

The Tenterden Terrier



Number 91

Summer 2003



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

The Tenterden Railway Company Limited

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital.)

Registered Charity 262481

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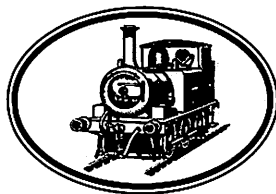
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FRONT COVER

*P Class leaves with the centenary train
past Tenterden Home signal,
16th March 2003*

(Mike Esau)

FRONTISPIECE

*The parade of Mayor and Town Councillors moves
along Tenterden High Street towards the station,
16th March 2003*

(Brian Stephenson)

*Dignatories parade on the podium at Tenterden
Station for the speeches*

(Brian Stephenson)

BACK COVER

*John Brice cuts the tape in connection with the
recommissioning of Maunsell coach No 53,*

28th June 2003

(Bill Oates)

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Railway – Part 3

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Editorial

Just for the ride?

News of another highly successful Thomas event in June – the second this year, is very welcome. July will see the Steam & Country Fair and September Thomas again and the Hoppers Weekend. December will be thronged with families coming to see Santa. All of these events

can be expected to produce bumper numbers of passengers and profits. Our Pullman trains are drawing record numbers with nearly all services fully booked. Coach parties for tea on the train continue to flourish. So the pattern is changing; the rump of our passenger numbers used to be 'turn up and go', but despite the attraction of a link with Bodiam Castle, this is no longer so. Should we be worried – probably not. But it would be nice to see more people coming 'just for the ride'; after all we are a Railway!

Lineside News

Compiled by Duncan Buchanan

Commercial

Marketing (Nicola Ashmore)

Last time I wrote an article for this magazine, we were just about to celebrate the Centenary of Tenterden Station. That seems like a long time ago now but I'm happy to report that the event was a marvellous success. We were blessed with glorious weather, which ensured bumper crowds lining Tenterden High Street as the procession of Station staff and local councillors made the journey from the Town Hall to the Railway. Both the Mayors of Tenterden & Ashford were present and took part in a re-enactment of the original opening ceremony from 1903. VIP guests mingled with hundreds of members of the public and enjoyed unlimited rides (with some trains bursting at the seams) to Rolvenden and back. One highlight of the event was a fascinating photographic display charting the station over the past 100 years, which remains on display for the remainder of the Centenary year for those of you who missed it in March. We managed to gain a lot of publicity from this day, which is crucial at the beginning of the Season as we featured on the front and centre pages of all the local papers and on the local TV and radio too. It took a large amount of hard work from many of our volunteers to make the event as successful as it was – so thanks again one and all.

Easter passed by in a blur and before we knew it, we were into May with Weekend at War on the first Bank Holiday weekend. This proved popular with members of the public as they

had the chance to experience a bit of life in Wartime Britain or France.

As I write this now, we are just recovering from another bumper Thomas event, which took place over the last two weekends. Yet again, we managed to break previous records and the 4 days saw almost 6,000 visitors with revenue from fares of almost £50k (40% above budget and 34% more than the previous June), this was with the added complications caused by the A28 into Tenterden being closed for all 4 days. The shop and catering department also had record sales with a special mention to the ice cream pulling power of Chris Tibbatts! On the whole, the event seemed to run quite smoothly (as much as it ever can with that many visitors) but as ever we were desperately short of staff and volunteers in all areas. The next Thomas event is only just around the corner, so if you think you may be able to spare just a few hours in September they really would be appreciated. Please contact Nic Ashmore at Tenterden Station (nicola@kesr.org.uk).

The next activity planned for Marketing is KESR's stand at the Kent County Show in July where we hope to spread the word and gain as much publicity as possible. I'll let you know how we fared in the next issue.

And now we are busily working away on the plans for 2004 with the 2004 Timetable planned for release at October Half Term. The plan is to try and make the railway as

accessible as possible to everybody without increasing our number of running days next year as well as introducing some new events to liven things up a bit. The timetable will be approved in August so if you have any bright ideas, please send them in to me as soon as possible for consideration.

In the meantime, it's time to concentrate on our peak running season to ensure that our daily passengers have a delightful visit on the Railway so that they return to us again next year.

Shop

Every time these notes are written they seem to be either just before or just after a Thomas event with three such events a year coinciding with three issues of *The Tenterden Terrier* this is perhaps not surprising. What is surprising is that the events not only continue to dominate shop takings but also continue to produce increasing, not to say record, sales.

For the February Thomas week we did not supplement the shop with a tent because of the perils of the weather but it still did incredibly well, peaking on the last phenomenal day when we sold £4.5k worth of goods. For those of you who know how small the shop is this is way beyond its theoretical capacity and represents an incredible effort by those two stalwarts who manned the till and the four others who forced their way through crowds to continuously restock.

For the June Thomas weekends the trend continued and with a second outlet open in the tent the result was sales 19% higher than last year. On the second Sunday, an incredibly hot and humid day there were not really enough volunteers but with the crowds gathering and rain threatening the decision was taken to open both outlets. The exhausted assistants were rewarded at the end of the day with total sales of £5,620, 7% higher than any previous single day's takings

Back in the routine world the main season got under way with the Centennial Day when the crowds took us all by surprise and the totally unprepared shop still took £1.4k. The 1940s event in May saw the rare and successful opening of Bodiam parcels office as a shop. Together with the Tenterden shop it took nearly £4,000 in three days.

We hope to continue to delight our customers with items of interest. Book sales have been

very healthy. Despite delays at the suppliers we should have two more new model wagons. The first of these will be a fictitious 'Rother Valley Brewery' Box van. These should be available in July, which is just as well because we are virtually out of existing stocks. Bus and tram models for the adult collector have also proved of great interest. We continue to look for interesting new lines

Well, you know what comes next. Please volunteer to help in the shop. So far efforts by the faithful few have produced a 13% sales increase on last year. However the pressure of such increases has meant that after nearly three years of all volunteer effort we have had to appoint paid assistance. Matthew Stubbs joined us as part-time assistant Manager in mid May. But he will be doing much of the back room tasks and we need your help up front more than ever. Please find that extra day to help earn the income the railway so sorely needs.

Catering

Following the withdrawal of the catering PMV from traffic last year, the difficult decision was taken to cap the numbers of catering party bookings: whilst the RMB continues to perform well in traffic, it was not designed for the use we are trying to put it to.

Subsequently a small group was established to ascertain our coaching stock requirements for the next ten years. Amongst the conclusions that this group came to were that a kitchen car, similar to our existing Pullman kitchen car 'Diana', would be the ideal vehicle for service train use. Accordingly a search was initiated amongst vehicles already in 'preservation' or remaining on the big railway. Many vehicles were examined and found unsuitable before an RU (restaurant unclassified) was identified at the Bluebell Railway. This vehicle has never seen service since it arrived at Horsted Keynes ten years ago and has now been purchased on behalf of the Company with tips collected on the 'Wealden Pullman'. Agreement has also been reached with several individuals who will finance its transport to and restoration at Tenterden.

In a new departure for us, a soft ice cream machine was purchased recently. This made its first venture into the sun at the June 'Thomas' event and to say that demand exceeded our expectations would be

something of an understatement. Nearly £1,900 worth of ice cream was sold over the two weekends (22% of total catering sales), despite having run out on several occasions.

Quotes are being sought with a view to replacing the life expired 'Portakabins' to the rear of the Tenterden Buffet. There is no quick, easy or cheap solution here, but action can be postponed no longer.

Northiam Station buffet staff has experienced a run off exasperating problems with the new coffee machine. In desperation, mention has been made of utilising the machine as a buffer stop or in aerodynamic tests in over-cliff flight.

Catering at Bodiam has yet to commence, despite the best efforts of all involved. A problem with the quality of drinking water at this site has also now been highlighted.

Staffing however remains the biggest barrier to growth, or indeed adequately delivering our existing range of services. At the time of writing, adverts for casual summer staff have been in place for over eight weeks and have

netted but one suitable individual from just three applications. This has resulted in the usual faithful few working an extraordinary number of hours, far in excess of what anyone could ask. Our thanks are due to all those, from every department, who have ensured that the doors have remained open for business.

Wealden Pullman

The Wealden Pullman continues to sell well with nearly all services run being fully booked. Seven private charters have been run so far this year, three of which are repeat business. We have also finally welcomed back Maunsell NBO 53 onto Pullman services after a break of many years. These older vehicles are much in demand despite the superior ride and ventilation available in Car 349. Since the exterior of this vehicle has been repainted, efforts have been made to improve the interior with recovered armrests and new curtains. These have all been financed through the Pullman Tips fund, which has collected in excess of £7,000 so far this year.

Motive Power

Priming continues to be a problem with all the steam engine fleet. Many people will have seen the cabinets installed at the water columns around the railway. These soften the water in order to extend the life of boilers and prevent scale formation. However this does not directly stop priming. That is caused by dissolved solid in the water supply and affected by the size of engine and its workload. The locomotive department has taken to changing the water in every boiler after every three days steaming. This obviously adds considerably to the workload of the department. In the longer term there are solutions but these must be balanced against the funds available and other claims on them.

Steam Locomotives

No 3 'Bodiam' (32670): New tanks have been offered up following fitting and cladding of the boiler. Nick Young has been working away on the piston valve and axle lubricators and associated pipework. As progress is being made more help is needed. Even mundane tasks like painting areas soon to become inaccessible helps release others for other jobs.

Please do offer a hand if you can help.

No 8 'Knowle' (32678): In service

No 10 'Sutton' (32675): Remains at Tenterden. There have been recent discussions with the Bluebell railway in respect of cylinder pattern procurement. The cylinders on this loco are beyond repair and are the main worry in any overhaul.

No 11 'P Class': In service.

No 12 'Marcia': The combined efforts of Mac Macintosh and Terry Harvey have resulted in a splendid set of new cladding sheets. A few minor adjustments are required and the whole lot can be removed for painting. A brass ring to go round the firebox radius will be made in house and the one for the smokebox end of the boiler barrel has been ordered from a local supplier. The new platework for the top half of the cab has been ordered and assembly should start shortly. Remedial work to all four of the eccentric sheaves has recently been completed. This has involved filing all running surfaces flat. Final measurements can now be taken to allow the



*The Railway Experience day customers and staff pose at Northiam after completing the course,
(Ian Scarlett)*

recently white metallised straps to be bored out.

Work has started on the manufacture of a new drivers side injector delivery pipe.

Dick Beckett, the locomotive owner, has now moved to Tenterden.

No 14 'Charwelton': Remains in store at Rolvenden awaiting overhaul. As with all stored locomotives it has been regularly moved to prevent damage by corrosion to the moving parts.

No 19 'Norwegian' (376): The left hand valve heads and piston rings have been replaced. In order to improve the cylinder lubrication the mechanical pump has been overhauled and an atomised oil feed installed to the locomotive. Tony Pearson oversaw the re-run of much of the small bore pipework while Archie Smith drilled holes to the snifting valve strainer. Frank Lambert completed the tedious job of cleaning the motion and Graham Clifford installed and jointed the new atomisers. Dick Dickson and his son cleaned and checked out the lubrication systems. Hopefully encouraging more of the younger

generation.

No 21 'Wainwright' (DS238): In service.

No 22 'Maunsell' (65): The boiler has been dispatched to Israel Newton for firebox replacement. The Loco Trust 40th anniversary appeal remains open. Over £17,700 has been raised so far, through 108 separate donations from 85 different sources of which the Loco Trust has provided 42, roughly one third of members. This has enabled a start to be made but without completion, of the fund raising, final work will be delayed and thus re-entry to service. Please send any donations direct to the Loco Trust Treasurer Boris Perkins (1 Pittlesden, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 6HJ) or for the appeal leaflets or donation forms send to the Secretary at Tenterden Station or email to duncanbuchanan@t5.co.uk.

No 23 'Holman F Stephens': The boiler is in the workshop and being prepared for steam testing.

No 24 'Rolvenden': In service

No 25 'Northiam': In service

No 26 (68078, Sellinge J94): This locomotive has now been added to the stock list and taken the number formerly allocated to 'Linda'. It is owned by a private group. Having removed all the tubes the group has taken the opportunity to wash out the boiler. This was done with the aid of a preserved fire engine which was organised by John Collard. There are a number of areas in the firebox where the water space is blocked by a huge build up of scale between the stays. Measures will have to be taken to remove these deposits which could cause localised hot spots. The boiler has been jacked clear of the frames in order to allow a thorough assessment of its state. The boiler inspector has indicated that some minor repairs will be needed.

The floor plates in the smokebox have been removed so that the condition of the top of the cylinder block can be checked. The boiler will have to be removed before work can progress on this. Quotes for various new parts are being obtained in order to finalise the extent of expenditure required on the loco.

These include, ashpan, smokebox, door, bunker and tyre turning. Boiler repairs will be carried out by a competent contractor.

No 30 GWR Pannier (1638): Painting has been completed in the Carriage and Wagon workshop at Tenterden. Thereafter some minor works are required as identified under the locomotive re-commissioning procedure. The locomotive was moved from Tenterden to Rolvenden on 4th July.

Diesel Locomotives

No 20 (GWR Railcar): The replacement of No 20's main roof cant-rails continues, with attention now being focussed on the large passenger saloon. Two sections have already been fitted in this area, and the next two sections have been machined and will be fitted in due course. The completion of this task will see two-thirds of the total cant-rail length replaced on both sides of the vehicle, leaving just four damaged sections to be changed in the entrance vestibule and small passenger saloon areas.

No 40 'Ford' (BTH): The BTH still awaits completion of outstanding paperwork before



John Clark uses oxy-propane cutting equipment to remove the crown stays from the inner frame of No 22, 8th March 2003
(Ian Scarlett)

formal training of drivers can commence and the loco formally enter service.

No 41 (Ruston): Following generator repairs the loco is serviceable. Several jobs are being undertaken by John Houselander to repair air leaks and provide an engine oil pressure gauge in the cab. The loco should soon perform on a par with the Drewry which was John's last project.

No 43 'Titan': Located at Robertsbridge now after moving there in April 2002 on long term loan. An engine service, replacement of brake blocks and a new radiator that does not leak are all repairs completed to date. A full repaint is in progress. It has turned a few wheels but awaits the completion of track and a platform at the site before it can commence revenue earning service.

No 44 'Dover Castle' (Class 08): We are advised that this engine has been acquired by TREATS and that outstanding maintenance tasks can now be tackled. The 08 has now re-taken its place as yard shunter at Tenterden and this occurred in time to carry out its duties as 'Devious' diesel for the June Thomas event.

No 46 (Class 03 Drewry Diesel): A new starting battery is to be ordered to replace the existing life expired one. Attention to several air leaks has been carried out. The diesel has

been moved from Tenterden, where it has been the pilot engine since late last year, to Rolvenden.

Class 33 'Ashford': In service and used frequently for engineering trains and also for special charters including the re-certification of South Coast Training driver instructors in March. This kind of activity is very expensive to organise on the mainline but can be done for moderate cost with us. Additionally it has covered a couple of times when there has been a lack of available steam locomotives.

Class 108 DMMU: Continues in service with its now central part in the off peak timetable. This has saved many thousands of miles for steam engines and has managed to keep steam mileages to less than those before we opened to Bodiam, despite running more days.

Cranes

No 133 (10T Taylor-Hubbard): In service. Due a boiler re-tube and inspections on the lifting gear this summer.

No 145 (10T Grafton): In store.

No 151 (36T breakdown): In service. Has had a recent boiler exam and used to clear up round Rolvenden Yard. Stuart Wood, a 'Duke of Edinburgh' scheme volunteer, is painting and fitting back panel sheets. Several repairs to fit rollers on the jib, to protect the ropes, are also in hand.

Rolling Stock

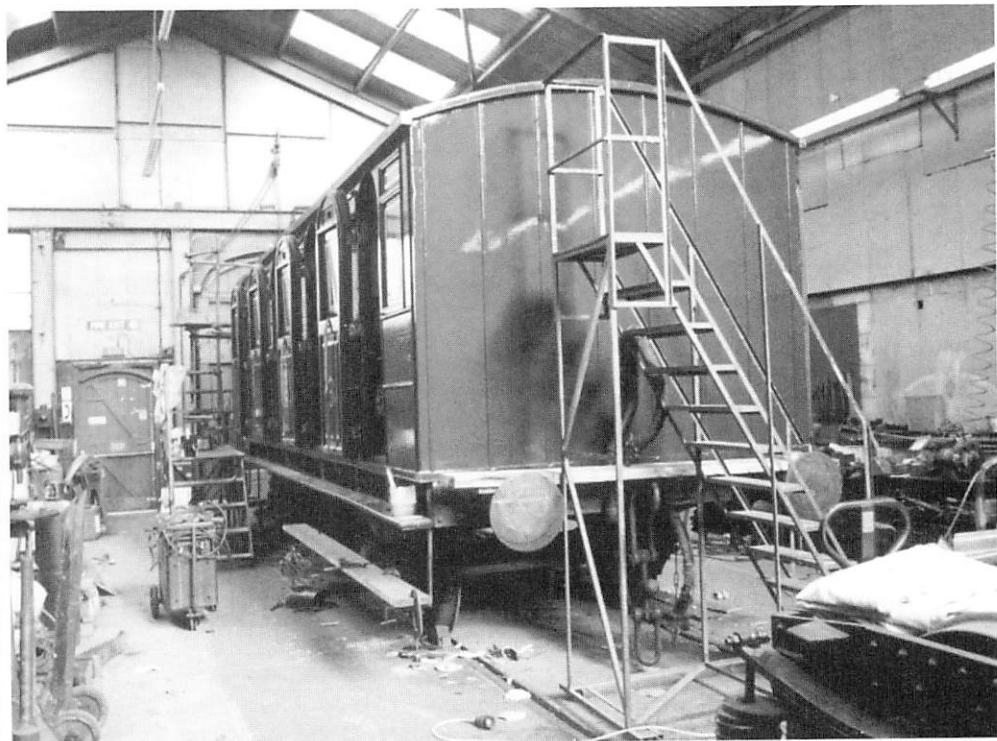
Pannier tank No 1638 (K&ESR No 30) has been in the carriage shed for some while to allow a high quality paint finish to be applied together with sign writing. Some priority has had to be given to this job, simultaneously with completing No 53, to free up shed space and release resources generally for routine maintenance. This has now been completed.

In the C&W shed the ground floor bolt store has now been moved to an extended mezzanine in the tool store. The resulting space will be used to accommodate the lathe. Construction of the new mess room proceeds well and should be ready for use soon.

Thanks are due to both Paul Rand and to the Tuesday Gang for their help with this.

Mark 1's

The big news is the purchase of a second RU (Restaurant Unclassified) for use on the Pullman set and for other party bookings. The vehicle in question is currently out of use on the Bluebell Railway and last saw main line service as an HST barrier coach. The restaurant car fittings and kitchen are largely intact but it will be necessary to convert the brakes from air to vacuum and fit steam heating. The coach will, of course also be generally overhauled and repainted before entering service. Delivery has yet to be arranged. Finance has been provided by various donors whom we thank for their generosity.



District Coach under refurbishment in the Carriage shed, 14th March 2003

(John Liddell)

Maunsell NBO No 53

After the inevitable delays which always seem to occur with any project, No 53 finally re-entered traffic in mid-June and just in time to help out with the Thomas event. An 'official' launch was held on Saturday 28th June (including a Tenterden – Bodiam return trip) which was the opportunity to thank all the Appeal donors and staff who have contributed to the project. The launching ceremony was performed by retiring C&W Manager John Brice and TRC Chairman Norman Brice was also present.

Maunsell NBO No 54

The re-appearance of No 53 enabled us to briefly take its sister vehicle into the C&W works for a wheel change and this was successfully completed. The existing wheel sets had developed flats and we had recently turned replacements available.

Vintage Vehicles

L&NWR Balcony Saloon (K&ESR No 82) is out of traffic as we go to press for repairs to the brake system. A number of venerable

components had become time expired and replacements have been obtained including new brake hangers. These were cut by a contractor using technology undreamed of (even by H. G. Wells) when the coach was built! A full repaint of No 82 will also be on the agenda at some point.

GER six-wheel brake coach (K&ESR No 81) is presently being fitted with new step boards and work continues, between other commitments, to the underframe of the Woolwich coach (K&ESR No 67). The roof of SE&CR No 2947 (K&ESR No 88) is showing signs of a serious leak and this will have to be attended to before long.

It is intended to make a Gift Aided appeal for the Woolwich coach (No 67), along the lines of that organised for No 53, to enable further work to be financed. This scheme is still under consideration and details will be announced in due course.

People

Carriage & Wagon Manager John Brice

recently reached 65 years of age and is therefore due to retire. He has had a varied career which has included many years in the building trade, driving on the Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway and full time employment with the K&ESR since 1998 and he has been the guiding light in the revival of the Steam & Country Fair. In this last connection, his activities in the world of steam rollers are also well known and his contacts have been invaluable. John will however be staying on three days per week, firstly to enable a smooth hand over to the new Manager and with the possibility of a further extension as project leader if we are fortunate in our recent application for funding to the Millennium Commission.

Paul Sayce has been appointed to replace John and started with the Company on 12th

June. As stated above, this will be a phased handover and the new Guv'nor will take full charge at a date to be announced. Paul has been a K&ESR volunteer for about twenty years, particularly as a loco fireman. He is also well known as the extinguishing kind of fireman – he is a member of the Kent Retained service, being based at Tenterden. His many skills include a more than adequate knowledge of computers which should be very useful in propping up the 386-rebuilt-as-a-Pentium, but with not enough hard disk space, which creaks along in Carriage & Wagon. Affectionately known as 'Popeye', Paul served in the Royal Navy during his younger days, his most famous exploit being on HMS Conqueror during some unpleasantness in the South Atlantic. In fact, now he works for the Company, we could say we've 'Gotcha'.

Permanent Way

It's been a hard slog this winter for all in P.Way with the replacement of Cranbrook Road Level Crossing, and the relay of the Lamings' Slip area. Lamings itself was

drained and now sports a retaining wall which will stop the annual encroachment of the clay onto the trackbed. Immediately we finished the March relay, we started on general



Avondale's weed killing road/railer in action at Bodiam, 9th June 2003

(John Liddell)

maintenance of the 10.5 miles of running line.

Patrolling is the key to safe running and we patrol the entire line every two weeks, noting any defects and producing lists of work for weekend volunteers. Any safety critical issues are dealt with first and other issues are put on the 'just job' list which is worked on as and when time and resources permit.

When patrolling we check for movements in embankments, ballast shoulders, the trackbed itself and we also check that ditches and drains are flowing freely. Each and every fishplate is checked for hairline cracks and more obvious complete breaks. Fishplate bolts are checked for tightness. Keys are checked and tapped back in where necessary. A patrol will carry, in addition to safety kit, a Keying Hammer, a Fishplate spanner, a Shovel and of course, the most important items of all, packed lunches.

I am sad to have to report what I hope is the

temporary loss of Peter Hemsley to the volunteer list. He has been a solid member of the crew for many years and all in the department wish him a speedy recovery. You just can't replace people with his depth of knowledge at the drop of a hat. Come back soon.

We have had a new piece of kit this spring – the Mowlem's Tamper which has been based at Wittersham Rd. It took a while for them to get it going (it is a machine after all), but we get free tamping to what I have been told is main line standard. No, the linespeed will not be increased as a result. This may be the start of free equipment for the department on a regular annual basis. Many companies such as Mowlems are looking for Railways which will allow them to 'practice' on quiet pieces of track. This year I haven't charged them, but in the future....?

S&T Engineering

The last year has seen completion of the majority of the outstanding detail in respect of the 'A' block installation at Northiam, some of which only became apparent once trial operation under supervision was carried out. Two Principal Inspectors for the Health & Safety Executive, (who regulate the safe operation of railways in Britain, be they Network Rail or ourselves) spent a day in mid June both inspecting the level crossings at Northiam & Bodiam, the signalling installation at Northiam, and operation of the 'A' block equipment itself. This now paves the way for the training of operating staff and allowing Northiam box to be switched out, when not required for trains to pass at Northiam.

A short resume of the history of 'A' block would not go amiss at this point. 'A' block was first conceived by my predecessor, Pete Lawrence, back around the early 1980s. An installation was built, and demonstrated to the (then) Department of Transport Railways Inspectorate, who accepted the idea in principle. The trial installation was moved to Rolvenden at its commissioning in 1989 and service trials carried out. These were not entirely successful and Rolvenden lay dormant

thereafter. When Wittersham Road was rewired in the early 90s, this too was provided with a slightly updated version, using lessons learnt. This has now been some 60% in use since that time, but to avoid delaying trains, by the need to exchange tokens, full commissioning was again deferred.

In around 1998, when the principles of Northiam were being set out, it was agreed that this would be an 'A' block installation, and it was equipped accordingly. Basically, the objective is to enable a single line box to clear its signals in both directions, and link the two block sections, one either side of it electrically as one combined section, and only permit one train to be in this lengthened section at one time. The same tokens are used as when the box is open, but the traincrew exchange them themselves, in this case using a set of auxiliary instruments located on the platform, to avoid the need to visit the box itself.

It also enables the signalboxes to open and close in any order, thus achieving full flexibility in the operation of differing service levels on the railway. It was subsequently realised that the practicalities of closing Rolvenden were simply not worth the potential savings, and the majority of this

equipment was recovered in stages between the mid 90s and this Spring. A few detail items remain to be fitted and this will then allow us to reap the rewards of this remarkable piece of innovation and foresight.

For some years, the interlocking of Tenterden lever frame had come under increased inspection, as significant wear had been discovered. During the closed season, all the moving parts of the frame were removed, and refurbished as necessary; in many cases this being by the fitting of oversize pins or by rebushing. Some work was carried out in house, some by contractors, but special mention must be made of Peter Bagg, a volunteer from Bexhill, who spent many hours manufacturing pins at home on his lathe. Sadly, Peter has had to call it a day, due to ill health, but we extend our gratitude and thanks to him. There remains only the completion of the remaining six spare levers at the left hand end of the frame, a full repaint of the levers and overhaul of the electric lever locks. Considering that this frame is now 109 years old (of which 23 years service has been in our hands at Tenterden), it is now in excellent shape to face the future.

Attention is now focussed on how much work we need to do on Rolvenden and Wittersham Road frames over the coming years, as they too are showing their age.

Also during the closed season, the opportunity was taken to overhaul several pulleys, along with some signal fittings of the Up Advanced Starter at Wittersham Road. This work is typically unseen and is being progressed as and when resources are available. It must be born in mind that all of this equipment has been recovered from the mainstream railway, usually at little cost, but with a good proportion of its serviceable life already long used. Service exchange and refurbishment, the majority in house, addresses this problem.

A long outstanding item is at Rother Bridge where, in May 2002 high winds brought down a further tree, and the overhead lines with it. Temporary reinstatement of the lines were carried out on the ground by, where they remain, as the remaining trees are badly decayed and are gradually being removed by our Forestry colleagues as resources and weather permits.

Infrastructure

Company Secretary's notes

Members will recall that, at the 2002 AGM, the meeting gave its approval in principal to the Board taking the necessary action to rename the Tenterden Railway Company as the Kent & East Sussex Railway Company Limited. I promised to keep everyone informed of progress on this development and it seems high time to say something on this subject. It is provisionally intended to make the change with effect from 1 January 2004 (to coincide with the beginning of the Railway's financial year) but this could be revised if necessary – we want to make the change but it obviously has to take a back seat if other business is more pressing. In any event, it remains fully intended to accomplish the name change during 2004, the centenary of the title 'Kent & East Sussex Railway'. A preliminary development is the new design of letterhead. The Railway's title is far more prominent than the Company name and minimum revision will be needed once the

proposal 'goes live'. Advice has been sought from various bodies and advisors to ensure we are proceeding correctly and I am currently asking all managers if there is anything which needs to be 'sorted' in respect of their departments so we don't end up with an administrative mess. The Bank has, as a long standing practice, accepted cheques made out in either name and this will continue for the immediate future. That should hopefully solve any difficulties arising from the change occurring just as the subscriptions fall due. There will, of course, remain the question of standing orders but I will issue further advice in due course.

The Tenterden Railway Company name will not entirely disappear but exchange titles (the Registered Number will be unchanged) with the K&ESR Company formed some time ago to protect our trading name. This is not to be confused with the erstwhile Kent & East Sussex Steam Railway PLC (which has no links with the Tenterden Railway Company) and

which was required to change its name on the instructions of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. TRC will then go into hibernation as a Dormant Company perhaps one day to be revived if we ever need another subsidiary for some reason (such as the management of a specific project).

Finally, another reminder that the AGM will be in Tenterden Town Hall, at 2.00pm on Saturday 11th October 2003. Following complaints about the acoustics, I am thinking of reserving the first row or two for people with hearing problems. If anyone would be interested in this possibility and would like to reserve a seat they are very welcome to write to me, in confidence, at Tenterden Town Station. Please mark your envelope 'personal and confidential'.

General Manager's report

The need for volunteers is as important as ever. We have on the station staffing a nucleus of volunteers that are surprisingly mature in years. We need new volunteers in the lower age group to learn the skills of older ones and so ensure the future. Many staff are becoming multi-functional by training in several areas, this gives greater flexibility to roster clerks and the opportunity for staff who, when they find the footplate too difficult, have an alternative role to fill displaying other skills.

We are currently in the position of having a TTI on nearly every train, this reduces the risk of having non fare paying passengers travelling free.

We almost have catering at Bodiam. The Bodiam team, under the guidance of John Miller, are currently building entrance steps to the PMV and Avon coach that will provide refreshments during the summer period. The Bodiam station team are drawing up plans to man the refreshment coach, for which we now have permission from the local council to operate. We are not going to try to compete with the Castle regarding food, only offer an alternative to our passengers to partake of light refreshments in a railway coach.

The horse and carriage has started operating between the Station and Castle which for a small fee will transport passengers to and from the Castle. It is run independently, and at no cost to us, but is of great benefit to us as it enhances the interest at Bodiam.

Jamie Douglas is leading a team of volunteers at Northiam, finishing off the wall at the rear of platform 1. This looks untidy from the car park but will look very nice when finished. In conjunction with the gardening group the border against the fence will be cleared and a hedge planted. This hedge will then be looked after by the gardening group.

Wittersham Road Station Agents, Sue and Jolyon Vickers, are making progress in tidying the garden area. The long awaited toilet has been commissioned in the station building which means the portaloo has been disposed of.

Wilf Watters has been working hard tidying up Rolvenden and we hope to effect permanent repairs to the canopy soon.

In the commercial office the staff have been busy with Thomas again, the computer booking system installed nearly a year ago has proved its worth with special events. Keith Jones has been using his IT experience to build a separate computer for the booking clerks during special events. This enables the clerks to issue tickets from the programme rather than write them out. This method of working also reduces the risk of double bookings.

The Managers continue to scrutinise all expenditure and the budget system introduced last year is beginning to take effect. We are now in a position to measure accurately our cash flow by adjusting necessary expenditure to take place during our highest income period. This is of course not possible in all cases as much of our track work and repairs need completing during the winter period when income is restricted.

We still have a lot to learn about keeping within budgets and this will be reviewed as we begin the process for 2004. The timetable committee are already busy preparing a draft timetable for next year, building into it special events and other ideas. We need the timetable approved with the budget and ready by September to meet our marketing requirements.

We have very good rapport with our customers. The number of customer complaints against staff last year stood at two, neither of which was justified, and other

complaints stood at 15. Six of these were identified as professional complainants who complain everywhere they go, in order to claim refunds. However, our policy is to only give refunds if the complaint is made known at the time. These figures represent an enormous achievement by our staff and they are congratulated for their customer focused approach.

Tuesday Gang

Since the last report we have said a very warm welcome to two new Tuesday members – John Chesswright who was previously a volunteer Station Master and to John Rose. We now have quite a healthy number and if all turn up on the same day we almost need a separate messroom!

We did see Phil Wood again for a few days after his operation when he put in some good work around the Tenterden site painting lamp posts, repairing some rotten wood and repainting the signal box. Unfortunately he has returned north for further treatment. We wish him all the best and a speedy return.

We spent four weeks at Northiam where heavy work was involved replacing a dozen coping stones on No 2 platform as the original ones had begun to crumble. It doesn't need much close inspection that before long some serious repair work will be needed to the whole length of the platform.

Since finishing at Northiam at the end of April we have been responding to a request from John Brice to build a new mess/office in the C&W shed.

Help is always needed – Tuesdays at 10.00am at Tenterden or phone Graham on 01303 862811.

Gardening Group

Work is continuing on the gardens at Tenterden but progress is slow due to the lack of volunteers. However, despite the ever increasing weeds at this time of year there is plenty of colour to delight the eye.

The gardens in front of the offices are gradually being stocked with plants begged or scrounged or grown from seed. Hopefully next year will see plenty of healthy plants and flowers.

Bill Mackay is a real stalwart as, time

permitting, he keeps the grass cut and generally tidies around the gardens.

Sue and Jolyon Vickers are working hard at Wittersham Road where they are slowly getting to grips with the gardens. They are endeavouring to keep things tidy and attractive for our passengers.

Bodiam is looking very good as summer progresses and now has a small hop garden which is well worth a visit.

It is proposed that next year all the stations will have gardens or tubs to add colour and enhance the overall presentation for our passengers.

If there is anyone who would like to join the gardening group to help keep on top of the weeds please phone Veronica Hopker on 01303 862811 evenings or email: veronica.hopker@talk21.com.

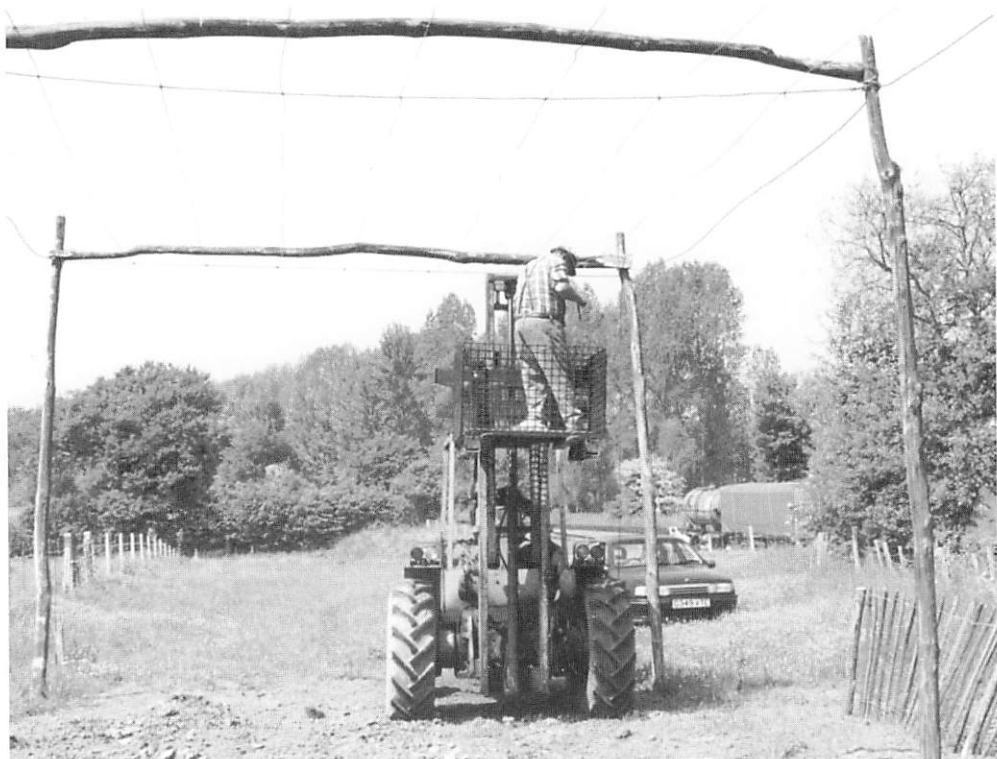
Calling all Alans & Charlies!

Next year marks 200 years of the Royal Horticultural Society and to mark the event they have declared next year as 'Year of the Garden'. As a tie-in with this we are planning our own 'Gardening' event with a Stations in Bloom event over one weekend in August. The railway will benefit by being publicised for free within the society, which has over 200,000 members nationwide. The plan is to spend the first half of the year creating floral and horticultural displays at all of our stations culminating in this special event. We are keen to hear from anybody who would like to be involved in this or who has any ideas that can be included. Please contact Nic Ashmore at Tenterden Station (nicola@kesr.org.uk) if you would like more details.

Bodiam

Further to the last report, another sack barrow, which will become No 4, has been rebuilt. It was donated by Graham Williams and was formally used at Folkestone West. A replica ash frame has been built by Ken Lee and it is being painted and re-assembled at Bodiam.

Hoppers Hut No 2 is gradually being furnished with suitable equipment from the 1940s and 50s. For the Weekend at War event in May, the hut became an Air Raid Warden base but it will revert to the hopping theme in time for the Hop Pickers weekend on 13th



Stringing the wires ready for growing hops at Bodiam, 2nd June 2003

(John Liddell)

and 14th September.

A small hop garden has been established in the corner of the field alongside the hoppers huts. Just 24 hop sets have been planted, which should eventually give us a harvest of about 48 hop bines for demonstration purposes. However the hops were not planted until April, and will need this year to become established, so it will be next year before we see the benefit. The ground preparation, poles, wires, planting and stringing were all organised by the Denier brothers and Dave Selmes, our friends who bring their tractors to the hopping event.

Arrangements for the hopping event are still being worked-up, but it will be similar to last year with a social event and supper on the Saturday evening, when we hope to run a late DMMU service as before from Tenterden Town. Volunteer assistance with staffing and catering will again be appreciated.

Mark 1 carriage TSO 4355 and kitchen fitted

PMV 1808 arrived at Bodiam in April and are parked at the end of the platform siding. The plan is to provide a catering facility at the station and with this in mind, 12 seats nearest to the PMV have been removed from the TSO and replaced by a serving counter across the carriage. The two Johns, Hicks and Liddell, have built access steps from the yard to the PMV and carriage and the connection of water and electricity to the PMV are awaited.

As usual John Hicks does a grand job in keeping all the grass cut and the Stevens Sisters have spent several days in the flower bed! John Liddell has spent time in altering the WC block main door to prevent it grounding and has constructed a bed for the hoppers hut.

An unusual venture has started at Bodiam to link the Castle and the station. For the first time since its formation in 1974, Rother District Council has licenced a horse-drawn bus service to operate on the public road.



Boris, Banjo and passengers on their way to the Castle, 10th June 2003

(John Liddell)

The service, which commenced on Saturday 7th June, aims to run on all days, weather permitting, when the trains are operating until the end of October. It runs from the Castle car park to the station, meeting all trains from Tenterden Town.

The operator is 'Here We Go' Ltd, which is run by Greg Searle of Battle, with the assistance of his father Alf, who acts as groom, and his mother Maureen, who collects the £1.00 each way fare. The horse-power is provided by Hackney X Welsh Cob horses Boris and Banjo, aged four and five respectively, and trained by champion carriage driver Boyd Excel at his Milton Keynes stables. They are brought in each day by horse-box from their Battle stables.

Initially the service operated into the garden nursery yard opposite the station, but this involved a gradient and the road sight-lines are not ideal, so the station yard is being tried out in July.

The covered wagon seats 16 passengers and was built about 20 years ago on a 1920s London dray underframe. It last operated giving rides in the New forest.

Membership (Pam and Sheila Stevens)

In the current year to the end of June we have gained 174 new members, 93 of whom will also be enjoying a Steam Locomotive Course. As you will see from the numbers below, there is still improvement to be made in getting our members to pay on time.

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Fully paid Voting Members | 1784 |
| Family and Juniors | <u>325</u> |
| | 2109 |
| Partly paid | 20 |
| Unpaid* | 284 |
| Cancelled, resigned, moved etc | 66 |
| Deceased | <u>8</u> |
| Entries on Register at 30.6.03 | <u>2487</u> |

*This figure appears to include some 30 working volunteers!

The final push for 2003 subscriptions is in process and the register will be finally pruned before we hand over to Stella Nuttman at the end of July.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone throughout the railway, who

has given us their help and support over the last two years without which we would have sunk long ago. We shall be there for Stella when she needs us, but hope mainly to be found pottering around Bodiam Station which has always been our main base.

Groups

CFBS News – Philip Pacey

By all accounts, the steam festival in April was another huge success, despite wet weather – after ten weeks of drought! – and a derailment. I'm told that, on the Saturday afternoon, the CFBS's Haine St Pierre 2-6-0T split the points while attempting to run around the train at Cayeux. A diesel was summoned to help rerail it; the diesel then set about hauling the train back to St Valery, but faltered on the rising gradient beyond Lanchères, so the steam locomotive coupled on at the back and pushed. It was perhaps fortunate that, during Saturday afternoon, much attention would have been focused on the other side of the bay, where the official inauguration of the newly restored Cail 2-6-0T and of the newly refurbished station area were taking place at Le Crotoy.

The Cail performed splendidly, and, I am told, looks 'very Victorian'. It was steamed for the first time since restoration – the first for many years – on April 16th, and again on the 17th when it hauled the 'voiture salon', which also dates from 1889, to Lanchères and back.

As on previous steam festivals, steam-hauled specials arrived by the main line at Noyelles, from Paris (Saturday), and from Le Havre and St Quentin (Sunday). The K&ESR 'P' class 0-6-0T was again a welcome standard gauge guest, although my informant felt that it was under-used and that, in consequence, the crew looked 'slightly bored' at times. If only it could have been accompanied by a carriage or two, providing a novel shuttle service between Noyelles and St Valery. Other visitors comprised a Cockerill 0-4-0 vertical boiler loco, the ubiquitous 'Marc Seguin' replica, several metre gauge locomotives, and a standard gauge and at least one metre gauge draisine. The K&ESR was of course also

represented by a steam roller. At St Valery, a horse-drawn tram carried passengers between the station and the quay.

Sadly I wasn't there myself; hopefully photographs, if not reports, from K&ESR members who were there will appear elsewhere in these pages. A fine selection of photos of the event can be seen on the CFBS Web site, which also includes links to a couple of other Web sites, belonging to individual enthusiasts, which include photos of the festival. The CFBS Web site is also currently carrying a message encouraging CFBS members to attend the K&ESR 'Fair Fest' at Northiam in July.

I had planned to spend some days in June working on the railway. I set out as planned on June 10th, but after an overnight stay at Calais I was unable to get further than Boulogne due to industrial action. Although there was a train at Calais Ville ready to depart for Boulogne – where, nowadays, it is necessary to change on to the through trains to Amiens and Paris which used to start at Calais – passengers were subsequently informed that it would not depart; the 24 hour strike of the day before was to be prolonged. It was evident that the railway workers at Calais were taking their lead from colleagues at Boulogne, and although SNCF laid on taxis to Boulogne, on arrival there it became very clear that that was 'the end of the line'. With no settlement in sight, I felt I had no choice other than to return to England while I still could. (In case you are wondering, I am one of those railway enthusiasts who actually travels by train!)

The final, definitive total of passenger journeys on the CFBS during 2002 is 93,834, by some way the best ever. The CFBS now regards 85,000 as a minimum, below which

the railway would cease to be viable. A marked decline in the number of visiting school parties in recent years has fortunately been compensated by growth in the number of individuals, which has more than doubled since 1995.

Some unwelcome news is that the CFBS has recently been targeted by vandals; stock at Le Crotoy and Noyelles has suffered from 'taggage', a new word to me, which is not in any of my dictionaries of various sizes and ages but which I take to refer to graffiti.

At St Valery, work on the first stage of reconstruction of the canal lock has been completed; it comprises a new, third channel, with sluice gate, alongside the two existing ones, where the canal enters the lock close to the CFBS depot and former halt at St Valery Canal. Apparently this is already enabling water to flow more freely, reducing the risk of flooding. Work will continue during the next three winters; at some stage the railway will be temporarily ruptured.

Museum

The rostering arrangements for attendants have probably worked better this year than ever before. At the time of writing (late June) there are no gaps until the end of August. 'Thank you' to all who perform this task.

Paying visitor numbers are running ahead of last year for the period March to May, (1400 in 2002 and 1516 in 2003). On 16th March we recorded our highest number on one day since the Museum opened. Unfortunately all 370 were complimentary, as that was the marketing arrangement for the station centenary day. On 15th May we also recorded one of our lowest totals when just two people came to the Museum.

There was general rejoicing when our Pullman car 'Theodora' moved from the front of Carriage and Wagon on 17th June. Once again the station may be seen from the Museum and vice versa, and picnickers on the Museum green can again watch the train movements.

Thanks once again to those who have donated transport related books to the Museum sales area. These book sales fund the general running costs of the Museum.

Ashford Area Group

The meeting in May was the 25th year of meetings of the Ashford Group, which started in January 1978. For the evening, Dave Baker, for the first time, showed a full length feature film called The Last Journey made in 1936. The story line was corny, but in the words of John Huntley "It is the best record that survives of the GWR in the 30s packed with steam action of Panniers, Castles, Kings, 0-6-0's and 0-4-2's, with scenes of Paddington, Slough, West Ealing, Taunton, Plymouth, Milbay Docks and the line from Reading to Basingstoke, and not a HiViz vest in sight!" A truly unforgettable evening.

The group joined with the R.C.T.S for a very enjoyable visit to the Fawley Railway, the private standard gauge railway of Sir William McAlpine. This has an incline of 1 in 14 which was negotiated by a 1913 Hudswell Clark 0-6-0. The extensive museum contains an enormous amount of fascinating railwayana, and parts of various stations that McAlpine's have worked on are spread around the grounds. We also joined R.C.T.S. for a trip to the Chalk Pits Museum for their Gala Steam up Day.

Our visit to Torry Hill Railway, the 9" gauge railway of Lord Kingsdown is an evening visit on Friday 1st August starting at 5pm and tickets at £2 are available from Eric Graves. Proceeds will go towards our fund for the restoration of the second 'Chatham' 4-wheel carriage rescued from a bungalow in Ashford.

We meet on the third Wednesday in the month at BR Social Club, Beaver Road, Ashford, and visitors are always very welcome. Our programme for the rest of the year is:-

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 17th September | Steam in colour in the 50s and 60s, slides by the late Derek Cross shown by his son David |
| 15th October | The Wensleydale Railway Project by David Gibson |
| 19th November | Railways of China by Donald Wilson |
| 17th December | Hunting the Elks – Scandinavian Railways by Tim Lawrence |

From Red to Black

Philip Shaw reviews the accounts for 2002, which show that there has been a considerable improvement in the Company's finances

The Tenterden Railway Company achieved a profit of £75,952 in the year to 31st December 2002, which compared with a loss of £39,403 in the previous year. How did this come about? The full report and accounts will be mailed to members in due course, but here is a resume of some of the key points.

The Profit & Loss account figures can be analysed as follows:-

| | 2002 | 2001 |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| | £ | £ |
| Profit from commercial activities | 172,362 | 173,648 |
| Loss from charitable activities | (46,169) | (88,915) |
| <i>Trading profit combined</i> | <i>126,193</i> | <i>84,733</i> |
| Membership subscriptions | 42,782 | 42,188 |
| Donations & Gift Aid | 58,265 | 14,193 |
| Depreciation of fixed assets | (69,215) | (70,746) |
| Central finance costs | (82,073) | (101,328) |
| Exceptional costs | - | (8443) |
| <i>Profit/ (loss) for the year - Total</i> | <i>75,952</i> | <i>(39,403)</i> |

Our commercial activities comprise trading through the gift/book shop at Tenterden, Catering from the Buffet at Tenterden and the on-train trolley service, the Wealden Pullman trains and income from driver training courses.

Our charitable activities include the core timetable train services, including Santas and Thomas. Membership subscriptions and donations remain a key feature in our on-going profitability.

The core train service for 'turn up and go' visitors, with no frills attached, has shown no growth in numbers over the years and, taken as a whole, is unprofitable if measured solely against the fares generated. Special events such as Hoppers Weekend and Weekend at War improved numbers dramatically over these periods and Santas and Thomas trains continued to attract large and profitable business. We also derived commercial income (shop, catering) from most of our passengers. The overall economics have not changed markedly since we extended the line to Bodiam.

Last year we reduced the number of operating days from 222 to 168 to eliminate the least patronised trains. Whilst this resulted in a 6%

drop in overall passenger numbers, average loadings rose from 70 to 87 - welcome but still not enough to be comfortable within the context of justifying the running of a steam train. However, we cut our operating costs - notably a £25,000 reduction in the coal bill and took a hard look at the wages bill. Staffing levels had risen over the years as we took on more paid people to cope with daily running. By 2001 this was too high to sustain and we had to make some unwelcome but necessary redundancies.

We now have some 20 paid staff compared with 28 at the peak and have achieved an £86,000 annual reduction in the wages bill. The need for volunteers remains as crucial now as ever it was.

It is worth bearing these points in mind in the context of the economics of operation if any serious proposals are ever put forward for extending the line through to Robertsbridge.

Our charitable status is of immense benefit to us in that we are able to claim Gift Aid on fares (gift aid overall is worth £40,000 in a full year) and exemption from business rates. The latter would be an intolerable burden on our cost structure if the concession to charities were removed.

Our commercial activities (the profits from which are covenanted over to the Charity) have become progressively more important to us over the years. Colonel Stephens Railway Enterprises, the subsidiary which accounts for these activities, earned profits of £172,362 last year. Around 30% of this came from the shop, 15% from the Pullman trains, 45% from general catering, and the remainder from driving courses. Arguably, specialty products are where the future lies for us. They combine innovation with a high level of customer service, repeat business and high added value. Many of these activities are also pre-booked and enhance our cash flows in the lean winter and early spring months.

On the balance sheet, our net debt also showed a very noticeable improvement last year.

Excluding the bonds, debt fell from £569,130 to £351,146. All of this debt is in the form of a fixed term bank loan, repayable in instalments, with interest linked to base rate. We do not have

Weekend at War

Photographed by John Liddell



Over the weekend of 3 May to 5 May, the railway re-enacted a scene of World War II in occupied France. Visitors were able to board trains at Tenterden and visit allied and enemy territory at Northiam and Bodiam.



(Continued from page 19)

an overdraft and it is not envisaged that we shall need one in future.

So what of the future? The Company is seeing good business this year and consumer spending in our region remains reasonably buoyant. However, it is still seemingly difficult to control costs to the degree that is necessary, despite having a well developed budgeting process. The costs associated with maintaining a fleet of steam locomotives and carriages is never easy to predict, particularly in the knowledge that

deferred expenditure is always in the wings in the run up period to a major overhaul which may accumulate over a period of 10 years. However, we must re-double our efforts to do so.

Our much publicised financial problems are now in the past, but we must remain prudent in our spending so that we can accumulate reserves year by year for both capital projects and to fund bond repayments.

The Author is Chairman of the Company's Finance Committee

THE K&ESR 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

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.

May 2003 Wealden Pullman

| | | | |
|-----|--------------------|-------|-----|
| 1st | Christine Tibbatts | (498) | £60 |
| 2nd | D J Strivens | (231) | £45 |
| 3rd | Suzanne Ward | (004) | £35 |
| 4th | J R King | (469) | £25 |
| 5th | Mrs J E Sparrow | (207) | £20 |
| 6th | D K L Morgan | (358) | £10 |
| 7th | Chris MacNaughton | (324) | £5 |

Registered with Ashford Borough Council, under Section 5, Schedule 1 of the Lotteries & Amusements Act, 1976

K&ESR 300 Club Donations List

| Date | Item | Amount |
|--------|--|----------|
| May-03 | Donation for purchase of RU from Bluebell Railway | £1000.00 |
| Feb-03 | Stills Boiler and Sink and Work Top for RMB | £1777.96 |
| Jan-03 | Donation for purchase Dave Stratton's Coach | £1500.00 |
| Nov-02 | Reservation Software Booking System | £500.00 |
| Oct-02 | Reservation Software Booking System | £1250.00 |
| Mar-02 | Water Softener Plant Rolvenden | £1781.00 |
| Mar-02 | Safety Fencing Pullman Siding | £424.00 |
| Mar-02 | Tarmacadem at Tenterden | £2040.00 |
| Mar-01 | Cab Fabrication of Terrier | £3000.00 |
| Mar-01 | Donation for restoration - Pullman Car Barbara | £3584.97 |
| Mar-00 | Purchase Water Boiler Tenterden Mess Room | £372.00 |
| Jan-00 | Additional Donation re Cranbrook Road Power | £608.57 |
| Oct-98 | Donation re Map & History Board for Rolvenden Platform | £355.00 |

June 2003 Northiam Station

| | | | |
|-----|----------------|-------|-----|
| 1st | Di Siviour | (109) | £80 |
| 2nd | Carol Mitchell | (075) | £60 |
| 3rd | Barry Holmes | (262) | £45 |
| 4th | Lynn Smith | (131) | £35 |
| 5th | R G Jones | (592) | £25 |
| 6th | Mrs S M Spring | (346) | £20 |
| 7th | Frank Lambert | (386) | £10 |
| 8th | T P Howell | (530) | £5 |

| | | |
|--------|--|----------|
| Jun-98 | Donation for Redecoration Toilets at Rolvenden | £460.00 |
| Jun-98 | Installation of electricity to Cranbrook Rd Crossing | £2006.00 |
| May-98 | Donation - Hillcraft Commemorative Plaque Museum | £150.00 |
| Dec-97 | Donation to TRC for Print Rollers | £63.45 |
| Nov-97 | Transport of Portakabin | £600.00 |
| Oct-97 | Payment of print rollers | £49.93 |
| Jul-97 | TRC crane hire | £400.00 |
| Apr-97 | Donation to purchase Heidelberg Print Machine | £225.00 |
| Mar-97 | TRC donation | £250.00 |
| Oct-96 | Donation for rollers Peerless Machine Print Room | £99.36 |
| May-96 | Purchase of laminator and Pouches | £244.41 |
| May-96 | Donation to resurface Tenterden forecourt | £1000.00 |
| Aug-95 | Donation to Purchase of Thompson Plateau Printer | £500.00 |
| Jul-95 | Contractors Equipment Hire Air Breakers and Breaker Steels | £518.41 |
| Mar-94 | Donation for children's Playground Equipment | £3736.00 |

GRAND TOTAL OF DONATIONS TO DATE £28496.06

Twins Together

A visit to France related by Norman Brice
with photographs by John Liddell

The last weekend of April 2003 saw the largest participation so far by the K&ESR at the Fête de la Vapeur organised by our twin railway, the Chemin de Fer de la Baie de Somme (CFBS). Mugs of British Railways tea vied with Muscadet and the 'all day British breakfast' faced competition from filled baguettes and ubiquitous frites when many members of the K&ESR paid our regular visit. Normally every two years, the 2002 event had had to be postponed to 2003 because the French elections in 2002 meant that no officials were available to help plan this major event in the otherwise sleepy French hamlet of Noyelles, the hub of the CFBS network.

The history of K&ESR's participation in this important regional tourist event goes back to 1996 when we signed a formal Twinning Agreement with the CFBS, an agreement which not only fostered social links but facilitated our eligibility for InterReg II funds. These European grants were a vital component in our financial package for the

Bodiam extension and offered opportunities for exchanges of both personnel and railway artefacts. Although largely metre gauge, CFBS has some stretches of dual gauge (metre gauge inside standard gauge and the points and crossovers have to be seen to be believed!), enabling standard gauge trains to run from Noyelles to St Valery Canal station, where the main engineering dépôt is located. (The standard gauge track actually continues as far as St Valery Quai Station but the weight limit and sharp curves on the Albert Canal bridge prohibit large locomotives from crossing it.)

Taking full advantage of this standard gauge track, in 1996 we displayed the P Class and in 1998 the Terrier locomotive Knowle returned to French soil; I say returned because in 1917, Knowle had played an important logistical support rôle in the Great War, working in Boulogne docks for the British Expeditionary Force.





Regrettably, our financial difficulties in 2000 precluded our sending any engines to the Fête de la Vapeur, so in 2003 we were determined to support our Twin railway more fully. And support it we did. Once again, the P Class represented the K&ESR: indeed, resplendent in its new livery, many of our French friends did not recognise it as the same engine they had seen 7 years before. Not content with just a steam railway engine, Carriage & Wagon Manager John Brice displayed a family steam roller and K&ESR pump trolley, whilst Chairman Norman Brice took two Lister Autotrucks as well, all types of vehicles apparently never seen before in that part of France, judging from the quizzical reaction of most French visitors to the festival. When not being driven, the Listers' flat load platforms offered ideal picnic tables and were much used for that purpose.

Grateful recognition must be paid at this point to both Waitrose and Eurotunnel, whose generous sponsorship of the transporter lorry and a Tunnel crossing respectively made these

latter displays possible. Thanks are also due to the locomotive crew who laboured hard on Friday night to prepare the engine for work on Saturday and on Sunday night to prepare it for its return, as well as our two lorry drivers whose enthusiasm and efforts made the journeys possible. And again the Terrier Trust had no difficulty in filling coach excursions from Tenterden on both days.

The Fête de la Vapeur followed its traditional pattern. There was a major celebration of newly completed improvements, this year being the turn of Le Crottoy where numerous national and local elected and other dignitaries celebrated the opening of a museum inside the station building as well as the completion of a new approach road. But perhaps the crowning glory was the baptism of a 'new' engine, completely restored by CFBS. This was the '130 Cail' (2-6-0 to the non-metrics), built in 1889 and which was reputed to have worked on the construction of the Panama Canal but which latterly spent many years in a museum in Detroit before

being shipped back to its native France. All the ceremonies being accompanied of course by the town band, ribbon cutting, champagne bottle smashing on the buffer beam, speeches and a reception.

As ever, CFBS ran special services all day from Noyelles to Cayeux and Le Crotoy, as well as organising various fascinating displays at all the stations. These offered more than enough to keep the enthusiasts (French and many, many English) happy over the complete weekend and, even if not intentionally, were themed on extremes. Massive main-line engines, American built, oil burning giants including a 141 (ie 2-8-2) needing a ladder to look inside, towered over 4 seat petrol-engined draisines (railcars) and electric bicycles; the Marc Seguin (the same age as Rocket and which appeared at Tenterden for our own 25th Anniversary) stood alongside the latest regional offerings from SNCF; and a hippodrome (horse-drawn tram) ran along St Valery quay. There were historic cars, display stands by many of the other French preserved lines and a model railway tent. The weather was one of extremes as well, ranging from brilliant sunshine to monsoon rains. Indeed, had there been more preserved

military vehicles, one might almost have said it was fine weather for DUKWs.

And what of the mugs of BR tea and the all day breakfast mentioned earlier? Near the site where Guillaume de Normandie (better known to us as William the Conqueror), embarked upon the first attempts since the Romans to introduce European culture and a single currency to us Anglo-Saxons, an enterprising British couple has turned the tables by renovating a derelict building opposite Noyelles station and opened an art gallery and café, the first point to be visited by the arriving Tenterden coach passengers! As well as French fare, they offered traditional tea and fry-ups for the less adventurous who could savour these whilst looking at a range of railway and other paintings.

If I may end on a personal note, I would like most sincerely to thank our French hosts for their usual very warm welcome to us all (which for me included champagne from plastic cups whilst sheltering from the rain in a specially-installed garden shed). We look forward to welcoming them to Northiam for our own Steam & Country Fair and returning their hospitality.



Trials with Railmotors

How the First Ford Railmotors entered K&ESR Service – researched by Brian Janes

The Austen papers gifted to the Colonel Stephens Railway Archive continue to yield much of interest.

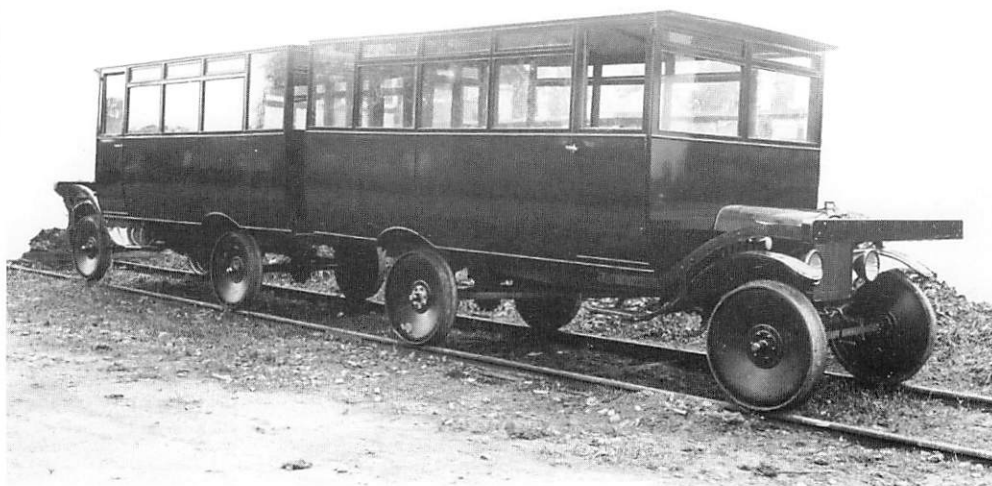
Two large sheets of lined paper, completed in pencil in W H Austen's handwriting, shed considerable light on the initial performance and duties of Stephens first Ford Petrol Railmotor set. No delivery date for this pioneering set has been fully established but the sheets commence on Thursday 15 February 1923 and it is highly probable that this was the first day of normal service.

The sheets detail the daily mileage and petrol and lubricating oil consumption for the next few months closing on June 9th, listing in passing service failures (although unfortunately not specifying the reasons) and the trains on which those failures occurred. From this some interesting deductions are possible.

The Railmotors appear to have been used during the trial period to directly replace steam services. They worked the 7.06 am train from Tenterden Town to Robertsbridge Junction returning to Headcorn at 8.18. On leaving Headcorn at 9.51 they reached Tenterden at

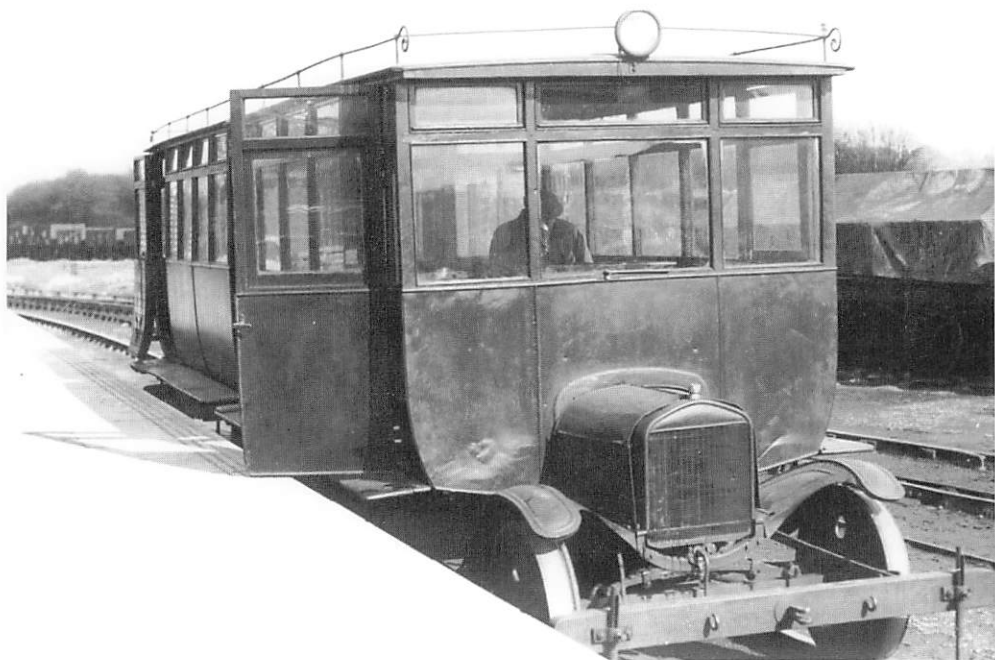
10.23, travelling on to Robertsbridge at 10.40 with arrival there at 11.22. Departing at 11.40 to Tenterden, on arrival at 12.25 they were relieved by a steam train for the remainder of the Headcorn run. This was the end of their Saturday turn. On weekdays they left at 3.50 for a Headcorn trip arriving back at Tenterden at 5.05. The daily weekday mileage given for this was 93miles 14 chains which will have included an empty stock run from Rolvenden to Tenterden and return each day. Saturday workings omitted the Headcorn run so totalled 74 miles 6 chains (no Sunday trains ran).

The first failures occurred on 26th and 27th February 1923 when the motors could only complete the first round trip to Robertsbridge on both days. Two weeks later on 14th March a more serious in service failure occurred when the set failed and was unable to do the last Headcorn run. It was out of service for two days, then failed again the next day at Rolvenden on the first trip before it could complete the run up the bank to Tenterden. It did not work at all the next day (the 19th) and on the 21st did not start to run till the afternoon. Caution and perhaps traffic levels then dictated



Ford railmotor set No 1 posed for a publicity photograph soon after delivery in 1923.

(Colonel Stephens Historical Archive)



Ford railmotor set No 2 at Robertsbridge, 14th March 1931

(H C Casserley)

that it should not run over Easter (28th March to 6th April) as no entries were made. Although the railmotors then resumed their normal roster, petrol consumption had been rising during the latter part of May and continued to rise reaching some 50% above previous levels. Enough was enough and they were taken out of service for a week commencing 21st April.

There might have been a myriad of reasons for individual failures but the problems of March and April seem to have been due to the carbonising of the engines. An analysis of the lubricating oil was sought from David Kirkaldy & Sons, Testing and Experimenting Works, 99 Southwark Street, London and a report dated 28th May 1923 written in elegant longhand is also in the Austen papers. It states

"This sample is a light mineral oil of good quality though the flash point is somewhat low. It is of too low a viscosity for general use in petrol engines... and would only be suitable for those employing a splash system of lubrication. The addition of about 5% of non-drying fixed oil such as lard is desirable, tending to reduce the liability to carbonise in the cylinder."

From the suggested use of lard it will be seen

that the days of mineral oil additives had not yet arrived. A de-coke* and change of oil seems to have done the trick. The set returned to service with one round trip on 30th April and settled down in regular service with petrol and oil consumption reduced for the rest of the trials, the records for which terminated on June 9th.

The railmotors having proved themselves they were then used to establish a new service pattern that was shown in Bradshaw for July 1923. The set was used to supplement the existing somewhat minimalist steam services established during World War 1. In this it now followed the classic pattern of railmotor use by increasing service frequencies in an attempt to counter competition from road based transport. In the July timetable the railmotors were shown as working the 9.20am train from Tenterden Town to Robertsbridge Junction returning to Headcorn at 10.20. On leaving Headcorn at 11.55 they reached Tenterden at 12.35p.m and travelled on to Robertsbridge at 1.20 with arrival at 2.10; returning at 2.25 (2.45 on Saturdays) to Tenterden. On weekdays they then substituted, as they had during the trials, for a previously steam service which left at 3.50 for a Headcorn return trip arriving back at 5.05 This finished



The Sheffield set enters Bodiam station from Northiam, c 1936. Note hop fields on either side.

(R C Riley Collection)

their weekday service but on Saturday and Wednesday they finished with an evening round trip to Headcorn

This augmented service was a bold and much needed marketing effort. Bus competition had been serious enough to warrant mention in annual reports as early as 1913. In that year 105,000 passengers were carried, by 1919 the figure had dropped to 85,000 and to 68,000 in 1922. With the coming of the railmotors the 1923 total train mileage leapt by nearly 25% to 84000 miles, marginally surpassing pre-war levels. The railmotors accounted for all of this and more. These high total mileages were maintained until in 1932 the railway went into receivership and services were cut to the bone. Initially therefore the Railmotors were not used simply to cut overall running costs but to control increased costs in the expectation of increased receipts. For the struggling Headcorn section however some savings were urgent and the motors continued to be used to replace obviously unremunerative steam runs.

When the second railmotor set came into use the next year, cost savings became increasingly attractive and the railmotors slowly took over more steam mileage, generally around a third of all mileage at a little short of 30,000 miles each year. Indeed during 1926 with a prolonged coal strike and the General Strike the railmotors

accounted for well over half of all services. With the arrival of the new Sheffield railmotors in 1929 mileage rose again by about one third although this did not last as the pioneering car was finally withdrawn soon after.

Despite initial success the railmotors had not been able to staunch the haemorrhage of passengers. Holding steady briefly in 1923 passenger numbers continued to decline and although they recovered slightly in the later 20s they had by then reduced to half the 1919 levels. With the railway passing into receivership in 1932 the end of the experiment was in sight. Annual passenger numbers fell precipitately to 20,000. As passengers had deserted to the more comfortable and frequent buses and steam was needed to move the goods, railmotor mileage never again exceeded 14,000 a year and both sets fell out of use in 1937/38.

However back in 1923 Stephens had good cause to be pleased with the railmotors and the results of the initial trials. Capital costs were low; reliability and high daily mileages seemed possible and indeed so proved. Average petrol consumption was a very good 15 miles to the gallon particularly when it is considered that the second unit was always being hauled. Nor in all probability was it realised at that stage that the type of gearbox fitted to these cars was never completely in neutral and was causing extra

wear and drag when hauled. This deficiency might incidentally account for the relatively early demise of the pioneering unit. Subsequent motors were fitted with the Supraphord transmission that eliminated this problem. Other costs would also have been favourable; one member of the crew was saved, the driver probably received less than an engineman and overtime was no doubt cut on the loco side. Economies could be made and the service supplemented, and if comfort was cut for the passengers then they were certainly no worse off than using the contemporary competing road bus services (although rapid road vehicle development soon changed this dramatically)

Spare one final thought for the workman who no doubt laboured up the hill from Rolvenden to the Garage to fetch up to ten one-gallon cans of petrol each working day. No bulk supplies then. Running railways was a tough business even when the internal combustion engine arrived.

SOURCES: Colonel Stephens Railway Archives, K&ESR Annual Reports

*For those of the younger generation who did not experience the joys of pre-1960s motoring this is the physical de-carbonising of the inside of the cylinders of petrol engines.

Footnote: A Recreated Ford Railmotor

For its centenary this year the Ford Motor Company sponsored a competition for the best restored model 'T' Ford. Amongst the 43 or so entries, one bold soul, Colin Shutt, decided to turn parts and a chassis he had obtained into a recreated Colonel Stephens railmotor. In just over a year Colin managed to put the main superstructure together with the benefit of interchangeable road wheels for the sake of flexibility. Transported to Yeovil for the competition Colin hoped to bring the vehicle to Tenterden in May for display but transport difficulties prevented this. Safely back in Yorkshire Colin is now working on completing details and an authentic interior. When completed he will put it back to back with a 1 ton model 'T' Truck he has already restored and which he will put on rail wheels. This authentic pairing will then be available for show at all important venues (like Tenterden we hope). And quite a sight, and sound, it will be – B.J.

Colin would welcome any interested local, or not so local, members particularly any who can lend a hand with fitting out at Wressle Brickyard Farm, Newsholme, and Nr. Howden East Riding, Yorkshire DN14 7JX. Please phone him on 01757 630193 beforehand though.



The frames of the Shefflex set in the dump siding at Rolvenden in 1939, behind sits one of the cars from Ford set No 2.
(Colonel Stephens Historical Archive)

Book Reviews

Railways Restored 2003 by Alan C. Butcher
published by Ian Allan price £13.99. 192 pages
with soft covers ISBN 07710 2933 4

Railways Restored is now in its 24th year of publication and includes a comprehensive listing of information on heritage railways, museums and sites throughout the country including locomotives, rolling stock, addresses and contact numbers. The attractions are listed alphabetically within separate sections for England, Wales and Ireland. There is also an index which lists the entries within counties. At the back of the book is a timetable section for many of the working railways. This is a working guide and much effort has been put into condensing the content to facilitate easy handling, although visually the layout is not all that attractive. Furthermore, the spasmodic photographs are something of an irrelevance. This is a more comprehensive guide on the subject than any other available and geared towards the enthusiast market. As a guide book, however, it is expensive – Hudson's *Historic Houses & Gardens* guide, for example, with some 600 pages is a mere £9.95. **PDS**

The Sheppey Light Railway by Peter A. Harding
published by the author privately and available at
the Railway bookshop price £3.50. 32 pages with
card covers in A5 format. ISBN 0952 3458 70

Peter Harding's little books are exceptionally good value for money and sell well at Tenterden. This latest title is a revised edition of the same book that he first published in 1984. There is additional information and photographs and, as usual, the whole layout is visually attractive and appealing to both enthusiasts and those with a more casual interest in the subject. The Sheppey Light Railway attracted influential support from the start and Stephens was probably appointed Engineer because of his family's connection with Lord Harris, who had land interests in the area. In the circumstances the finance for its construction (usually a problem with light railway schemes) was never in doubt. Nevertheless, traffic was always modest and grandiose schemes to develop Minster-on-Sea and Leysdown as major tourist areas, which might have given significant business failed to materialise. It is doubtful if the SLR ever achieved a profit in its working life of 50 years. Visually, it was very much a 'Stephens' line and the station structures were similar to those found on the K&ESR and elsewhere in the Empire. When closure came in 1950 it was no surprise. **PDS**

Rolvenden Steam Enterprises

A history of the organisation which owns three locomotives which run on the Kent and East Sussex Railway. By Richard Crumpling.

In September 2004 Rolvenden Steam Enterprises will have been in existence for 25 years. So now seems an appropriate time to recall its reasons for formation and some of the significant events along the way.

The original members were and still are, David Brailsford, Alan Castle, Richard Crumpling, Robert Forsythe and John Liddell. Laurence Donaldson, the current locomotive manager at Rolvenden, joined the group after a few years.

From the beginning, we all had one common goal, which was to secure a steam locomotive and to restore it to as near original condition as possible. We also wished to see it run for the benefit of the Tenterden Railway Company.

So the search was on. We were open minded about the type, the most important criteria had to be the state of the boiler. There were and still are several locomotives on offer that are in a very sorry state. However, we did not wish to burden ourselves and the TRC with such a millstone so the lengthy search continued.

At the same time we had reached an agreement with Bob Forsythe to assist him with a locomotive that he had bought in 1977. This was Hunslet 0-6-0 ST, 3781, of 1952, Linda.

The loco had been bought unrestored but complete from the NCB at Maesteg, S Wales. Working closely with RSE, No 26 entered the works and was restored at RSE's expense with

considerable input from Bob. After several years and much work from a great number of people Linda entered service following a televised naming ceremony performed by Donald Sinden, on 23rd August 1988.

Our search went on for another loco. Our records show that we made over 80 enquiries throughout England, Scotland and Wales. The requirements for a powerful but relatively light locomotive remain paramount on the K&ESR.

At last, Robert Stephenson and Hawthorn, 7086 was located at the Titanic Steamship Company, near Uttoxeter. Bob and a certain B.R. boiler inspector, Mr Knight, went for a good look. The resulting report was very favourable bearing in mind the limited access to certain areas of the loco and more importantly the asking price was acceptable. RSE purchased the loco from Mark Bamford (the son of J. C. Bamford).

Fortunately, Richard Crumpling and David Lumsden (transport contractor) knew each other following many discussions in a local ale house. An extremely generous transport deal was negotiated. Richard did not see 7086 until he went to Uttoxeter to load the loco. This was done with the aid of a JCB, which pushed the loco on to the low loader. It was a pleasure to see the loco sitting on the trailer in the yard that was full of salvaged propellers and ships anchors.

On arrival back in Kent that evening plans were made to unload the following day. The loco, provisionally named 'Rolvenden', was properly laid up and put into store. It spent many years at Tenterden as a static exhibit, but covered thousands of miles being driven by enthusiastic children of all ages.

Ironically several years later 7086, was considered surplus to requirements and sold off the railway. The locomotive is currently being restored by the Southern Locomotive Group at their base in Kent.

Another engine in which we took a great interest in the early eighties was Hunslet 0-6-0 ST, 3797, of 1953, 'Sapper', then owned by the Army, but actually on site at Rolvenden. Approaches were made to the army, but at that stage no firm commitment was made as to the engine's future and RSE had more than enough to do elsewhere.

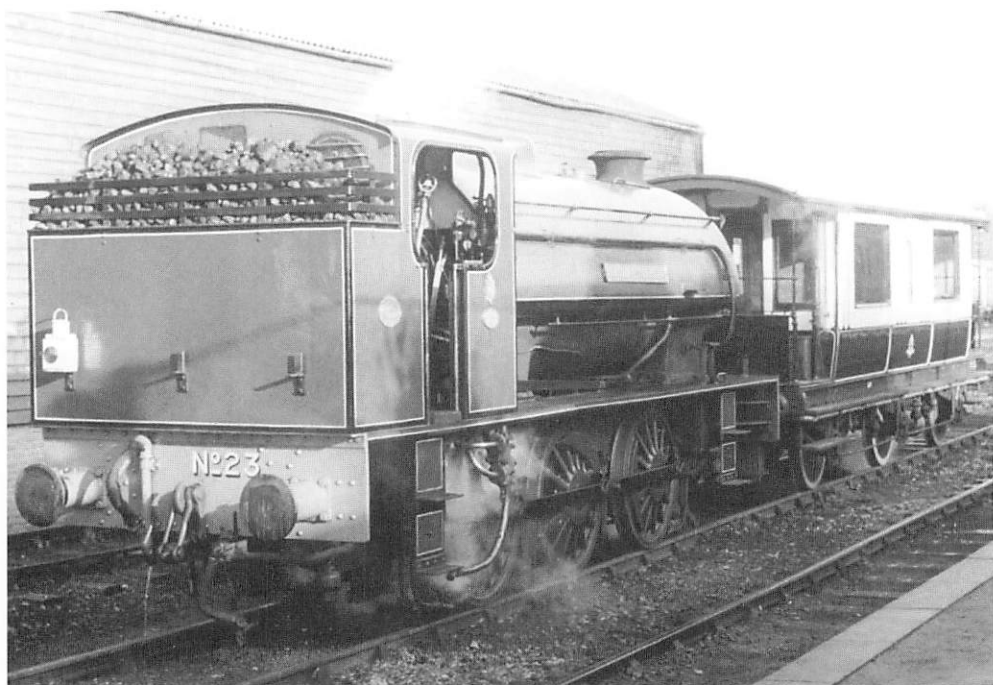
Shortly afterwards the M.O.D. put the loco up for tender. Tim Stanger assembled a formative group (including RSE) and without much hope put in a bid. Many other railways had expressed a keen interest. To our surprise and delight our bid was accepted.

As we had thought the loco was in excellent condition and was put into traffic for less than £10,000. The loco is now named 'Northiam' and



No 26 'Linda' running round at Northiam, 21st December 1991

(Brian Stephenson)



No 23 sits at Tenterden with the LNWR inspection saloon in 1992

(Jim Berryman)

is owned by the Northiam Group. For the record this group comprises, Dick Beckett, RSE, John Liddell, Richard Crumpling and Jackie Brown.

Thanks to John Miller and some excellent lining out, No 25 carries original Rother Valley Railway blue livery and continues to do good work on the railway.

Another major aspect of loco preservation is the need for spares. When our group was first formed there were still industrial sites using these type of machines. This resulted in more searching of disposal lists, more telephone calls and many miles to far flung places to recover as many parts as possible to secure the future of our locos.

We purchased a large amount of spares from the now defunct steam centre at Southport, Lancs. Derek Foster was breaking an Austerity and Bob had acquired a skip full of parts at a good price. When the skip (an old coal mine tub) arrived at Rolvenden on a lorry it was too heavy to offload in one go. All the items had to be removed individually. Despite the time it took the effort was well worth it.

We returned to the Welsh Valleys one weekend with a small pickup truck to collect a large number of fire bars and other items from a van body situated at the closed down washery at Maesteg. The journey home was a lot slower than that on the way down and we had to stop to put a bit more air in the truck's tyres. But again it was worth the effort. We also recognised the need for proper storage and consequently purchased a Southern Railway CCT and an LMS Box van for our use. These items have since been replaced by steel ships containers and the rolling stock has been sold onto other owners on the railway. Both vans have been restored and are in use as stores.

We now have an accurate list of spares that is updated by one of our members.

Change was on the horizon when the Mid Hants railway showed an interest in No 26, Linda. They were looking for a suitable engine to turn initially into a 'Percy' and subsequently into a very convincing 'Thomas'. The deal was done and the timing fell about right as David Stratton had just purchased a Pannier tank, 1638, and wished to sell No 24, 'William H Austen' to a group on the railway. Thus Bob and RSE

became the owners of this locomotive. Linda's last working day was 15th August 1993.

With no disrespect to William H Austen, No 24 soon became 'Rolvenden' and it was returned to traffic in the same BR livery as that carried by No 26. It carries nameplates cast from the originals carried by K&ESR locomotive No 2.

RSE teamed up with Bob on No 23, 'Holman F. Stephens', (Hunslet, 0-6-0 ST, 3791, 1952), which meant that we were now involved with all three Austerities left on the K&ESR. Having three similar locomotives available and a large pool of spares we would like to think that we have helped the maintenance and operational process of the railway. What is certain is that we have been able to make savings when parts need replacing. A certain amount of bulk purchasing has also helped many interested parties when parts have had to be renewed.

No 23's overhaul is progressing steadily and it is hoped that it will again become a good performer for the railway. The loco will be outshopped in a green K&ESR livery with black and white lining.

All three locomotives have received new smokeboxes, bunkers and a modified hopper ashpan. This has led to a modified lower centre frame stretcher being fitted. Additional lubrication systems have also been fitted as the need has arisen.

We have purposely not gone into a lot of technical details in this article. Should anybody require exact information this can always be provided from our copious records.

Richard's own memories of steam are from the Tonbridge / Redhill line including the most wonderful, almost model, Penshurst station. Needless to say the station is several miles from the village of Penshurst. Clapham Junction was also a favourite haunt so he saw everything from the fantastic C Class on the goods to the Golden Arrow and lots of shunting as well.

RSE did not set out to become an Austerity group, but we have to admit that our predecessors knew exactly what they were doing when they produced these locos.

The great numbers in use at various industrial sites was testimony in itself to the robustness of



David Brailsford addresses the audience at the naming ceremony for No 25, Northiam, 30th May 1999

(John Liddell)



No 24 about to leave Northiam with a Camra headboard, 21st October 2000

(John Liddell)

the design. We have no doubt in our minds as to the operational suitability of these engines for the tasks that they perform.

Although this article has been written by Richard Crumpling as Chairman of RSE, he cannot over emphasise that the organisation is a team effort. We rely heavily on the skills, expertise and professional experience of all the other members and staff. Over the last 25 years this has been a key element in the success of RSE and a great amount of thanks is due to all involved. We take a pride in the way our engines are kept so that they may continue to help run our railway.

Over the years RSE has always funded its own projects and does not receive monies from any outside source. We have now become involved, in a small way, with the ex BR 68078 association. (An original LNER J94.) This is currently based locally and being worked on.

Where to now with Rolvenden Steam Enterprises? Well business as usual we hope.

Richard Crumpling can be contacted on Staplehurst 01580 892506 should anybody wish for further information on these locomotives.

Rolvenden Steam Enterprises – Stock List

| K&ESR No | Year built (wks no) builder | WD No | Date to K&ESR | K&ESR Name |
|----------|-----------------------------|--------------|---------------|--|
| 23 | 1952 (3791) HE | 191 later 91 | Feb 1972 | 'Holman F Stephens' |
| 24 | 1953 (3800) HE | 200 later 95 | Jan 1971 | 'William H Austen' 'Rolvenden' from July 1995 |
| 25* | 1953 (3797) HE | 197 later 97 | Sept 1977 | 'Northiam' |
| 27 | 1943 (7086) RSH | 75050 | Sept 1979 | 'Rolvenden' until 1995 Sold 1995 |

HE = Hunslet Engine Co RSH – Robert, Stephenson and Hawthorns

*Owned by the Northiam group of which RSE is a member

Another Centenary...

John Miller describes the recent re-enactment of the opening of the Tenterden extension to the Rother Valley Railway in 1903.

Since 2000 we seem to have had a spate of centenaries and on Sunday 16 March last, we celebrated the latest, that of Tenterden Town station. This time we did it in style.

The event was based on that held 100 years before to the very day. Two marquees set up for the earlier 'Thomas' event were retained. One for a VIP reception and the other for public catering and the Harris Brothers gallopers were erected in the yard. A dais for the speeches was positioned in the gap between the platform and the yard.

On Sunday morning chairs were set out close to locomotive 'Sutton' for Cranbrook Town Band and promptly at 11.00am the first public train departed from Tenterden. The train service operated only between Tenterden Town and Rolvenden, effectively between the new terminus and the old, and passengers were given the rare opportunity of conducted tours around Rolvenden Works.

At 11.51am the Victorian train departed with No 32678 (thinly disguised as RVR No 3) carrying the 'company party' consisting of Norman Brice as himself, Andrew Nash as Colonel Stephens and Richard Halliwell as contractor William Rigby. They were accompanied by 30 or so children from Tenterden Primary School, who were equipped with small union flags on sticks.

Meanwhile a procession was forming up outside the Town Hall. At midday Harry Hickmott, in his town crier uniform and holding aloft a red flag, led the ensemble off. He was followed by John Brice driving his steam roller and pulling a pump trolley on a trailer. Then followed Alan Brice with his steam roller. After a short gap came the civic party led by the Tenterden town councillors in their blue caps and gowns. They were followed by both Town Sergeants in uniform and carrying their silver maces, then the Town Mayor of Tenterden in full robes, the Town Clerk and deputy in wigs and gowns, and then the Mayor of Ashford, again in full robes. It was a very colourful sight.

Next in the procession came the councillors' partners and family members, led by the Mayoress of Tenterden and Mrs Edwards, wife of the senior serving councillor. They were followed by uniformed railway staff, then a group of railway volunteers dressed in their working clothes and carrying tools of their work, picks, shovels, lamps, etc.

As the procession approached the station, the band struck up and the first steam roller was manoeuvred with some difficulty onto the forecourt, then the civic leaders were greeted on the platform.



The procession arrives at Tenterden Station, 16th March 2003

(John Liddell)

An engine whistle heralded the approach of the Victorian train pulled by No 3, while the band played 'Hail the Conquering Hero Comes...', and the children stood at the open windows fluttering their union flags. The train stopped opposite the dais and the two mayors were introduced to 'Mr Stephens' and 'Mr Rigby', then the official party mounted the dais, with the Town Sergeants and councillors lined up on either side. In front of them stood the children, still with their flags.

A much larger than anticipated crowd had assembled to witness the event, consequently there was little space between the front of the onlookers and the official party, not helped by the partial failure of the public address, which meant people pressed forward to hear the speeches.

At about 12.30pm, the band stopped playing, the gallopers came to stand still and the Town Crier rang his handbell to call the assembly to order and introduced Norman Brice, Chairman of the Tenterden Railway Company. He said:

"Your Worships, Ladies and Gentlemen

On this day, 16th March, exactly one hundred years ago, this station was opened for passenger traffic.

In a moment we will celebrate the centenary of Tenterden Town station by re-enacting the ceremony of that Monday morning. We are told that a band played, children waved flags, speeches were made and everyone went for a ride on the train.

100 years ago, the locomotive in service was No 3 'Bodiam.' That engine is still with us and should be in service later this year following overhaul. Deputising is sister engine No 2678, a comparative newcomer, having first come to this line just 63 years ago.

For today's ceremony, some changes have had to be made to fit with current circumstances. The words spoken by Mr Stephens are based on those of Sir Myles Fenton, company chairman in 1903. Mr Stephens was unaccountably silent at the original ceremony, but we feel Stephens' fame lasted rather better than Sir Myles'.

As you may know, our Engineer, Locomotive Superintendent, general Manager and Managing Director are all embodied in one person – Mr Stephens. If that were not enough, he is also known as Captain Stephens in the volunteer forces of the Royal Engineers and we wish him success in his parallel part-time career. Who knows but that one day, with his usual diligence, he may reach higher ranks and might become known as Colonel

Stephens if he should continue to progress.

The words spoken by our present Mayor, Cllr. Mike Pearson, are essentially those of his predecessor of 100 years ago, Cllr. J. R. Diggle. Tenterden was then a borough in its own right.

We are grateful to Cllr. Pearson and the Tenterden Town Council for taking part in these proceedings.

It now gives me great pleasure to ask Mr. Stephens to address you."

Andrew Nash, a former catering manager of the Tenterden Railway Company but now suitably dressed as Mr Stephens, then stepped forward to deliver his address:

"I have the pleasant duty of declaring this extension of the railway, from the old Tenterden Station to this new Tenterden Town Station, officially open. The old station will henceforth be known as Rolvenden.

I hope the residents of the town and neighbourhood will appreciate and support the line and enable the shareholders who have invested their money in the project to receive at least a moderate dividend. Tenterden has long been promised a railway to the town, and hopes were raised in 1851, 1855, 1864, 1877 and 1882. Even just a decade ago in the 1890s, your then Member of Parliament, Colonel Dampier Palmer, and some notable residents including Mr Obadiah Edwards were promoting the South Kent Railway to link the town to the national system.

The inhabitants have shown much patience but the old saying has now been verified that everything comes to those who wait.

The extension of the line to Headcorn is now well in hand and should be completed in about two years time.

In view of the expansion of the railway, I can reveal, and you are the first to know, that the railway intends to change its name as from next year – from the Rother Valley Railway to the Kent and East Sussex Railway."

Norman Brice then thanked 'Mr Stephens' and the non-speaking 'Mr Rigby' for attending and called upon the Mayor of Tenterden to say a few words. Councillor Mike Pearson then delivered the words (slightly amended) of his predecessor of 1903:

"On behalf of the Corporation and citizens of the borough of Tenterden, I would like to congratulate the railway company on the completion of this

instalment of the line with a station in the centre of the town for which we have waited for over half a century.

I trust it will be of great advantage to this grand old town which is possessed of much historical interest and natural beauty.

Mr Stephens referred to the patience of Tenterden people and I must ask the directors and shareholders to exercise the same amount of patience with regard to the dividend referred to by that gentleman.

I urge on the Directors the necessity of doing all they can for the rapid, convenient and comfortable transit of passengers and I am sure if this is done, the line will be well patronised and the hopes of the shareholders as to dividends will be realised.

If Mr Stephens and his directors did not possess that amount of patience which has been shown by the inhabitants, then I would advise them to come and build their residences in the vicinity, so that they may enjoy some of that rare air which has promoted patience.

My thanks to the children of the town for joining in the celebrations so enthusiastically and I am sure it will cause little inconvenience if I declare the rest of this day a school holiday!"

Councillor Michael Claughton, as Mayor of Ashford, had indicated his willingness to say a few words and he made an impromptu and amusing speech:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls,

1903, in the words of the standard classic, was a very good year – it was a very good year for transport: in 1903, Wilber and Orville Wright (the Wright brothers) got the first man made aircraft into the air. Henry Ford launched his wonderful and famous motor company, and of course, Tenterden Town Station opened on this line, running parallel with those other marvellous achievements.

So 1903 was indeed a very special year for transport.

As a man of steam, and one who has steam actually running through his blood, it gives me the very greatest pleasure and privilege to be here today.

The railway is one of the largest tourist attractions in the borough of Ashford and as we all know, it draws copious numbers of visitors both to Tenterden and the surrounding area each year.

Being a charity and an organisation that is run almost entirely by volunteers, I think that is an

achievement which speaks volumes. It also serves an important role in preserving a piece of history; here not only to entertain, but also to educate future generations.

On behalf of the Borough, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to thank the Kent and East Sussex Railway for the valuable contribution it has made to our community over the last 100 years.

I won't be here in a 100 years time, but I have absolutely no doubt but that the Kent and East Sussex Railway will be here prospering and flourishing, and long may it never run out of puff."

At this point there were cries of, "Hear, Hear" from the crowd and prolonged applause. Then, in true 1903 style, and to some surprise, the band struck up the National Anthem, after which there was further applause.

Norman Brice thanked the speakers and everyone else for attending and stated firmly that we were all now back in 2003. He asked invited guests to make their way to the VIP marquee and the children to go to the catering marquee where they would be served soft drinks and cakes. He invited everyone else to enjoy their train rides to Rolvenden and back, reminding them that all tickets that day were 'day-rovers' and he hoped they would "admire our 100 years old extension".

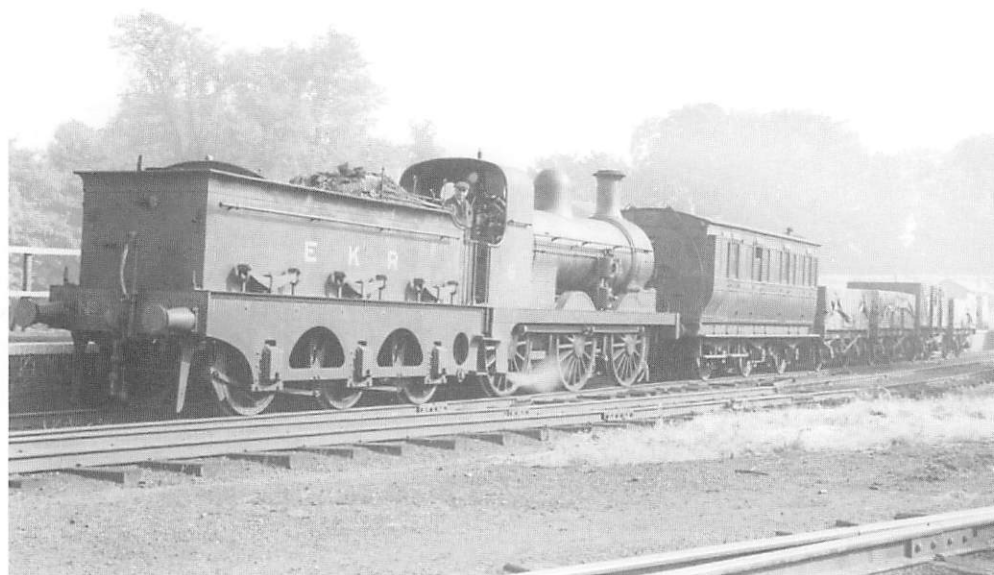
By 12.55pm the speeches were over and it was time for photographs. Cranbrook Town Band resumed playing, the gallopers started turning and the sound level rose steadily.

Invited guests were given a champagne reception and they could sample 'Old Tenterden Town Pale Ale', a special centenary brew, a barrel of which had been donated for the occasion by Rother Valley Brewery. A cold buffet, prepared by Meg and Sharon, our in-house caterers, was enjoyed, and Andre Freeman was ably assisted with the food service by Jolyon Vickers and Pam and Sheila Stevens. The latter two were both dressed as Edwardian maids and several other 'staff' were noted in attendance in period dress, all of which added to the celebratory atmosphere. Also on offer to visitors was a photograph and cuttings display organised by Carol Douglas in the old print room.

Special thanks are due to Tenterden Town Council and their officials and to the Mayor of Ashford for entering into the spirit of the occasion and attending 'in state', as indeed their counterparts had done a century before.

Locomotives of the East Kent Railway~ Part 3

Brian Janes completes his three-part description of this fascinating line's locomotives with the engines that to many typify the EKR.



EKR no 6 at Shepherdswell, 20th June 1926

(R.G.Jarvis)

The 0's and 01's

Back in 1923, one month after the Adams Radial, No 5, was acquired, the EKR bought the first of the engines that were to do most of the work on the railway through to dieselisation in 1960. The newly formed Southern Railway, who shortly acquired a majority shareholding in the East Kent, sold for £409 6s 1d one of a dwindling number of their 0 class engines, No 372, as EKR No 6. Built in 1891 as one of James Stirling's mainline goods engines for the SER she was modernised with a slightly raised boiler in 1902. After an overhaul at Ashford she started work on the EKR on 11 June 1923. She was a success and perhaps under the influence of the increasing Southern shareholding in the railway another 0 followed on 22 September 1928,

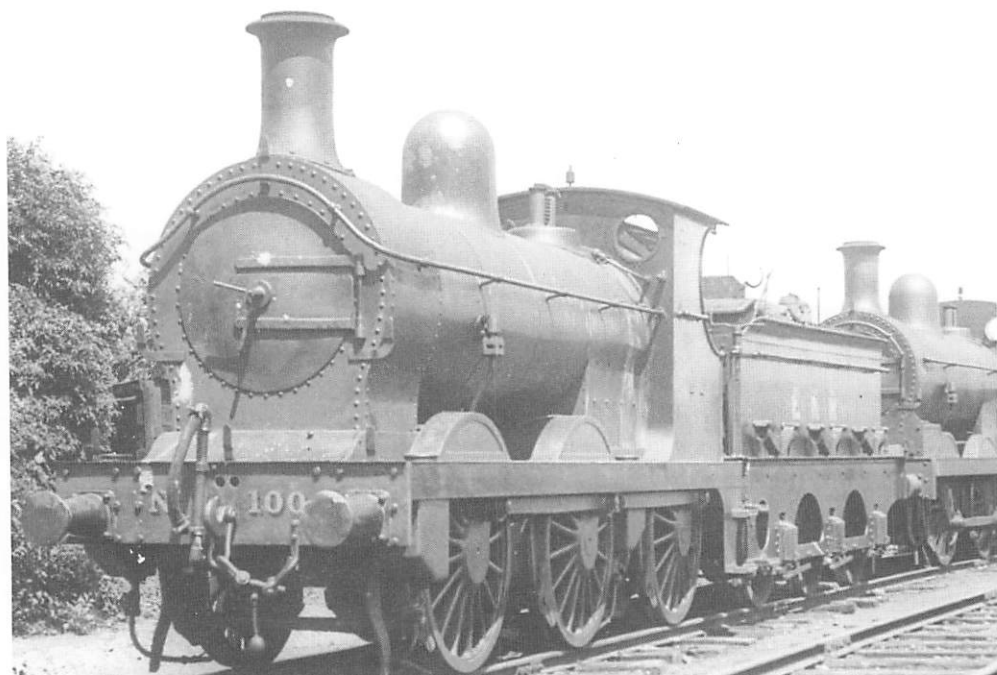
No A376, which at a cost of £1,085 (spread over two years) became No 8. This engine could always be identified from No 6 on the EKR as she sported lamp brackets on each side of the smokebox. No 6, also unique amongst the 0's, had the steam reverser moved from the cab to running plate. Both of these engines had domeless boilers and were specially fitted with Canterbury & Whitstable style short chimneys to cope with restricted clearance. This could have been in Golgotha tunnel. This tunnel had been added to the original plans at a late stage and had several constructional oddities. It had been built in such a way that it could be systematically enlarged both in height and width. It was almost certainly altered in height sometime in the 1920s although it was never opened out to double track.

However, taller engines like No 7 were operating through the tunnel by 1926. Another restricted clearance, possibly on the Tilmanstone or Guilford colliery branches must have been present for a year or so after that otherwise No 8 would not have required alteration.

Although whenever possible Tilmanstone coal traffic was left to No 4 these capable little 36-ton engines began to take up a wide range of duties and became the EKR standard. No 6 was rebuilt at Ashford with a second-hand H class domed boiler and full height chimney in October 1932 to become a 01 and re-entered service on 9 November. This reboiling process had started in 1903 with her mainline sisters but she was the last engine by a 5-year margin to be so rebuilt and she was always unique in retaining a Stirling cab. Reportedly this work was paid for by exchanging a second hand Terrier boiler with the Southern and although the transaction is well minuted the mystery is why EKR would have acquired this boiler and where it had been located

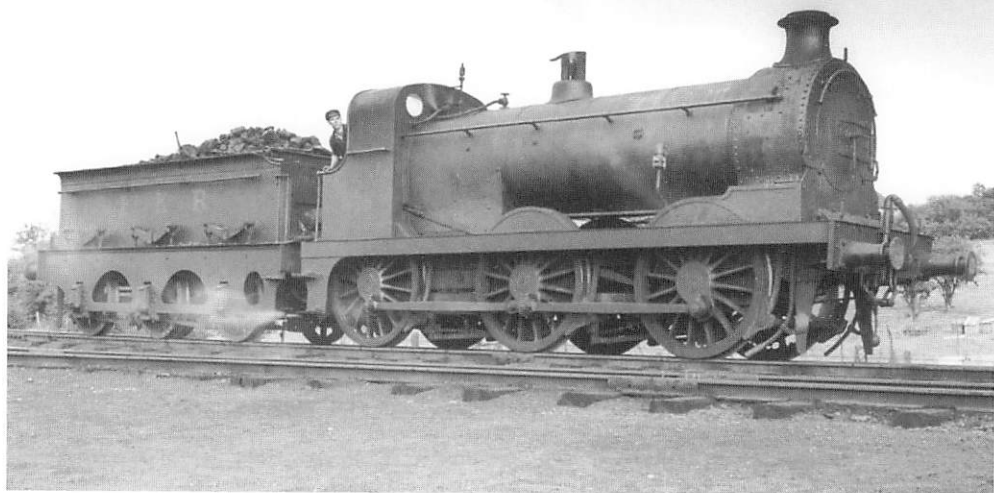
since purchase in 1926. We simply do not know.

Two 01s, Nos A385 and A390, were reported as loaned to the EKR for a short time during 1932 presumably helping out whilst 6 was being rebuilt. No 8 fell by the wayside and in May 1935 she was reputedly part exchanged for another 01, No 1383. No 8 is however thought to have been dismantled at Shepherdswell and records show that the EKR paid £850 for the new engine on 25 June. She had arrived on 23 June grandly numbered 100 by the Ashford painters who reputedly in the absence of better instruction opted for the lowest number they thought might not duplicate others! She retained this number for some years, becoming the second No 2 on 9 February 1946 after an overhaul at Ashford. Nos 6 and 100, with No 4, did the majority of the work on the Line in the 1930s and 40s. By 1948 No 6 had run 94,765 miles after rebuilding and No 100 73,447 miles. Good figures for a railway where latterly no daily turn exceeded 45 miles.



No 100 at Shepherdswell locomotive shed with No 6 behind, c 1937

(Colonel Stephens Historical Archive)



No 8 at Shepherdswell, 1st September 1934

(R.G.Jarvis)

Although only two engines were needed daily, availability was tight and in the war years and immediately after essential overhauls could be protracted; No 6 was at Ashford for 3 months in 1943 (when she probably lost the green livery bestowed on her in early 1939) and 6 more months in 1946 overlapping with a three month overhaul for No 100. To cover for this and the non-availability of the tank engines other 01s were hired from the Southern. No 1426 came for a month in 1942 and a succession of 3 more (1430, 1066 and 1437) covered from April 1943 to March 1944. Following this lengthy period of hiring the East Kent bought a final 01 No 1371 which arrived in March 1944 at a cost of £1125. By then the Tonbridge office had clearly given up in East Kent and she never acquired an EKR number. Even then another 01 No 1373 arrived on hire on 25 January and stayed till May, returning again in December and staying till No 100 (renumbered 2) returned from overhaul in the following February.

The surviving 3 EKR 01s came into BR ownership early in 1948 and were allocated 31383 (No 2), 31372 (No 6) and 31371 but there was a holocaust of 01s at this time and

they did not last. Withdrawal came in April 1951, February and January 1949 respectively. Their remaining mainline sisters, who were kept especially for EKR and K&ESR duties, replaced them. Numbers 31065, 31258, 31425/30 and 31434 came in over the years to handle the Tilmanstone coal shuttle. The Author remembers them well for in childhood they woke him with their whistles every morning when he stayed with his aunt at Shepherdswell. They kept continuity of East Kent motive power until the all-conquering diesel shunters (subsequently classified 08) arrived in 1960 to finally extinguish the last remnants of the Tonbridge influence.

Sources and Acknowledgements: Locomotives of the SER, D L Bradley, RCTS, LSWR Locomotives, D L Bradley, WSP, The Weymouth Harbour Tramway, G Beale, WSP, Brewery Railways of Burton on Trent, C Shepherd, IRS, Mainline to Industry F Jones, Lightmoor Press, Railway Observer, Colonel Stephens Railway Museum Archive, John Miller, Tom Burnham, Stephen Garrett.



No 1371 at Sheperdswell, 25th September 1948

(J.H.Aston)

Summary of East Kent Railway Locomotives (excluding hired locomotives)

| East Kent No | Type | Built | Maker & former identity | Acquired by EKR | Disposal |
|--------------|---------|-------|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | 0-6-0ST | 1875 | Fox Walker GWR No 1386 | 1911 | scrapped 1938 |
| 2 | 0-6-0ST | 1908 | Hudswell Clarke WC&PR No 4 | 1913 | sold 1943 scrapped 1957 |
| 3 | 0-6-0 | 1880 | Beyer Peacock LSWR No 0394 | 1918 | withdrawn 1929 scrapped 1933 |
| 4 | 0-6-0T | 1917 | Kerr Stuart WD (IW&D) | 1919 | scrapped 1949 |
| 5 | 4-4-2T | 1885 | Neilson LSWR No 0488 1923 | | sold to SR 1946 preserved |
| 6 | 0-6-0 | 1891 | Sharp Stewart SECR No 372 | 1923 | withdrawn 1949 & scrapped |
| 7 | 0-6-0ST | 1882 | Beyer Peacock LSWR No 0127 | 1926 | withdrawn & scrapped 1946 |
| 8 | 0-6-0 | 1891 | Sharp Stewart SR No A376 | 1928 | Sold for scrap 1935 |
| 100 (2) | 0-6-0 | 1893 | Sharp Stewart SR No 1383 | 1935 | withdrawn 1951 & scrapped |
| 1371 | 0-6-0 | 1891 | Sharp Stewart SR No 1371 | 1944 | withdrawn 1949 & scrapped |

