August after a problem of hot axle boxes had been sorted out. Buffaud Robatel 0-6-2T 'Beton-Bazoches' was withdrawn from service at the end of its day's work on 27th September for a major overhaul and boiler replacement. Dismantling the loco commenced the very next morning! It is hoped that it will return to service in July 1999.

The 'fourgon à vigie' (a brakevan with an external, elevated brakeman's cabin) which Guy Lenne has been carefully restoring has finally been completed and entered service on 29th August; by way of a launching ceremony, a suitable bottle was broken over its buffer at Lanchères on Sunday 8th November. The 'fourgon' which is used as a ticket office on the quay at St Valery (and which is apparently known as 'Léon') received attention in the depot during the winter, as did diesel locos 351, 352, and BA12. The chassis of coach 10303 was sent to Mouregons Industries to be examined with a view to installation of automatic brakes.

Two changes to the skyline at St Valery Canal began to take effect in late August. The former chicory factory, which has for long been disused and decaying, in which the rails of a 600mm wagonway survived, was judged to be unsafe and a demolition team moved in. Meanwhile, very close to it, the CFBS began erecting a large 'hangar' covering three tracks to provide shelter for material awaiting restoration. (I can't think of the correct English terminology for such a structure: it's simply a long metal shed with a curved profile). This is now finished, and it is already full: it contains railcars M31, M41, M42, and X157, diesel locos 301 and 824, the coaches from Madagascar, a crane wagon, and various trucks.

As soon as the season finished, work commenced on lifting the last remaining sections of the Cayeux line which have not received attention in recent years, between Lanchères and Hurt, and Hurt and Cayeux, comprising a total of 1.8km. Tracklaying was scheduled to take place in February and March. The mixed gauge curve on the approach to St Valery Ville was also relaid during the winter, and it was expected that some work would also take place on a section of the Crotoy line.

The engine shed at Le Crotoy was scheduled to be rebuilt between the end of the winter and June. The appearance of the shed will not be altered, but an addition at the back will provide a rest room and facilities for engine crews. Some low iron gates, formerly from a level crossing, which I helped to clean up and paint in July, are to be installed at the station at Le Crotoy.

A British telecommunications company has laid a fibre-optic cable between London and Paris. It will emerge from the Channel near Cayeux and accompany the railway to St Valery, before following the canal to Péronne. Although of no immediate benefit to the CFBS, the company was persuaded to lay the cable in such a way as to facilitate telecommunications links between CFBS stations at some future date.

During the busiest period of the 1999 season, that is, between 14th July and 19th August, the CFBS will run a steam-hauled morning train on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays as well as on Saturdays and Sundays. As on the weekends, this train will leave St Valery at 10.45. 1999 will see modest fare increases, e.g. the return fare between St Valery and Le Crotoy will rise from 56 to 58 francs.

1999 will see the launch of a programme of urban improvement at Cayeux, beginning with the area in front of the station. I gather that work will officially begin, or some sort of opening ceremony will take place, during the steam festival in the year 2000, and that Cayeux's industrial past will be commemorated in some way.

A Working Weekend on the CFBS



*A visit to France
in February 1999
photographed and
described by
John Liddell*

Sanding wagons at St Valery



KESR Chairman, Robin Dyce (left) and members connecting up fish plates



K&ESR and CFBS members outside the shed at St Valéry, the author is on the extreme right



Derelict locomotives used by the Germans in the last war. Note "vandalised" boilers

A Working Weekend on the CFBS

by John Liddell

On Friday 5th February 1999, seven members of the Permanent Way department crossed to France, via the Tunnel, to visit our "twinning friends", on Le Chemin de Fer de la Baie de Somme, for an exchange working weekend. Their Members had previously visited us in November 1998 and had worked in the Locomotive and Carriage and Wagon departments.

The party stayed at the Auberge du Chateau de Nolette, just outside Noyelles sur Mer. (Not as grand as it sounds, but perfectly adequate, if you are ever seeking accommodation in the area.) Saturday was a bright and sunny day, but with a strong wind from the north. On our way to work, we were taken to inspect some derelict engines, used by the Germans in the last war, to build up their defences. When they had finished using them they burnt a large hole in each boiler, to ensure no-one else used them. Our friends advised us that they are considering making one good engine out of those that remain, but detailed inspections have yet to be made.

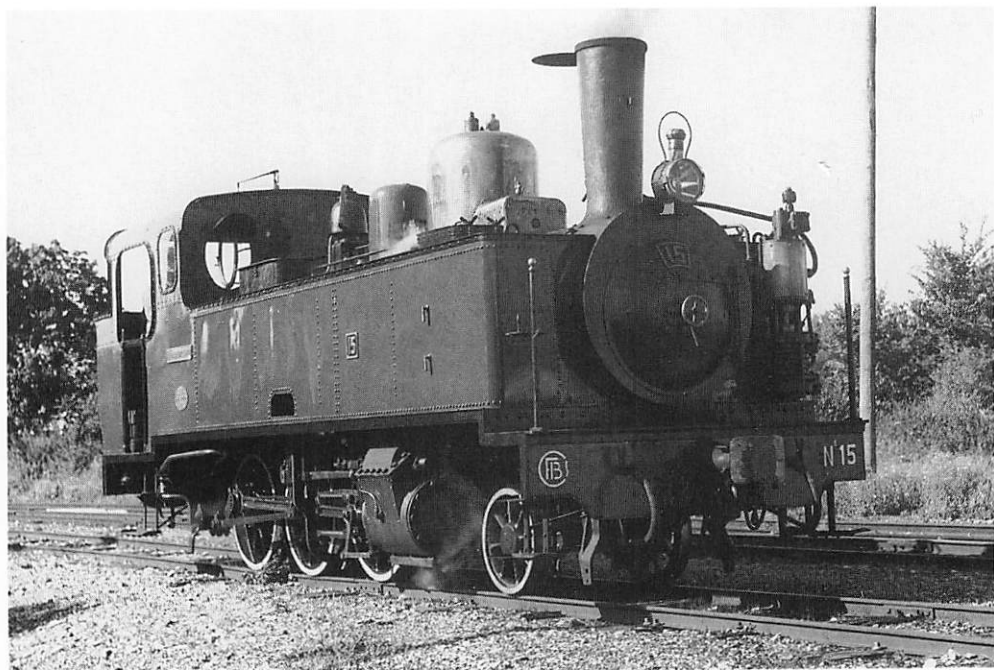
The day's work involved helping their members to re-lay rail onto new wooden sleepers, while others cleaned fishplates and rail ends of rust, to which

graphited grease was applied, before they were bolted up. For those who have been fortunate enough to visit this wonderful railway, will already be aware of the hospitality that is always extended to us, and this visit was to prove no exception. Lunch had been arranged at a café adjacent to where we were working.

Given only an hour to wash and change, a train had been arranged to take us to dinner. Leaving St Valery, via Noyelles, we were taken towards La Crottoy, and on the way the train suddenly stopped out in the country. We were then escorted to a restaurant to dine with their volunteers. Here also, the hospitality continued unabated and after an excellent meal short speeches were given by Robin Dyce and their president, Jean Marc Page. In both cases these were translated by Norman Brice.

Sunday was again bright but cold, and prior to "signing on", a visit to the local supermarket was made to obtain our duty frees and the odd gift. The day's task was fortunately in C&W/loco shed, since by now the wind was really blowing off the sea.

All in all a weekend of pleasant memories, in that we had helped our French friends with their railway.



Recently restored CFBS locomotive No 15 photographed at Noyelles on 7th August 1998 (Peter Groom)

Book Reviews

abc of British Railways locomotives combined volume, Winter 1961/62 edition. Published by Ian Allan, price £8.99. Hardback 264 pages of text and numerous photographs. ISBN 0711025916.

Ian Allan's legendary pocket books from the steam era have long been out of print and many fetch high prices on the second hand market. This reprint, which lists all steam, diesel and electric locomotives and multiple units in service at that time will make readily available the 'Bible' to a whole new generation of enthusiasts and provide a nostalgic reminder to all trainspotters who were brought up in the immediate post war period. The book is divided firstly according to the British Railways regions and within these there is for each class of locomotive a brief history, including introduction date, manufacturer and technical data. The locomotive numbers are then listed out under each class so that in locospotting days they could be 'ticked off' as having been seen. There is even a section showing the names and numbers of all the Pullman cars in use on the system. It was quite a messy job updating a new abc from an old one with pen and ruler – perhaps some enthusiasts even follow diesels in the same way today. However, for the older generation who still have their coveted abc's emblazoned with ink, this reprint will represent an opportunity to buy and keep a good clean copy.

Lost Lines – London by Nigel Welbourn published by Ian Allan, price £12.99. Soft covers, 128 pages of photographs and text. ISBN 0711026238.

It is rare these days to find a railway book that adds much to what has been written on the chosen subject before, but this book is an exception. It is the seventh in Nigel Welbourn's lost lines series and although the title is something of a misnomer – the coverage extends to the very extremities of the underground system, Ongar, Watford and Uxbridge, it provides a unique guide to London's relatively short closed lines and numerous disused facilities. The author states that well over 100 stations have been closed in the London area and he has visited many of the sites, researched their history and noted his findings, in graphic detail. The photographs, many of which have been taken by the author are well chosen and add considerably to the enjoyment of the book.

The book will appeal both to railway enthusiasts and to a wider audience of industrial archaeologists who may be tempted to explore the numerous sites covered.

The Southern Railway's Withered arm. A view from the past by Stephen Austin, published by Ian Allan price £15.99. Hardback 96 pages of text, liberally illustrated with photographs price £15.99 ISBN 071102622X.

The railways west of Exeter, which became part of the Southern Railway, suffered grievously as a result of the Beeching closures, hence the title of the book (which has been used before) and many of the West Country resort towns such as Ilfracombe, Bude and Padstow lost their railway connections forever. Mr Austin's book re-visits a well hackneyed subject, presumably to make use of the extensive Ian Allan photographic archive. In this respect it is successful, for many of the pictures have not been published before and some are very interesting, dating as they do from the last century when the lines were under construction. Two of H.F.Stephens lines are covered- The North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light from Halwill to Torrington and the line from Bere Alston to Callington, part of which is still in use today. Unfortunately, every effort has been made to cram in as many pictures as possible so that detail and atmosphere is lost with small format reproductions. This will be particularly irritating to model makers who, as the publishers acknowledge, provide a ready market for this type of book.

Southern Electrics: A view from the past by Graham Waterer published by Ian Allan price £15.99. 96 pages of photographs and text. ISBN 0711026211.

This book is a historical pictorial compilation of the Southern electric system. Commencing with the electrification of the LB & SCR's line from Victoria to London Bridge in 1909, continuing through the Southern Railway years and on to 1962 when the second part of the Kent Coast electrification was completed. This is a comprehensive study, including a history of the rolling stock in use throughout the period, route indicators and other specialist information. The photographs are all of very acceptable quality, including some interesting interior shots of electric units. Mr Waterer is an acknowledged expert on the subject and although the appeal of the book will inevitably be limited, it is surely a must for the serious student of the subject.

P.D.S.

Tickets Please!

1998 was a satisfactory year at a time when many tourist attractions have experienced difficulties. Ray Collins provides the facts with further analysis by Duncan Buchanan.

1998 will be seen as a year when passenger numbers were largely static. Some modest improvements were almost wiped out by falls elsewhere. However we were able to trim the train service by over 100 trains with no apparent effect on passenger numbers. It is also noteworthy to point out that many other attractions had problems retaining visitor levels.

The February half term service proved very popular for a modest outlay in train service. 2361 passengers travelled and the service continues for 1999 being enhanced at weekends by Vintage Light Railway events.

Easter moved back into April in 1998 and the passengers carried shows this clearly. Here

1997					1998				
	Op. Days	Trains	Paying Passengers	Avg. per Train		Op. days	Trains	Paying Passengers	Avg. per train
Jan/Feb						13	50	2924	58
March/April	25	212	9290	44		21	136	7255	53
May	15	133	10163	77		16	128	10139	79
June	21	161	6607	41		21	147	6279	43
July	31	209	9321	45		31	202	9466	47
August	31	245	14320	58		31	211	14920	71
September	23	151	8292	55		24	145	8350	58
October	13	88	3545	40		14	72	3461	48
Nov/Dec	15	100	11305	113		15	85	10451	123
	174	1299	72843	56		186	1176	73245	62
Wealden Pullman and Charters			2906					3212	
Privileges			4026					3904	
			79775					80361	
<i>Bookings from:</i>									
Tenterden			61123					61519	
Northiam			10963					11092	
On train			757					634	
			72843					73245	
<i>Schedule analysis</i>									%±
Wealden Pullman and Charters			2906					3212	+10.5
'Thomas'			8897					8263	-7.1
Santas			10268					9700	-5.5
Scheduled services Jan/Feb			0					3174	-
Scheduled services			57704					56012	-2.9
			79775					80361	+0.7

especially the train service was altered radically for the better.

The May figures are skewed by the effect of Thomas. Without Thomas in 1997 there were 4809 passengers on 96 trains and in 1998, 5272 on 91 trains. A healthy rise from 50 to 58 passengers per train.

June, July and August are the main months for 'ordinary' passengers and in 1998 there was a 1.4% rise in passengers. Despite this, and a reduction in trains during June, the loadings continue to disappoint in June and July. There is no single reason for the problem but rather a combination of factors which include persisting with a two train service when traffic does not require it, a transport weekend that failed to attract (eliminated in 1999) and too many trains on Sundays.

If Thomas is removed from the September numbers again we see low loadings per train, down from 45 to 42. Saturdays appear to be the primary problem here.

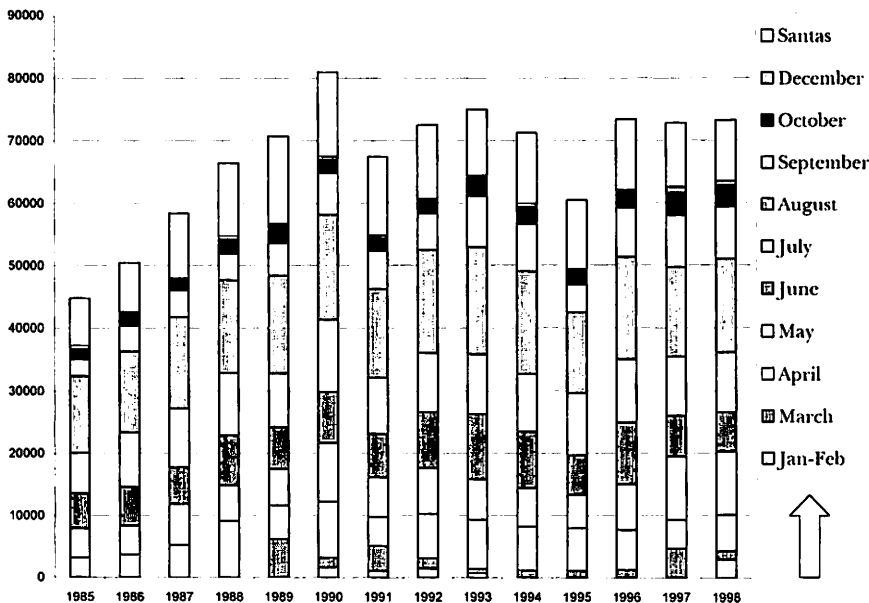
October is a curious month. We used to carry on

average 2500 passengers. In 1997 we added trains to cover the half term holiday and this boosted numbers to the current 3500. This now masks the low loadings during the rest of the month. During 1999 we seem to be running more trains than ever, with little justification.

Santa Specials show a continuing decline in total numbers with another 5.5% drop. From a high of 14,000 passengers in 1989 to 9700 in 1998 Santa Specials are not a volume market any longer. We have managed to raise the ticket prices and, though in recent years income is better, even after adjustment for inflation, we still cannot beat the 1989/90 revenue, when capacity was far higher.

For the first time ever we review the carryings over a long period – 13 years. These show some interesting trends. Firstly the opening to Northiam represents the high point for passenger numbers, in absolute terms. Ignoring the novelty element of extending the line suggests a real peak in 1993. The passengers per train numbers also peaked in 1990 but since then have been consistently lower than prior to opening to Northiam. However it is the fares revenue that

Passengers carried



actually matters most. When fare per passenger is looked at, adjusted for inflation, one can see a significant rise over many years. This suggests we are more than maintaining our interest as a

quality tourist attraction. Nevertheless we could undoubtedly carry more passengers with fewer trains and thus further improve our cost effectiveness.

PASSENGERS, TRAINS & FARES

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
Passengers	59302	67289	69958	81934	68469	74588	76195	72693	61407	73365	72843	73245
Trains	633	767	811	911	1023	1093	1174	1061	986	1019	1299	1176
Pass/train	94	88	86	90	67	68	65	69	62	72	56	62
Fares/pass	1.91	1.97	2.10	2.69	3.04	2.61	2.79	2.78	3.41	3.19	3.34	??

THE K&ESR 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

October 98

Bodiam Station

1st	Vince Williams	(609)	£60.00
2nd	Graham Hukins	(315)	£40.00
3rd	H G Todd	(510)	£30.00
4th	Peter Carey	(156)	£25.00
5th	E L Stockdale	(138)	£20.00
6th	F E J Osborn	(610)	£15.00
7th	G Champion	(322)	£10.00
8th	Norman Brice	(154)	£5.00

December 98

Wealden Belle

1st	Mrs L M Garner	(495)	£200.00
2nd	P S Jarvis	(450)	£150.00
3rd	Mr R T Price	(546)	£100.00
4th	D Scott	(362)	£90.00
5th	Wilf Watters	(603)	£80.00
6th	Mrs S F Simmons	(609)	£70.00
7th	Mrs B M King	(470)	£55.00
8th	P S Jarvis	(161)	£45.00
9th	P S Jarvis	(232)	£35.00
10th	Lucien Perring	(613)	£25.00
11th	C A White	(577)	£20.00
12th	T P Howell	(530)	£15.00
13th	D W Edwards	(174)	£10.00
14th	Mrs G M Flisher	(614)	£5.00

November 98

Rolvenden

1st	Robin Dyce	(227)	£60.00
2nd	H G Todd	(510)	£40.00
3rd	Daniel Chandler	(275)	£30.00
4th	Mrs S F Simmons	(609)	£25.00
5th	M B Knott	(365)	£20.00
6th	G Hopker	(474)	£15.00
7th	Mrs M C Read	(266)	£10.00
8th	P R Jones	(452)	£5.00

January 99

Northiam

1st	Mrs V J Partner	(279)	£60.00
2nd	R G Sparrow	(616)	£40.00
3rd	Norman Brice	(155)	£30.00
4th	Dick Dickson	(102)	£25.00
5th	L F Bailey	(419)	£20.00
6th	J Green	(448)	£15.00
7th	A Lillywhite	(401)	£10.00
8th	C M Dawson	(582)	£5.00

HAVE YOU JOINED THE 300 CLUB YET?

To join, phone Brian Heyes on 01622 744509 or Chris Garman on 01580 880378 for an application form. Registered with Ashford Borough Council, under Section 5, Schedule 1 of the Lotteries & Amusements Act, 1976

Thameside Retrospective

Nick Pallant recalls a one-time influential Area Group and assesses its role in the history of the preserved K&ESR – part 2

At the Group meeting on 12 October 1981 it had been decided to assist the Permanent Way with the extension to Hexden Bridge.

Thameside Group would work as a self-contained unit under Kevin Jarvis who was to liaise with Peter Davis (then Permanent Way Manager). Work commenced on 31 October and was to continue every other Sunday. By December, approximately a quarter mile of track had been relaid using wooden sleepers and standard BR track fittings. By March 1982 half a mile had been completed and 40 ex-WD 75 lb. track panels were removed to the site of the carriage shed and associated sidings. Most remain in use at Tenterden yard to this day. Work was delayed by weather conditions in December and January and the breakdown of the crane but re-started in mid January using sleepers and rails recovered from Batchelors private sidings at Ashford.

All this had been achieved by a working group averaging seven people, a most creditable achievement considering the other K&ESR commitments of most Thameside members. But even Thameside was not immune from

the staff resources problems which have ever plagued steam railways. Only a handful of new faces had been seen and it was suggested that some armchair members ought to have been able to assist. Work on the six wheeler was also still proceeding but the only people working on this project were Bob Gilbert and David Stratton (whose eminent name we have to record for the first time in this account).

Despite these difficulties, in January Thameside had organised a meeting which would be handled at Board level today. This was with the local community at Northiam Village Hall. Messrs. Sime, Stutchbury and Jarvis, along with company Chairman Mark Yonge and John Miller from the Board, gave an illustrated talk about the Railway to around 60 local people. A Northiam member covered the cost. Such an event appears to have been wise and timely. The prospect of services to Northiam must then have seemed remote and to the local people the Railway something of an unknown quantity. Back on its own patch, the Thameside Group had, during the early part of the year, held a Dinner and Dance at the Falconwood Social Club.

During the spring of 1982 the Group started re-sleeping the Northiam to Bodiam section from the Bodiam end. Temporary level crossing gates were erected and later replaced by permanent ones from Belvedere. Steam at Bodiam was again planned for August, subject to Railway Inspectorate approval, but the worrying undertone about volunteer numbers reappeared. It was in fact stated that "New faces always welcome as Group's activities are carried out by small number of very dedicated enthusiasts". Were Thameside running out of steam or trying to do too much? Were they 'hoist with their own petard' and appearing not to need help? Worst of all, did they appear to be a clique?

In the event, the August Steam at Bodiam failed to materialise due to the state of the track. - insufficient sleepers had been replaced



Charlie Masterson on the 10 ton Grafton crane,
11th January 1987 (Brian Stephenson)



David Stratton in Carriage and Wagon uniform, 1992

(David Dine)

on the Bodiam to Dixter Halt section to allow trains to run. Thameside Group had other important commitments and were not able to complete the work. They tried again and aimed for an event in May 1983. This time they intended to use Charwelton as well as Marcia. Charwelton never made it – she was damaged during the derailment at Pope's Cottage a few weeks earlier. But, at the Northiam end of the line 300 sleepers were replaced and Marcia and the District coach again provided Steam at Bodiam on 29 - 30 May 1983 which raised about £800. Around the station, timbers were replaced in points, sleepers renewed in sidings and catch points reconnected. When the last of the trackwork was virtually complete a symbolic spike was driven in by George Wright. Following a visit by Major King, from the Railway Inspectorate, the railbus service was operated on all Sundays in July and August, services being hourly from 13.30 to 16.30. Unfortunately this could not be matched with an August Steam at Bodiam – May proved to be the last of these popular occasions..

The event planned for August had to be cancelled due to 'the lack of a suitable steam locomotive' – at least that was the official reason given. The abandonment of Steam at Bodiam has remained the subject of uncertainties (controversy would be too strong

a word) to the present day. Alternative explanations given were concerns about what was, with respect to the professionalism of those involved, a somewhat improvised operation. There is also a suggestion that the popular nature of the events tended to draw traffic from the main service at Tenterden with the consequent dangers of dividing one's forces.

By 1983, Sue Jarvis was the Group's Secretary whilst George Wright was using his considerable energies as prime mover in the preservation of steam crane DS451. This project was unrelated to the Thameside Group but illustrates well the range of important activities with which its members became involved. Similarly, George Wright and Mark Stutchbury came fourth in the Footplatemen of the Year Competition held at Bulmers Steam Centre, Hereford. Despite all this activity there was concern about low numbers attending the meeting at the Corner Pin. By contrast, a second Valentine Dinner and Dance held at Falconwood had been a sell out – perhaps Thameside was simply outgrowing "gricer" gatherings in pubs.

The company Annual General Meeting, held on 1 October 1983, was significant of the growing influence of the Thameside Group. Mark Yonge announced his retirement as Company Chairman and no less a person than

George Wright took over as Acting Chairman until a permanent appointment could be made. (The top job eventually went to John Miller.) Particularly significant for the future of the Railway was the election of David Stratton to the Board – a step he took at the urging of working volunteers.

An interesting aspect of the 1983 AGM was the outgoing Chairman's report. He noted there was "friction in some departments" that "enthusiasts tend to be intolerant of the views of others which may deter potential volunteers from active participation" and that there was "a closed shop mentality in some departments". Examples of these things can be found on most steam railways at some time and the remarks may or may not have been aimed at Thameside. Weighing up the evidence one concludes the Group was too pro-active and welcoming to fit this description. The contrary approach was the secret of its success. But in confronting intolerance and the closed shop Thameside doubtless trod on a few toes. There is a thin line between friction and controversy. The latter can, within reasonable limits, be healthy in a lively, expanding organisation.

The Tenterden Terrier for Spring 1984 announced that the Group had adopted a half

mile section of the operating line and undertaken to resleeper and maintain it. Such a commitment would be enough for most Area Groups, but in addition to everything else it was doing, Thameside still managed to organise a Dinner and Dance at the Falconwood Social Club on 31 March. On the committee front, Charlie Masterson retired as Group Chairman at the end of 1983 – so he could concentrate on becoming a driver – and was replaced by Kevin Jarvis. 1984 also saw Thameside Group pledge £500 towards restoration of engine No. 3 and £517 towards repair of Bodiam level crossing. To help raise money a sponsored pump trolley marathon was held at Bodiam in May and members of the North Norfolk Railway were invited to take part.

Numbers taking part in the Thameside Group must still have been causing some concern as 1984 was the year of a recruitment drive in the South London area. As I write, I have in front of me my copy of the resulting letter to non-participating members. For the era immediately before the spread of advanced word processors it was quite cleverly produced. One had to look twice to spot that it was a circular and not an individual letter. Personal impressions are, as ever, subjective but the tone seemed slightly demanding, and



(l-r) Allan Sinclair, John Pritchard, Bob Gilbert, work on the GER 6-wheeled brake at Tenterden, 3rd March 1985 (Clive Grewcock)



*Balmy days of Summer as 'Marcia' propels the District coach and LNER brakevan towards Dexter,
25th May 1981*

(Mike Esau)

still does. I didn't take up the offer. It was mainly domestic reasons which prevented me being a working member and if I could have been at the K&ESR I would have been. With Thameside's perceived (via the Terrier) reputation it seemed the last thing they would have wanted was another inactive "gricer"!

The venue of the six-weekly Group meetings had by this time changed to the Albany Park public house adjacent to the station of the same name. To continue detailing Thameside activities would become space consuming and probably tedious. Various types of fund raising and social events continued for the remainder of the 1980's together with regular work on the Railway. Indeed it becomes increasingly difficult to disentangle Thameside efforts from the overall volunteer scene. It seems preferable to focus instead on major projects and the overall trend of Thameside Group influence.

1984 saw the appointment of David Stratton as company Vice-Chairman. The shape of the K&ESR management in the late 1980's was beginning to emerge. David was amongst the volunteers who took part in a notable Thameside exercise over the weekend of 17 - 18 November - the recovery of 20 lengths of Bullhead rail from the disused Gravesend West branch at Southfleet. 14 people spent the Saturday clearing undergrowth, their numbers being swelled to 17 on Sunday including some Maidstone Group members. The lengths of rail weighed about 15 tons and these were

trolleyed 300 yards and then carried a further 50 yards to an articulated lorry. This event was, of course, the precursor to the much bigger operation several years later when much of the remainder of the branch was lifted and taken to the K&ESR for reuse between Wittersham Road and Northiam. The Railway Tavern at Northiam was, incidentally, Thameside Groups 'Away Base' and the pub (now the Rother Valley Inn) had also raised £75 for the K&ESR.

Over the next couple of years Thameside Group put much work into the Rolvenden track layout alterations and also became involved with the repainting of the Rother bridge with several coats of black bitumen. The reconditioning of this structure was crucial to the eventual Northiam extension and considerably less radical than some diagnoses of the ills of the bridge had suggested!

The winter of 1985 was perhaps the point at which Thameside influence reached its peak. It was then that David Stratton became Chairman and he and George Wright were joined on the Board by Andy Webb. Any appraisal of the Railway's recent history would surely conclude this to have marked the beginning of one of the K&ESR's dynamic periods. *The Tenterden Terrier* for the Spring 1986 recorded Thameside involvement with another track recovery project, this time at Paddock Wood and there was an echo of past glories at Bodiam when an Open Weekend was

held on the Sunday and Monday of the late May Bank Holiday. This was repeated on August Bank Holiday. There was no way that a train service could now be run, not least because the track was missing over much of the line between Hexden Bridge and Bodiam.

A further track recovery scheme was undertaken between March and April 1986 at the home of Shredded Wheat, Nabisco's factory at Welwyn, Hertfordshire. Organisation was in the capable hands of George Wright. The project involved removing redundant sidings and pointwork, disposing of unwanted items and transporting the rails back to Kent. A full account of this was published in *The Tenterden Terrier* No. 41 and only brief details are given here. Welwyn may not be far from Tenterden as the crow flies but it is, of course, on the far side of London and the logistics were complex. Various items of equipment, including a crane and fork lift truck had to be moved from Kent to the site and remain there for the duration. Remarkably George Wright managed to recruit volunteers from local members and, with some assistance from members nearer home, the recovered track components reached Wittersham Road on Dave Brailsford's articulated lorry.

Turning briefly to other activities, the part-restored GER coach had been at Tenterden since 1985. The small group who continued to restore the coach were joined by further volunteers from the Croydon area. Perhaps as a sign of the times the K&ESR organised a Ladies Day in 1986, and it comes as no surprise that on that occasion several Thameside women took a prominent part in operating the Railway. It seems quite appropriate in this context to mention that around this time there were a number of engagements and marriages between group members.

Thus the Thameside Group continued until around the end of the 1980's. Perhaps its greatest blow came on 22 July 1987 when, after a short illness, George Wright died at the age of 47. The loss of such a man to the Kent & East Sussex Railway was immense but his legacy and his legend live on. There have been times in recent years when we would have welcomed his ability, drive and commitment. It was planned to name crane No. DS451 after him but it never happened.

The Group seems to have faded out, less through lack of interest than because a number of members moved away - many to the vicinity of Tenterden. The Group was in effect absorbed into the main effort. Many of them had anyway developed from being "gricers" meeting in a pub into railwaymen (either British Rail or K&ESR). The drive of George Wright was missed as it was throughout the Railway. The effects of their efforts continued and continue yet. Charlie Masterson and, once again, Tim Stanger were TRC Board members in early 1990's and former Thameside figures are to be found throughout the organisation. On one level of accomplishment, it was the completion of the GER coach as a brake vehicle in 1991 which enabled the formation of a viable Victorian Train. On another, it was the Board with David Stratton as Chairman and Andy Webb as, in effect, Assistant Company Secretary which took the Railway back to Northiam. Area Groups exist to support the K&ESR and Thameside Area Group did that and more besides - it moved the Railway on towards its ultimate goals. *(concluded)*

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This New and Interesting Railway

Tom Burnham marks the Centenary of the formation of the South Eastern & Chatham Railway with a review of their Guide of 1909.

A recent purchase of a copy of the seventh edition of "The Official Guide to the South Eastern & Chatham railway", published by Cassell & Co. in 1909, casts an interesting light on a period of great change, not only for the railway but also for the territory it served.

The Managing Committee had for ten years been making strenuous efforts to put behind it the reputation which the South Eastern and London Chatham & Dover Railways had acquired amongst their long-suffering passengers in the latter part of the 19th century, providing new locomotives and carriages, new connections to enable the two railways to be worked as one system, and even new lines such as that from Crowhurst Junction to Bexhill, forming the "short express route between London and Bexhill-on-Sea".

Great emphasis was given to the cross-country route via Reading, on which there was a daily train each way between Dover and Birkenhead, making connections at Oxford or Banbury with Great Central trains to the Midlands and the North. It is also interesting to note that in addition to descriptions of the London suburbs, the country towns and the coastal resorts of Kent and East Sussex served by the S.E. & C.R., the guide also extends to the continent, via Flushing, Ostend, Calais and Boulogne, and indeed on to Asia as "at Moscow on Saturdays we may join the Trans-Siberian Express, composed of first and second class sleeping cars, comprising bathing accommodation and a library ... The entire journey from London to Dalny, 7,253 miles, affords the longest continuous railway run which can be taken in either the Old World or in the New."

However, in the words of the Guide, "the New World of the West, as well as the ancient lands of the east, are equally approachable by means of the South Eastern & Chatham services", as the Red Star Line was using the improved Dover Harbour as the port of call

for its Transatlantic service to New York. The Guide therefore devotes a few pages to that city, where the S.E. & C.R. had recently established an enquiry office at 407 and 409 Broadway.

Readers of *The Tenterden Terrier* will no doubt prefer to follow the route of the Vestibule-Car express on the direct main line to Hastings, where we come to "ROBERTSBRIDGE JUNCTION (for Bodiam, Northiam, Tenterden, Biddenden and Headcorn), 50 miles from Charing Cross."

"The little village of Robertsbridge, which lies to the left of the main line to Hastings and on the banks of the Rother, was in bygone days chiefly known for its pleasantly situated Cistercian Abbey, a foundation of the twelfth century, of which naught remains save a few fragmentary ruins. But it has recently become a station of some importance, by reason of its connection with trains of the "Kent and East Sussex Light Railway" which runs hence through a picturesque countryside to the small market town of Tenterden. Certain stations on the line are conveniently situated for the fishing reaches of the Rother.

"The Company's trains, comprising first and third class carriages, usually depart immediately after the arrival of the London express and travel in a north-easterly direction through the Rother Valley to BODIAM, a station but five minutes distant from the moated remains of Bodiam Castle, an imposing baronial stronghold erected in 1386 by Sir Edward Dalyngrudge, a member of the family who immediately succeeded the Bodiams as the manorial lords. The ruins, which are approached by a noble gateway with a portcullis, are open to visitors on any weekday throughout the year. Not far distant is the parish church, dedicated to St. Giles. At the same station passengers alight for the neighbouring villages of Ewhurst and Staplecross.

"Some twelve minutes later the train pauses at

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FOR THE



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RAILWAY

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LONDON, CROYDON, READING,
TUNBRIDGE WELLS, HASTINGS,
AND BEXHILL,

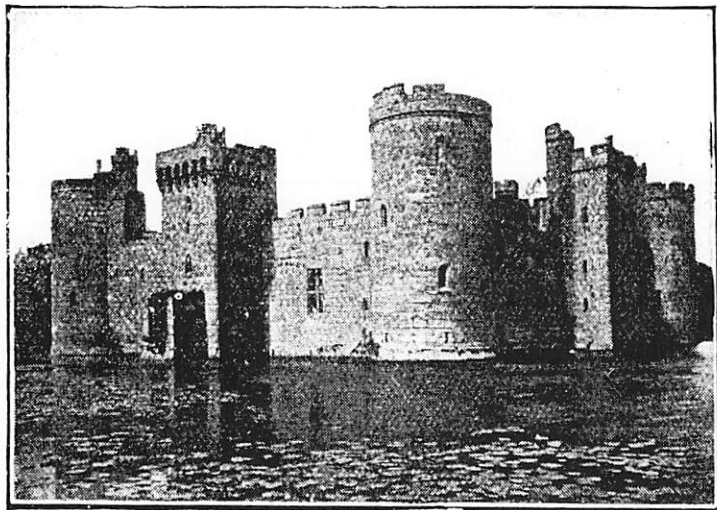
BY MEANS OF THE FREQUENT

SOUTH EASTERN AND CHATHAM EXPRESSES,

WHICH RUN TO AND FROM

ROBERTSBRIDGE JUNCTION.

THIS new and interesting railway, which traverses the picturesque valley of the Rother, and extends through the beautiful scenery which belongs to the border land of Kent and Sussex, serves stations at Bodiam, Northiam, and Wittersham Road, ere it finds its terminus at the old-world Borough of Tenterden.



BODIAM CASTLE, SUSSEX.

Five minutes' walk from Bodiam Station.

Chief amongst the architectural attractions which lie on or near to the railway is the imposing pile of Bodiam Castle, a grey fourteenth century stronghold, still washed by the waters of its broad moat. Farther down the line may be seen the fine parish churches of Newenden, Wittersham, and Tenterden, likewise several choice bits of rural England, which until lately have been nine or ten miles from a Railway.

Information relating to Train Services, Fares, and special Tourist or Excursion Tickets can be obtained of The Managing Director, Kent and East Sussex Railway, Tonbridge.

(For the Kent and East Sussex Railway, see pages 90 and 151.)

XIII

NORTHIAM for Beckley and Sandhurst. Northward on the banks of the navigable Rother lies the old-world village of Newenden, which is built near to the site of an important Roman encampment. In the church is a remarkable elaborate example of a Norman font. WITTERSHAM ROAD is the nearest station for Wittersham, noteworthy for its stately church, dedicated to St. John the Baptist, which occupies an elevated site on the borderland of Kent.

"ROLVENDEN, another Kentish village, is about three miles from TENTERDEN TOWN with an ancient corporation enjoying the privileges of an arm of the Cinque Ports, having been originally affiliated to the port of Rye in the days when the sea came up to Small Hythe, a hamlet but three miles distant. Its principal architectural feature is the stately parish church of St. Mildred, with its noble Perpendicular tower containing a fine peal of eight bells.

"The extension of the railway affords a route by HIGH HALDEN ROAD to BIDDENDEN and thence to FRITTENDEN ROAD to HEADCORN JUNCTION, upon the main line via Tonbridge and Ashford of the South Eastern and Chatham Railway."

A few words of comment and explanation may be in order. The accompanying route map shows the "Rother Valley Railway" extending to the original Tenterden station, and we may suppose that the text originally reflected this situation, with later amendments to incorporate the change of name and extension first to Tenterden Town and then to Headcorn Junction, hence no doubt the much less detailed description of the route beyond Tenterden.

The station names "Robertsbridge Junction" and Headcorn Junction" although used by the K&ESR were not usually found in SE&CR publications, and indeed the guide is not entirely consistent, referring simply to "Headcorn" in the description of the main line from Tonbridge to Ashford. The Guide is generally rather liberal with "Junctions", so distinguishing Red Hill, Tonbridge, Paddock Wood, Ashford and Minster (although not Faversham or Swanley, for example), perhaps to impress upon the potential traveller the range of opportunities for obscure cross-

country journeys.

The route map is decorated by sketches of landmarks on or near the SE&CR – two views of Ashford, Rye, Winchelsea, Hastings, Battle Abbey and Etchingham. One that will be less familiar to the modern traveller is of Normanhurst, a large mansion at Catsfield, near Battle, built in 1867 by the railway contractor Thomas Brassey in the style of a French chateau and in 1909 the seat of his son, Lord Brassey. Normanhurst was demolished in 1951.

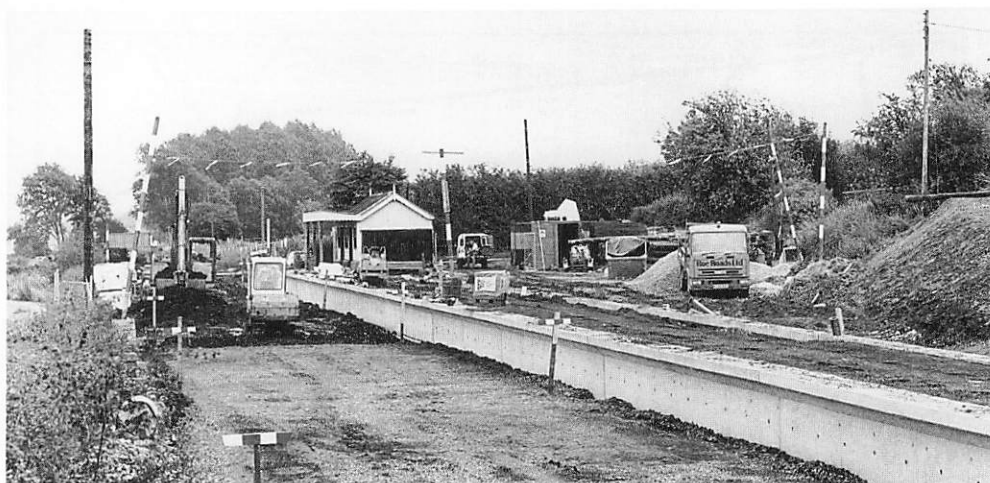
The map does not show the Rye & Camber Tramway, although under Rye the Guide notes that "at Camber-on-Sea, which can be reached by a tramcar service, is a capital eighteen-hole golf course."

Finally, the display advertisement for the K&ESR, tucked between Sevenoaks School and the Charing Cross Hotel, is a fine example of period typography and displays the somewhat proprietorial attitude to Bodiam castle typical of so much K&ESR publicity. If this railway is no longer quite so new, it is none the less interesting.

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Bodiam Station under re-construction, 4th September 1998

(Brian Stephenson)

entailed acquisition of further land to the South of the yard. This low lying and badly drained area will need significant civil engineering work before track can be laid and completion is not expected before August.

The original platform was of unreinforced concrete with a blue brick coping and it was decided that the replacement should also be in concrete with the obligatory overhang cast into the face making possible a replica brick coping rather than the heavy concrete units used elsewhere. The Asphalt surface will be dressed with chippings to give a more rustic appearance.

The new platform was illustrated in the last *Tenterden Terrier* and for those who feel that it looks like the Berlin wall take heart, for when ballasted the rail head will be at least six inches higher and the filled sleeper cribs will have the effect of visually reducing the height. Actually, Peter Barber has compromised splendidly and the platform has been kept to the minimum acceptable dimensions.

Some years ago John Miller and his team, later to be known as the museum group, carried out considerable restoration work on the station building and also planted a hawthorn hedge on the northern boundary. This has matured well and helps obscure the platform from the direction of the castle.

The company's minimum alteration pledge allowed for no additional buildings on the station site. The station lean-to was therefore demolished prior to reconstruction as a staff

lavatory and kitchenette, but maintaining its original exterior appearance. After further debate it was decided to provide public lavatories after all, as the facilities at the castle are perhaps too distant. Humphrey Atkinson has designed a compact building, after the style of a coal office or small goods warehouse and this will be placed at the back of the yard just to the right of the cattle dock. It will be clad in black weatherboard with black roof sheeting and promises to be acceptably unobtrusive as well as meeting the approval of the District Council.

That sums up the major work but there is much detail to be added before the result can be judged for authenticity. The platform is now wider than hitherto and in order to absorb the visual impact of this much larger structure in a very compact setting a privet hedge has been planted along two thirds of its length. This will be backed by a traditional K&ESR four rail fence extending the whole length. All yard and wicket gates will be in Kent five bar style as supplied to the original company by British Gates of Biddenden. In fact many of the firm's products were despatched from Biddenden station so this long established company continues to provide a rare link with the past.

Platform lamps will be near replicas of the original acetylene lanterns and mounted on 7'6" high wooden posts, but now electrically illuminated. The lanterns will be supplied by Sugg Lighting, the original Victorian manufacturers. A further lantern will be placed on the back corner of the old gent's lavatory

replacing one removed in the thirties. Having surrendered its duties to the new facility the old lavatory will be rebuilt as a utility store for the station staff.

The running-in board will be in K&ESR style blue and white enamel and placed near to the original site, where it was always visible from the castle.

The Museum Group are to finish restoring the interior of the station as well as assisting with installation of the lighting and maintaining the gardens.

There is much to be achieved if we are to present a complete and authentic station in time for the reopening in April 2000 and members can contribute to this and Bodiam 2000 finances by joining working parties every Tuesday, or the working week from the 10th to 14th May, ring Graham Hopker on 01303-862811 for details.

Finally, we are confident that the view of the station from the castle will be exactly as it has been for the last 100 years, as nearly all the alterations are at a low level and well obscured.



Bodiam Station taken on 31st August 1938

(B K Cope)

Special Events in 1999

EASTER FAMILY FUN WEEKEND

Friday 2nd - Monday 5th April inclusive

Four days of family entertainment have been arranged for the Easter weekend. Four locomotives will be in action each day working a frequent train service from Tenterden to Northiam. In addition, there's Jungle Jim's Easter Bunny Puppet Show, friendly face painters, traditional chairplanes and swingboats **plus a free chocolate egg for each child travelling.**

Easter Sunday lunch served aboard the Wealden Belle on 4th April.

Tel: 01580 for details and bookings.

FRIENDS OF

THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE DAYS

Saturday 1st, Sunday 2nd and Monday 3rd May

PLUS Saturday 18th and

Sunday 19th September

The Fat Controller will take charge of the railway for these very special weekends of family entertainment. "Donald" and other really useful steam engines will be busy pulling comfortable coaches while the Troublesome Truck and Devious Diesel will be up to their usual tricks.

Author Christopher Awdry will be signing books on 1-3May.

BANK HOLIDAY STEAM UP


Sun 30th & Mon 31st May

Two newly-restored locomotives are scheduled to enter service at this event. The first, No. 2678 worked on the K&ESR regularly from 1932 until 1954 when it hauled the final passenger train as British Railways closed the line. It last worked in 1963 and has been brought back to life thanks to a seven-year restoration costing over £60,000. By comparison, No.25 "Northiam" is a relative youngster, having been built for the Army in 1953. No 25 saw extensive service on the line in the 1980s and early 1990s when a major overhaul became due. Their return will be marked by a short ceremony performed by **Ian Hislop**. The event will be a three-way celebration as one of the other engines due in steam for this weekend is No. 376 "Norwegian" celebrating her 80th birthday.

JOIN THE CELEBRATIONS WITH STEPHENSON'S ROCKET

Daily, Sunday 11th - Sunday 18th July
(except Monday 12th and Friday 16th)

The National Railway Museum's working replica of Stephenson's "Rocket" will be visiting Tenterden Town Station from its home in York enabling you to see and ride behind what is probably the World's most famous steam engine. Stephenson's original locomotive won a prize of £500 at the Rainhill trials in 1829 and went on to work trains on the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. Ever since, railways have had a special place in British culture and 170 years after "Rocket" was first built, steam is still revered. On Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th July, the replica "Rocket" is due to be joined by its French equivalent, "Marc Seguin" also built in 1829. Come and see the two pioneering engines side-by-side for the first time ever!

'Rocket' sponsored by  **NatWest**

SILVER JUBILEE STEAM UP & HISTORIC VEHICLE EXTRAVAGANZA

Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th July

Every available K&ESR engine (and one or two visitors) will be in steam to mark the 25th Anniversary of the re-opening of the line. In all, seven, eight or even nine full-size locomotives may be in action on each day. The proceedings will commence at 10.00am with a cavalcade of locomotives at Tenterden Town Station giving you the chance to see all the engines together – a real spectacle! A frequent train service featuring locomotives and carriages dating from Victorian times to the 1960s will run on both days and special day rover tickets will be available offering unlimited travel throughout the day. Away from the tracks, historic cars, lorries, traction engines, buses, steam rollers, tractors and vans will join in the festivities. Plus old-fashioned fairground gallopers and demonstrations of traditional rural crafts. On Saturday 24th, join the celebrations and indulge in a delicious champagne brunch aboard the Wealden Belle luxury dining train – advance booking essential.

FATHERS' DAY LUNCH & HIGH TEA

Sunday 20th June

Give Dad a great day out and enjoy a magnificent three-course roast luncheon aboard the Wealden Belle – luxury dining train.

Telephone 01580 766428 to book or see special leaflet for details

STEAM BACK TO THE '60s

Sunday 29th & Monday 30th August

Trains, music and road vehicles from the Swinging Sixties will feature in this two-day event recalling the atmosphere of four decades ago and celebrating the survival of many of the steam engines that seemed destined to be lost forever. Live band the 6Ts will be playing at Tenterden Town Station on both days. Four steam engines will be in action alongside two of the diesel locomotives that replaced them in the 1960s. Steam was swept away as being unfashionable but thanks to the dedication hard working volunteers many steam locomotives work-on long after the "modern" diesels have themselves been scrapped! There's a fascinating '60s fact sheet and fun trivia quiz for all visitors plus a discount for anyone coming in sixties dress.

AUSTIN COUNTIES CAR RALLY

Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th October

A gathering of distinctive Austin Counties cars dating from the 1940s and '50s will add to the period atmosphere at Tenterden Town Station.

DELIVERING THE GOODS WEEKEND

Saturday 24th & Sunday 25th October

Demonstration old-time, steam-hauled goods trains will run in addition to the line's usual passenger services to provide a magnificent finale to the season. Four steam locomotives will be in action

Relive an old feature of the line and ride the 'mixed' – a train of passenger coaches and goods wagons. These were once run as a cost cutting measure as it was cheaper to combine passenger and goods traffic into one train! Off the tracks, old-fashioned lorries and vans will make deliveries to Tenterden and Northiam stations.

STEAMING INTO THE MILLENNIUM

27th December to Monday 3rd January 2000

Trains from the 19th century will be amongst those in action as the 21st century dawns. Celebrate with a glass of hot punch on us!

Letters to the Editor

Frittenden Treacle Mines

Sir – I noted with interest the coloured photograph in the Winter 1998 edition of *The Tenterden Terrier* of the newly painted former ESSO wagon with Treacle Mines livery. Your Rolling Stock section offers no clues to this temporary 'industrial' livery.

A number of your readers may therefore wonder what this is all about – treacle mines at Frittenden!

The following is by way of explanation which was related to me over 35 years ago by the landlord Mr Dive Beirsby Sr. of The Bell Public House (now called The Bell and Jorrock's). He said that he was the landlord of the pub during World War II, when in 1944 the American airmen came over (presumably stationed at Weeks Farm Airfield in Bedlam Lane, Headcorn).

The airmen had bragged to him about how clever they were so one day Mr Beirsby thought that he would teach them a lesson. He told them that in the fields near the village there were treacle mines. Off the airmen went in a drunken stupor on what was a wild goose chase!

That put them in their place and since that time Frittenden has been famous for its non-existent treacle mines.

Reading, Berks. Patrick Chillingworth

Off the rails

Sir – The "Off the Rails" article (Summer edition of *The Tenterden Terrier*) and the derailment of Terrier 32678 made interesting reading, both as to the cause and the subsequent recovery operation, with some splendid photographs of the latter. However I think the running number of the derailed carriage, given as "5317" must be in error as this was an SECR Lavatory Composite that was withdrawn in 1940. The KESR carriage was confirmed as of LSW origin and was one of the four brake corridor seconds working the line at this period, viz. S3093, S3121, S3170 and S3171. It is possible that it could have been either 3170 or 3171 and wrongly written up as "S317" with the S transposed as a 5 and the fourth figure omitted. S3175 was also a LSW

corridor brake in the KESR service but appears to have been on the line from 1950 onwards so I think this vehicle can be eliminated. If in fact it was either 3170 or 3171 it obviously left the line for repair (Ashford?) and returned to service for another nine months or so before withdrawal, in the case of 3170 by 31/12/49, and 3171 a bit later in 10/50.

Perhaps one of our historians conversant with the line's post war rolling stock can elaborate further on the above theories, and an interesting episode in the line's history.

Blandford Forum, Dorset A.G.Coombes

The details for the article were obtained from Modern Transport Magazine of 16th April 1949, which purported to be an eye witness account of the incident (EJRM).

"It is with great pleasure..."

Sir – following my article some eight years ago, *Tenterden Terrier* No 54. Spring 1991, regarding my activities representing the Railway by way of slide presentations, I felt it might be of interest to our members that this way of publicising our railway continues unabated. Since the article mentioned above I still continue to visit, on average, about a dozen or more groups each year across a very wide cross section of society.

During 1998 I spoke to twelve groups, and I have listed them below just to illustrate the diversity involved;

9th February 1998 – Fairlight Wine Society, near Hastings

18th February 1998 – Railway Correspondence and Travel Society, Eastleigh

19th February 1998 – RCTS (again) Brighton, two consecutive evenings!

17th March 1998 – Morris Minor Club, Maidstone

7th April 1998 – St Helens Park Preservation Society, Hastings

27th April 1998 – Canterbury & District Model Engineering Society

1st June 1998 – RCTS Ashford

14th September 1998 – Egerton over-60's Club, Egerton, near Ashford

23rd September 1998 – Canterbury and East Kent Postcard Club, Canterbury

30th September 1998 – Rotary Club of Chatham

11th November 1998 – Cheshire Homes, Sevenoaks

1st December 1998 – Wadhurst Probus Club

The majority of my bookings are in the South East area but from time to time I do find I am summoned farther afield, indeed I have twice spoken in Newcastle, twice in Middlesbrough and also in Reading and Birmingham, and for 1999, apart from local bookings, I will be attending Chelmsford, Tring, Brighton and London. Luckily, being fairly mobile for a living, allows me to slot in these various locations with my work, thereby saving some of the travelling expenses. This allows the recipients of my presentations to donate perhaps a larger sum to the railway. I hasten to add that not all organisations donate cash as they, themselves, may be charitable organisations, such as Rotary. However with the latter one does normally receive a very pleasant luncheon or dinner!

I hope the above goes some way to re-assuring members that, quite apart from our 'normal' commercial marketing, very ably undertaken by Graham Hukins and his team, there are still others out there publicising the railway to whoever we can persuade to listen! It is fun and very satisfying, and we have a great story to tell, which will be even more exciting soon when we will be telling our audiences that we re-opened Bodiam station on April 2nd 2000, one hundred years to the very day that it was first opened.

St. Michaels, Tenterden, Kent Doug Lindsay

Nationalisation of the Kent East & Sussex (sic) and Editorial

Sir – In the winter edition of *The Tenterden Terrier* the editorial put the question as to whether in view of the apparently insatiable demand for volunteers there is something about productivity that we have to learn.

The very real problem is how valid is any comparison of the present day railway with that of 1947. There are more obvious differences than similarities. Today the railway carries no external freight but in 1947 it is probable upwards of 30,000 tons of freight and 2,000 head of livestock were transported.

On the other hand there were no Wine and

Dine trains, no buffet services or shop, no shareholders or in house magazine. So what factors may be compared?

	1947	1997
Operating days	312	174
Trains	3,744	2,598
Passengers	27,113	151,572
Passengers per train	7	58
Train miles	39,312	18,186
Seat miles	1,965,600	3,637,200
Passenger miles	284,687	1,007,954
Seat occupancy rate	14.5%	27.7%

Less quantifiable factors must also be taken into account. With only two coaches in daily use prior to nationalisation the adopted policy seemed to be to run vehicles into the ground and then to replace with second hand stock. Today the available pool of replacement stock is steadily decreasing and even Mk1 coaches are now 40 years old. The need for in house maintenance and restoration is therefore an imperative.

Similarly in 1947 four locomotives, including two on loan from the Southern Railway, sufficed to operate the service. With only a fitter and a fitters mate presumably only day to day maintenance could be undertaken at Rolvenden. Today major examinations and rebuilds, in house, are common place for the larger stud of locomotives required to run today's service.

Even before the utilitarian period of the Second World War the railway struggled to provide a static level of service. Since 1974 the operating line has been extended by 4½ miles, three stations have been built (or rebuilt), two signalboxes installed, an engine shed constructed at Rolvenden and a carriage shed, buffet building, museum and toilet block at Tenterden. In the past few months work has been undertaken on reconstructing a further 3½ miles of track to an operational standard.

Over 6000 days (20 per volunteer) of voluntary work are needed to provide a 1947 level of service to supplement the reduction in numbers of paid staff. How many additional volunteer days are needed to service all the facilities provided today.

Perhaps someone out there knows.

Tenterden, Kent

John Weller

Jottings from a Signalman's notebook

Smarting from being told that he only played with the train set whilst real men drove them, our lever puller decided to see what really caused delays when on duty one autumnal Sunday, 25th October 1998. Unfortunately this was the day the Commercial Supremo decreed that a merry procession of goods wagons would interrupt an otherwise perfectly satisfactory passenger service. Co-incidentally, our signalman found another bit of Tenterbureaucracy in a form on which he was required to explain the reasons for any delay over five minutes. Here are the reasons for the delays he recorded for the information of the Line Manager.

1. Need to check line between Rolvenden & Wittersham Road with diesel after overnight gales and heavy rain.
2. Telephone wires found down and block failed, so pilotman working introduced for most of day.
3. Guard appointed as pilotman: result is three guards now available instead of four. Our over-stretched trio have to jump between trains to keep services running.
4. Run out of guards (because they need feeding), so lunchtime freight cancelled.
5. Pilotman arrives at WR with first down train only to discover next train is in same direction. No car available to return him to Rolvenden.
6. Cannot find keys to station building: ignore calls whilst looking for them
7. Only one WTT available at Tenterden so need to break into office to photocopy extras for important people like Controller, guards and crossing keeper.
8. Clock in Tenterden signalbox stops twenty minutes after being changed to winter time: needs new battery.
9. Controller/shunter loses his watch.
10. Instrument in Tenterden signalbox does not accept tablet properly: requires adjustment from S&T technician.
11. Catch lever spring breaks, thereby interfering with interlocking in Tenterden signalbox if not

careful.

12. Tenterden shunting bells not working; need to find radios.
13. WR signalman cannot release token to Northiam: eventually clears fault himself.
14. Rolvenden signalman has planed off top of finger: needs auxiliary lever puller and bell ringer.
15. Cranbrook Road crossing keeper telephones in to say overnight rain has flooded home and ceilings bulging. Tell him to ignore and get a move on to Railway. Commendably in circumstances he arrives only two hours late.
16. Telephone not working to Cranbrook Road crossing.
17. It works the other way! Crossing keeper reports sheep on line. Drivers advised of market price for mutton and lamb (cheap).
18. Leaf-fall debris in Tenterden level crossing gate locks needs clearing out.
19. Have to refill oil lamps in signals for running after dark. Lamps blow out and matches to re-light them useless in wind.
20. Wagons not correctly marshalled at start of day so require much shunting.
21. Controller decides day's service needs four brakevans. Digs out tatty "Shark" from Headcorn, sorry headshunt, end siding.
22. Door open on up service train: check no-one missing.
23. Wheelchair passenger cannot board train: shunt on further carriage to facilitate his access.
24. Train departs with tail lamp dangling from drawhook on vintage carriage, about three inches above sleepers. Debate with Rolvenden signalman whether this is an acceptable place for lamp or not.
25. Leaves on line (that old excuse!) and damp conditions slow trains up Tenterden Bank.
26. Yankee No 65 doesn't want to start train on crossing when required to shunt four coaches to loop via main line.
27. Controller wants up goods stopped at home signal to caution driver before entering loop. Driver stops and obeys rulebook almost precisely. White diamond indicates no need to telephone signalbox unless stopped for ten minutes.
28. Drewry 03 shunter cannot move faster than a snail's pace when climbing Tenterden Bank with three wagons and brakevan: not much faster downhill.
29. Driver blames tyre profile on Norwegian for inadequate adhesion.

30. WTT compiler has decided recovery time is only for wimps.

31. Guardspersonette seen waving flag violently from back of rapidly receding brakevan. As it is a green flag decide no action needed except to check on said person's health on arrival at Rolvenden.

32. Train incorrectly "incorrectly described" by correspondent. Explanations and reassurances that it really is unfitted freight hurtling down Tenterden Bank.

33. Rulebook says FRIMTROL not to be put into No.3 siding. Shunter forgets. FRIMTROL decides straight line easier than nasty curved rails. Result is interesting little derailment of leading bogie.

34. Headshunt now blocked. Darkness falling and rescue gang, all two of them, decide tomorrow's another day. Only room to put one coach away at a time into No.1 siding.

35. Visitor standing at crossing wants line's history in detail. Not satisfied with short version asks supplementary questions.

36. Traction engine blocks level crossing.

37. Receive important messages about coal for traction engines at busy moment.

38. Wagon delayed in platform whilst unloading coal for traction engines.

39. Signaller delayed whilst collecting bearer bond certificate (to save Company postage money).

40. Station cat seen boarding train in platform as it is about to be berthed. Search ensues but no sign of cat. Later it is seen strolling along platform.

41. Signaller blinded by Norwegian's headlamp; drops tablet pouch.

42. Discuss shunting manoeuvres with trainee signaller who points out these are not covered in rulebook.

43. Urgent and immediate consultation on proposed signal box at Northiam.

Amazingly the one sure-fire excuse on these occasions never materialised. Linesman failed to telephone at the most critical moment asking for ladder to be dropped off / picked up at some obscure location.

N.S.R

Terms used: WTT - Working Time Table;

WR - Wittersham Road; Shark - type of brakevan used for P.Way ballasting operations; FRIMTROL - Bogied boiler wagon (Ex Frittenden Treacle Mines).

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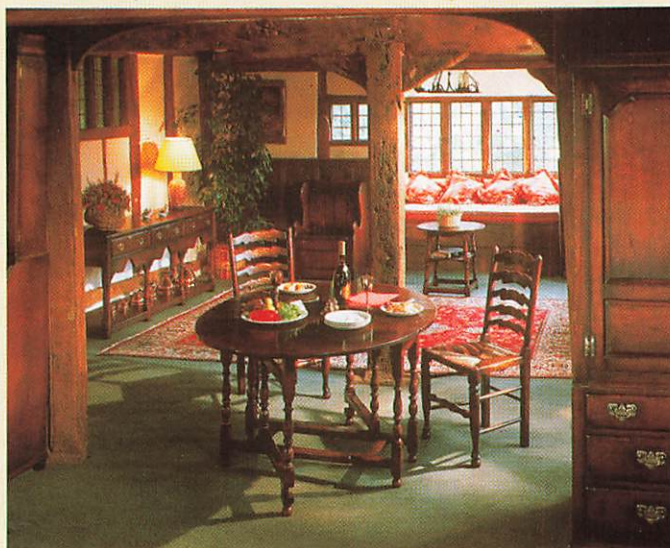
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