

# Tenterden Terrier



Number 96

Spring 2005

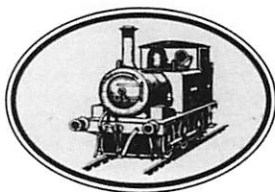


**JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY**





# Tenterden Terrier



Number 96

Spring 2005

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## FRONT COVER

*Pannier tank 1638 arrives with Wealden Belle at Rolvenden, 10th October 2004 (Tom White)*

## INSIDE FRONT COVER

*Children enjoying the festivities and fireworks during Halloween, 29th October 2004 (Bill Oates)*

## BACK COVER

*Theodora newly outshopped at Tenterden, on return from its trial run, 18th February 2005 (Phil Wood)*

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# The Kent and East Sussex Railway Company Limited

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital).....Registered Charity 262481

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(appointed 21 February 2005)

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**Membership Secretary** .....Stella Nuttman, Tenterden Town Station, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 6HE

# Editorial

## Every Little extra helps

Norman Brice's article on the budgeting process shows how we run our business and how we plan our finances. In summary, whilst annual profit is of limited importance, cash generation is paramount. We invest all of our free resources back into the business and the Board's

perception is that in order to achieve long term stability we need to invest more. Our train operations are not currently profitable, although our finances are boosted by the contributions from our members and from grants and donations. It is a sobering thought that if every visitor stayed an hour longer and purchased an extra cup of tea, we would be well on the way to a secure and profitable future. If 10% of our visitors came back once more, we would generate a similar amount. If this is difficult to achieve- it should not be!

# Lineside News

Compiled by Duncan Buchanan

## Commercial

### Passenger Figures

It is pleasing to see a recovery in passenger numbers for the last three months of the year. November and December are the best in the last five years. Plans for next year's Santa Specials will, I am sure, result in more visitors, although the number of passengers carried is not likely to increase due to physical constraints.

October was good as a result of the children's activity week, and we will repeat this style of half-term event throughout 2005.

### Footplate Experiences/RXDs

Forward sales are extremely encouraging. Paul Wilson is charged with delivery of the budget for these activities, and I have every confidence that we can exceed expectations.

### Tidying Up

The Tuesday Group have thrown their anchor down at Tenterden for a few months. They will be re-painting and generally clearing up the site. There has been some excellent work done in removing old scrap and generally tidying our railway. A thank you to all those who are making an effort.

### Terrier Club/Youth and Children's Activities

It is planned to re-launch the Terrier Club at the back end of 2005. There is a need for a team of mentors for junior members together with a club Manager. We would like to get to the position of having an active

Terrier Club again, with a co-ordinator of all junior activities.

The youth of today is our railway of tomorrow. We would be very pleased to hear from anybody who feels that they can be involved in this extremely important project. The future depends on you!

### Shop

The shop is fettle up, orders placed for the coming season and, of course when the railway is running, doing what we are there for- earning profits for investment in our railway.

2004 was another good year in the shop. Sales were 7% up, despite passenger numbers on the railway being some 4% down. Average spend per head rose to £1.33 from the 2003 figure of £1.22 and annual sales passed £150K for the first time ever.

So on to 2005. As these notes are being written we have just finished fitting some new shelves and have been plunged in to the middle of another Thomas phenomenon. With Christopher Awdry as our honoured guest for the 60th anniversary of the stories written for him. Signed books were in great demand during the first weekend. This and an ever-larger tent resulted in a staggering 72% increase in sales over the corresponding year's weekend. Nor did it end there. Every day of the event

smashed the previous daily Thomas record sales (set last September). Total sales for the four days were 34% up on the six days of the previous year. Those of you who have a statistical bent can work out the percentage increase on the first Sunday when sales of £7539 were recorded as against £3881 on that day last year. This broke the previous daily Thomas record by nearly £2,000. This tide of customers nearly swamped those few volunteers on duty.

This year we will be stocking a new DVD/Video tape which Wilf Watters is producing for the main season. Provisionally titled "Down the Line" its content is probably self-explanatory. Our previous two videos will be available on a single DVD. On the models side, we are working with Dapol to produce some N gauge items, an own-named 73 electro-diesel and a K&ESR wagon.

The Volunteers, who run the shop, got together for a meal at Ye Maydes Restaurant in Biddenden in January. Volunteers may be thin on the ground and because we often work on different days, this was an opportunity for us all to get together for a pleasant and convivial occasion. To join us please phone Brian Janes (01580 714032) and come and help.

### **Catering**

The 2004 season ended very positively for the catering team. Thanks to the sterling efforts of our contractor, Dave Stubbs, the new extension was handed over to the department following the first 'Santa' weekend. André Freeman knocked through a new doorway between the existing seating area and the new dishwasher area. This was accomplished with some degree of reluctance, as it involved removing part of the original pitch pine structure (which did, however, put up a good fight!). This new access enabled the dishwasher and associated sink to be removed from the kitchen, which has dramatically improved working conditions: the hazardous pinch-point between deep-fat fryer and dishwasher operator has been eliminated and the kitchen doorway collision point has also been improved. Much fitting-out work remains to be accomplished, although financial constraints dictate this will be a lengthy process.

The staff messroom has been formed within the new building: fitting this out was largely undertaken by James Veitch, who even provided some of the fittings at his own expense. He has taken considerable trouble to produce a high standard of finish, so woe betides any member who is seen to leave the room untidy.

Catering for our 'Santa' customers combined the usual army of sherry & mince pie distributors with our developing "outside-event" team. Following the excellent October 'Thomas©' BBQ, this high-profit area was refined and further developed. Such has been the success of this enterprise that demand has, at peak times, outstripped our ability to deliver. The need to utilise all available cooking facilities in order to meet demand saw the Wealden Pullman evening meal preparation put on hold to cook hot-dogs! (What would George Mortimer Pullman have thought?) Inevitably this occurred on the only day that the Pullman set was not berthed in its dock, but buried in sidings on the other side of the line. In order to overcome some of these difficulties, additional equipment has been purchased at auction (and at no direct expense to the company). The return on sales at these events is such that this outlay can easily be recouped within two days. We have been fortunate in acquiring quite a quantity of equipment at auction at advantageous prices. Indeed, the new extension has taken on the appearance of an auction storeroom itself. However all these items offer tremendous benefit to the company and have been privately funded. The proof of this belief lies in the figures, as hitherto spend per head on busy "event" days was considerably below the normal daily average. This was largely due to slow service forming extreme congestion, queues and therefore lost trade. Following the improvements, we are now seeing a significant increase in visitor spend, up in excess of 15% on last year.

Overall, 2004 station catering sales rose by 10%, despite the reported drop in passenger numbers.

The astonishingly successful February 2005 'Thomas©' BBQ saw yet further development, with a "new" gas powered double-basket fryer acquired. As we were





*The new bar for Theodora under construction, 18th December 2004*

*(Bill Oates)*

therefore able to keep pace with demand, practically the entire supply of chips was sold during the first day alone. A small raiding party to every local supermarket ensured trading could continue, with the result that catering receipts exceed last years high by 118%!

As always, the greatest barrier to sales is having sufficient staff to adequately deliver the products to our customers. We are fortunate that those members who do offer their services demonstrate a very high level of commitment. To sustain our current growth, further staffs are required. Why not come along and see the improvements that have been made first hand? There are a wide range of duties available, both customer facing and "backstage", all of which ultimately benefit your railway's continued prosperity.

#### **Wealden Pullman**

Following the successful conclusion of services on 1st January, we said a fond farewell to Met Camm. Pullman Car 349. Arriving in 1999 for a planned years hire, she accommodated many thousand Pullman passengers whilst in our service, not to mention a full compliment of passengers at every "Thomas©" event and some "Santa's". Although her 1960's décor did not compare to that of our older Cars well,

she remained a comfortable and popular choice. The re-formed standard Pullman set for 2005 will be: "Barbara" (18 supplement covers); "Diana"; "Theodora" (15 non-supplement covers) and Maunsell NBO 4443 (36 non-supplement covers). Although aesthetically it would be desirable to have both Pullman Cars marshalled together, practicalities dictate otherwise.

At the time of writing, "Theodora's" painstaking restoration is virtually complete, whilst "Barbara's" partial re-paint is well underway. As always, the window of opportunity is small and the consequence of overrunning significant.

Despite a revised schedule of charter pricing (yes, that means INCREASE!), our charter business remains buoyant. Winning charter business creates an odd mixture of emotions: there is the satisfaction of converting that tentative enquiry into a confirmed sale; whilst as soon as the cheque is received, the horror of yet another mountain of work is confirmed! Regrettably our ability to undertake every such lucrative opportunity is simply not possible without a considerable increase in volunteer labour. If that opportunity sounds of interest, with training to nationally recognised standards available,

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# Motive Power

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The Bluebell Locomotive Manager is keen to visit and inspect our Reverse Osmosis Plant to help overcome their own water treatment problems. Interestingly the aspect of water treatment is included within the latest Health and Safety guidance for looking after loco boilers properly.

## Steam Locomotives

No 3 'Bodiam' (32670): At the volunteers/staff meeting, in February, it was hoped that completion of the overhaul might be finished by late summer.

The time consuming task of installing the lubrication system is continuing whilst the air brake system is also progressing. Reshaping the new dome has taken place.

No 12 'Marcia': Both axles have now been dressed and are under the frames. Lowering on to the wheels will have to wait until all the heavy work involved with the installation of a power brake system is complete. Grease lubrication has been fitted to all horn guides.

The small vacuum brake cylinder donated by the Chemin de Fer de la Baie de Somme is in good condition and is currently being worked on by Mac Macintosh and Dick Beckett. Pipe runs are being installed, which has involved some further dismantling of the loco in order to gain access in difficult areas.

Old penetrations in the buffer beams where dumb buffers and narrow gauge wagon drawgear were fitted have been tidied up by welding and grinding.

Terry Harvey has finished fitting the cab roof which is now in store awaiting the final assembly of the loco. The water tanks are totally finished and await installation.

We are currently trying to acquire a small conventional brake ejector, but are not having much success. If anybody knows of the whereabouts of a suitable item please contact Dave Brailsford.

No 14 'Charwelton': Several volunteers have



*New Buffet extension during construction, without roof, 16th November 2004*

*(John Liddell)*





*Inside the new buffet with partially completed roof, December 2004*

*(John Liddell)*

spent much time at the tedious task of cleaning the frames. This has now resulted in paint being applied which is always a good sign of progress.

The boiler has been inspected and a schedule of repair work identified. This is being undertaken as and when time permits but it is a useful trade exercise for James Taylor's apprentice training. He has undertaken drilling out studs, boiler stays and rivets to date.

No 19 'Norwegian' (376): Following its boiler washout exam in November some repairs were identified. A new right hand gudgeon pin has been manufactured and case hardened. The right hand connecting rod faces that retain the big end bearing have been re-machined. The slackness evident in this loco (which has resulted in drivers, when ascending the bank, to drop the valve gear out) has to a limited extent been attended to by re-shimming the crosshead and renewing the right hand big end brasses. The existing brasses were found to be cracked.

No 21 'Wainwright' (DS238): has undergone a routine washout. The bent hook and

coupling, as a result of the loan to the National Railway Museum, is being actively resolved. The haulier has supplied a replacement coupling. Two new hook forgings are on order with Forgemaster; one to replace and one as a spare – justified by the cost of tooling for the manufacture.

No 22 'Maunsell' (65): The overhaul proceeds with frame painting by John Vesey. The wheels have been delivered with the tyres turned. A trial lowering on to the refurbished axleboxes has taken place and the loco will be re-wheeled as soon as possible. The boiler work has been delayed due to the late delivery of special taps.

No 23 'Holman F Stephens': in service and settling in after its overhaul. The smokebox floor has been concreted to improve air tightness.

No 24 'Rolvenden': has had its front draw hook and square hole repaired. A new arrangement of drawhook support has been installed using the rubber 'Spencer pad' arrangement rather than volute spring which is believed to have contributed to the wear found on both hooks.

No 25 'Northiam': trailing wheel sets are receiving attention to allow the locomotive to operate without the springs hitting the spokes of the wheels due to excessive wear.

No 30 GWR Pannier (1638): In service

Gervase: The parts for this loco have been grouped together at the Sewage Works siding ready for transport to Sellindge where it is hoped a cosmetic restoration can be carried out. This could provide an exhibit at Tenterden Station for visitors. Richard Moffat is currently project managing this project.

Lambton Tank: Arrangements are in hand for the loan of this loco to our railway during August if the outstanding repairs are completed to schedule by the contractors and the owning group at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

### **Diesel Locomotives**

No. 20 (GWR Railcar): In February, the Railcar was moved into the Carriage and Wagon Shed for a week. While undercover, all the alignment checks and adjustments to the vehicle's wooden bodyframe were

finished. The Railcar Gang would like to thank the C. & W. Department management for their co-operation in making the shed space available for this period.

No 44 'Dover Castle' (Class 08): In service and used as "Devious Diesel" during the February Thomas.

Class 33 'Ashford': In service

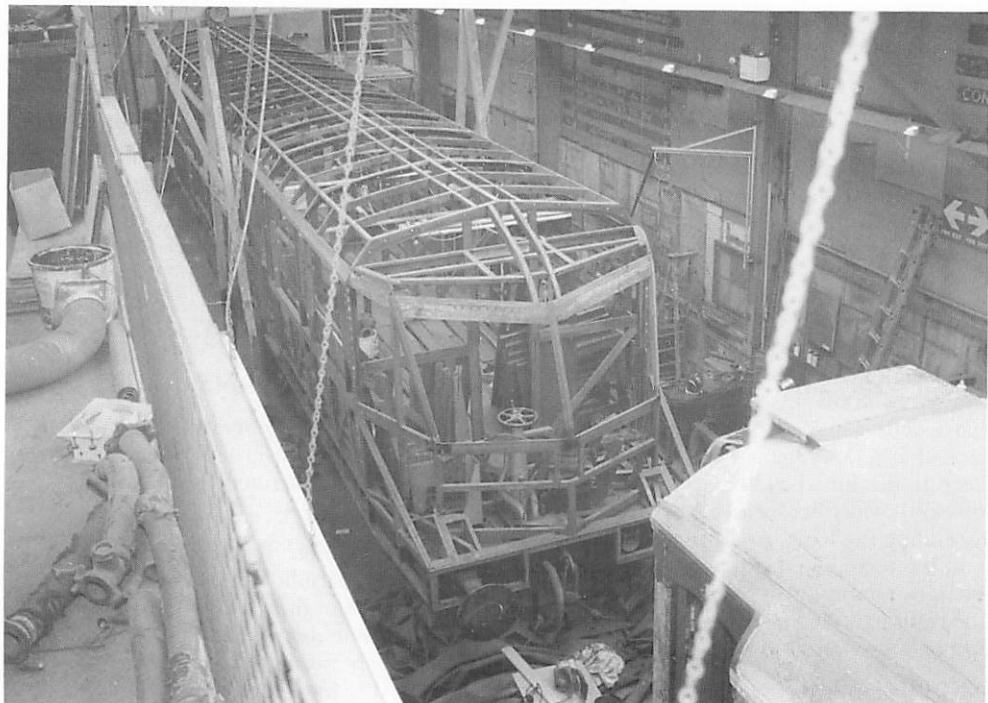
Class 108 DMMU: In service

### **Cranes**

No 133 (10T Taylor-Hubbard): In service and awaiting use for the Permanent Way relay at Tenterden in March.

No 145 (10T Grafton): Still out of service

No 151 (36T brakedown): It was discovered on 12th November, before any movement, that one wheel set, next to the match wagon, had derailed in Orpins siding. As the crane was needed, to lift No 25, the crane had to be re-railed very quickly. Many staff helped out on that Saturday. The crane has been examined and repaired. New axle box covers are on order, with patterns being made.



*GWR Railcar inside Carriage and Wagon, 11th October 2004*

*(John Liddell)*

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# Rolling Stock

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## Coaches

The working week is planned for 23rd to 31st July – all are very welcome to join in. The exact vehicles which will feature have yet to be determined but almost certainly include at least one van and hopefully SE&CR Birdcage, K&ESR No. 61.

Pullman Car Theodora (K&ESR No. 51): At the time of writing this project (part funded by the Millennium Commission) is drawing to a close with only a few minor tasks remaining. The Commission were able to grant us six additional weeks (their suggestion, not ours!) to complete restoration and C&W staff thankfully accepted, thus avoiding any need for a last minute rush.

The new carpet was fitted during the first week of February 2005 and this looked really splendid once topped-off with the new Pullman-style chairs made for us by an outside contractor. The project did not originally include any marquetry but, thanks to a generous donation and additional monies from within the Company most of the pilasters and the frieze have been renovated.

The remainder of the interior has been completed with stained and varnished wood and this looks most acceptable. It is planned to install further marquetry work in due course, as finance permits. A successful test run was carried out on Friday 18th February to Bodiam and back with planning started for an official launch in the early part of the main season.

Barbara (K&ESR No. 52): The problem with having two near identical vehicles is that as soon as one is restored it shows up all the faults in its twin. Having had this contrast made with Maunsell BNO's Nos. 53 and 54 we were determined not to have a repeat with the two Pullman Cars. The paintwork on Barbara has accordingly been receiving attention, the 'Tenterden platform side' having been given a complete repaint together with the cream panels on the 'shed' side. The

'shed' side umber has been re-varnished. Hopefully these improvements will give that extra little something to our flagship set.

GER Brake (K&ESR No. 81): Work to the doors and panelling of this vehicle continues on an as-and-when basis. The Company was unable to make budget provision for this work during 2005 and progress depends on in-stock materials and available volunteer labour.

We nevertheless hope to advance renovation as quickly as possible, not least because we need both the shed space and a second vintage brake back in traffic.

## Wagons

In preparation for the re-siting of the level crossing end point at Tenterden, the Permanent Way department asked us to carry out repairs and maintenance on various wagons and this was added to the work schedule during January and February.

Vehicles involved were Dogfish hopper Nos. 144 and 154, 'Nathaniel Pegg' No. 155 Ling No. 143 and Medfit No. 157. A party from the CFBS assisted with this work during their visit over the period of 4th – 7th February.

## People & Departmental Management

As reported elsewhere in this journal, Carriage & Wagon Manager Paul Sayce left the Company's employment, due to redundancy, at the beginning of November 2004. The post of C&W Manager has been abolished.

Overall control is now in the hands of Lawrence Donaldson, formerly Locomotive Manager, who has been re-designated Engineering Manager in accordance with his increased responsibilities. Day-to-day matters are dealt with by Alan Brice (Shed Supervisor) and Nick Pallant (Administration). Routine C&W issues should be addressed to them in the first instance.



*The General Manager's clear-up train at Wittersham Road (upper), and beyond Northiam (lower),  
9th January 2005*  
(John Liddell)





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# Infrastructure

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## Company Secretary's Notes

Please note the AGM this year will be held in Tenterden Town Hall during the afternoon of Saturday 8th October. We have again arranged for the use of the public address system. Nominations for election to the Board will close on 16th July 2005. The necessary nomination forms can be obtained from the Company Secretary.

There have been two changes in the Company's management structure.

At the January 2005 Board meeting it was decided that the post of Managing Director be abolished. However, as the Railway's Safety Case Exemption requires that a Director has formal responsibility for safety, Derek Dunlavy has accepted nomination to the post of Safety Director. This position also reflects the Board's commitment to safety.

Following the decision to abolish the post of Carriage and Wagon Manager Paul Sayce became redundant in early November 2004. Lawrence Donaldson, formerly Locomotive Manager, was re-designated Engineering Manager and now has overall responsibility for the Locomotive and C&W departments.

The Editor did not have all the information to hand regarding this change when the winter 2004 edition of the Tenterden Terrier was being prepared. As a result, the C&W Manager's post was shown as vacant instead of being deleted from the list of officers.

Members will be pleased to know that when they use the facilities of the London Beach Hotel, St Michaels, in respect of dining, drinking, golf and accommodation, provided that they show a valid membership card, K&ESR will receive from the hotel a donation equal to 10% of their expenditure, net of VAT.

## Forestry & Conservation

Our work at Wittersham Triangle has finally been completed. We have left some very large fallen tree trunks for wild life, and created small log piles, as this area is set well back from the running line. We have continued working towards Oxney Straight, felling small trees growing under

the telegraph wires and beside the track. A lot of time is being spent clearing weed, bramble etc off the fence lines as they tend to drag the fences over. This could save the railway money in the long term.

On our last visit before Christmas, the manager always supplies the mince pies but this time one of our members Doug Barrow also supplied pies to mark his 20th anniversary of both joining the railway and indeed our department. Doug has been our official look out person for most of this time and is regarded as an essential member of the team. Our thanks go to Doug for 20 years of support.

On Sunday 9th January 2005 some of our group attended the clearance train. The highlight of the day was enjoying a dish of Meg's wonderful soup followed by Christmas pudding. Some serious clearance was done on the day and it was good to see and meet our colleagues from other departments.

On Saturday 5th February 2005 four members of our department met twelve of our French colleagues from the Baie de Sonme Railway who volunteered to assist in a day of clearance on Wittersham bank. Due to the sheer number of people a great deal of excellent work was achieved during the day. Unfortunately our lack of knowledge of French did inhibit conversation but we did manage to have a good rapport during the day and some laughs along the way.

At the end of a very long successful day we thanked our visitors for all their work and through our interpreter we said we would welcome them back next year. At this, one of the French group shouted "in France" and we all said back "yes please".

On Saturday 12th February 2005 the first Thomas train out of Tenterden was stopped near Pole 85, on Oxney Straight due to a large willow tree coming down over the track. Parts of the tree were removed to enable the train to proceed after a 15-20 min delay. The following day we cleared the tree which turned out to be fairly



*Installing the new point at Tenterden Town station, 9 March 2005*

*(Graham Sivyer)*

difficult due to being entangled in the telephone wires.

Our department is a very happy one. We have both male and female workers of all ages and we encourage any new volunteers to join us. Please get in touch with Peter Thorogood any evening on 0208 859 5082.

### **Bodiam**

Over the winter, the new roadside station name board has been framed and erected close to the cattle dock.

Other work includes repainting of a platform bench seat. We were surprised to find that, when all the old paint was stripped, the timber slats were stamped "S.E.R" on the back. The timber is still reasonably sound even though it must be over 105 years old. The "Train Service" board has also been taken down and repainted.

Work has also started on the retaining wall alongside the platform siding but at the time of writing this hadn't been completed.

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## **Permanent Way**

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We have had two tampers and the ballast regulator working for us in the last few weeks. Clive Lowe, ably assisted by Frim Halliwell, replaced the brakes on the regulator which had been out of action for over 18 months. It was then pressed into immediate service and spread ballast out in various places, ready for the Balfour Beatty tamper to start work. Clive then used his own tamper to get the long siding at Bodiam ready for the "medium to long term restoration projects" which will be moved there in due course. The long siding was released back to operating on Tuesday 15th Feb' 2005 with a 5 m.p.h speed limit on it.

Along with our usual mix of patrolling and fettling, we have begun work on the new points for Tenterden. The blades unit has been built at Wittersham Road ready for craning onto a wagon and transporting to Tenterden in one piece. The rest of the "kit", together with ballast will be delivered to Tenterden after the last train of Sunday 6th March. The aim of the project is to extend the run-round loop by putting the

new point in the crossing. We will also improve the drainage outside the station building. There has been significant input from Nick Wellington in this project. My thanks to him, and all of my lieutenants who helped plan the work.

As part of the general tidying up process instigated by the new General Manager, we have turned scrap rail and old unwanted chairs into over £2,500 worth of cash. Our yard at Wittersham Road has been cleared up to give our customers a better view, but of course, a Permanent Way yard has to be kept as such and we need a ballast pile, reserves of sleepers and other materials. When the unsightly coaches are removed to Bodiam, the yard will be easier to use and less of an eyesore.

Finally, we will be running a clearance train on Friday 20th May 2005. We aim to pull back to Wittersham Road all lineside materials between Tenterden and Rolvenden. If you want to have a day out with us, please come along to Tenterden at 9.00am and we will work our way down the hill, collecting as we go.

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## **Groups**

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### **Ashford Area Group**

The group was formed in 1977 to provide a local focus to promote the K&ESR by arranging monthly meetings on railway topics and raising funds for projects on the railway - our current fund raising is for the restoration of the second "Ashford" 4-wheel carriage.

We arrange summer visits, and a date for

your diary is Sunday 17th July when we shall go to The Wayside Light Railway at Hunton, near Maidstone by the kind invitation of Lawrence and Sue Martin. If you have not been able to join us on previous visits top this fascinating and very extensive 7 1/4" gauge railway, it is a very worthwhile visit - and Sue does provide a superb tea.

Our future programme is:-

Wednesday 20th April Steam in Colour in the 50's and 60's by the late Derek Cross shown by David Cross

Wednesday 18th May Members slide evening - always a fascinating mixture.

Wednesday 15th June Reminiscences of a Top Link Driver by George Hollands

Wednesday 20th July More from Dave Baker's amazing collection of Railway Films

All visitors very welcome. For more information contact Eric Graves 01233-623687

### **Maidstone Area Group**

The Group held it's Annual Model Railway Exhibition on the 23rd and 24th October 2004. The number through the door was the highest for some years and although our expenses were also higher, owing to the number of exhibitors who came from some distance who required bed and breakfast, the surplus was a very respectable £1345. This was helped by the surplus from catering and the tombola stall totalling £686. The Group also represented the shop and generated additional income of £507.

The Group attended the Gillingham Model World Exhibition and the North Kent Model Railway Exhibition in Broadstairs in November where, in addition to the Shop stall, many Santa Special leaflets were handed out. In January we also attended the Erith Model Railway Exhibition in Dartford where again the shop stall was staffed and over 700 Thomas leaflets and new timetables were handed out. These three Exhibitions generated over £1284 income for the shop. The Group would like to attend many more exhibitions as it not only generates income for the shop but even more importantly makes people aware of the Railway and hopefully gets them to travel on our line. If any one is interested in staffing a stand they can contact the Shop Manager, Brian Janes, at the Railway or contact the telephone number below.

The Group is still accepting old newspapers and junk mail at Tenterden Station, although a fire, which occurred on the 20th January and is believed to be arson, has damaged the waste paper container. Please leave any papers, preferably in plastic bags

or tied up, outside the present container. Waste paper does generate about £1500 each year which helps to finance various items on the Railway, so please keep bring as much paper as possible. More paper means more money towards various projects.

The Group's Open Evenings, commencing at 7.30pm, are held at the Tovil Working Men's Club, Tovil Road, Maidstone are listed below:

30th March: More Transport Films by Dave Baker

27th April: Steam, Diesel and Electrics on colour slides by Doug Barrow

25th May: London Main Line Stations slides by Gordon Buck

29th June: Some of my Favourite Railway Slides over the years by Gavin Smith

28th September: Over 30 Years down the Tube. Illustrated talk by Dave Carson

26th October: South African Steam and other things on 16mm film by John Liddell

30th November: Some British Narrow Gauge and other miscellaneous slides by Denis Ovenden

For further details or queries please contact Dave Tibbatts on 01580 763736 after 7.00pm.

### **Sussex Area Group**

Meetings of the group are held at Westham Village Hall at 7:30 on the dates below. All are assured of a warm welcome.

April 12th Hastings Tramways by Robert Harley

May 10th Ginger-Beering (Railway engineering) by Tim Lawrence

June 10th 2004 reviewed by John Scrase

July 12th Delights in the can by Keith Carter

September 13th Pelham The final Fling (The saga concludes) by Fred Rich

October 11th Travels with Stroudley by Ralph Gilham

November 8th Steam on the big screen by Alan Allbury

December 13th Golden Age of Railways II (more postcard delights) by Steve Benz

If anyone wishes more details then please ring Tim Lawrence on 01323-845108.



## **Gardening Group**

At Northiam the hedge has been trimmed in order to encourage bushy growth during the growing season. We were given a camellia bush which has been planted in front of No.1 Cottage as a start to recreating the gardens.

In our last report we failed to thank Mr. and Mrs. Pearson for all their stalwart efforts in keeping the wooden tubs at Rolvenden looking splendid all year. Thank you both very much indeed. By the time this report is printed we plan to have spent some time at Rolvenden tidying the little garden area and the small patch by the crossing gate after the work on the level crossing has been completed.

Several Tuesdays were spent at Wittersham Road tidying the garden area and making the flower bed on the bank rabbit proof. During the year more time will be spent at Wittersham Road in maintaining the beds.

Following the felling of trees and construction of the Pullman Walkway at Tenterden, we have been able to make use of the displaced topsoil and all the wood chippings. This has been spread around the Tenterden gardens as a mulch and a lorry load of soil has been transported to Northiam to improve the vegetable patch and create the cottage gardens.

A few spaces have been left on the wall of the Pullman Walkway into which we propose to plant a few trailing specimens to soften the look of construction. We promise not to make it look "twee".

The raised beds have had a "make-over" in order to open the area up and encourage our passengers towards the "Refreshments" sign. Hopefully the more pleasant surroundings will encourage them to buy teas and coffees and linger over a tasty danish pastry.

The aim at the present time is to spend time at Tenterden in order to get all the gardens to a manageable state. There are still areas of ivy and brambles to clear but this will be done in time. It is planned to put as many perennials in as possible and then the demands for annuals will not be so great.

The seed growing season is fast

approaching so when you plant up your flower seeds this year will you please think of the Railway and put a few extras in for us. All contributions are gratefully received. If anyone has a few hours to help around the gardens at either Tenterden, Rolvenden, Wittersham Road or Northiam please contact me; Veronica Hopker, 01303-862811.

## **Tuesday Group**

Some time has been put in at Wittersham Road Station. Undergrowth, which was encroaching onto the platform, has been cut back and more shingle has been added to the surface to try and make it more even. This has only met with limited success. Possibly a future tar covering would bind the shingle together. The edge of the platform white line has been repainted, at the same time.

Work on No.1 cottage at Northiam has continued. The floor and outside weather boarding on the south west corner had to be replaced as both were well rotten. The outside painting has now been completed and a privet hedge has been planted as a start to returning the cottage gardens to somewhere near their original form.

To further improve the general appearance of the area, No.2 cottage has been given a cosmetic covering of paint.

The floor of Northiam Station Booking Hall was very damp in places and on closer inspection a large area was found to be very rotten and, after consulting with Dave Stubbs, it was decided to take the whole wooden floor up and replace this with a concrete mix and a screed on top.

The Tuesday Group helped out on the Santa Specials covering both the A and B sets on the Tuesday before Christmas.

The latest project we have been involved with is helping with the construction of the new Tenterden Pullman Walkway. This will allow ordinary passengers access to view the Pullman at the carriage height, rather than the previous far off ground level and also access for the proposed commercial days on the Pullman.

We would like to welcome a new member – Alan Gloss – to the Tuesday Group. Alan has previously been a volunteer on the East Lancashire Railway.

During 2004 the Tuesday Group put in a total of 1995 hours between them, much of which was claimable against Interreg Funds. It just goes to show what can be achieved. The intention is to set up another Group to work on another day and probably at Tenterden. If anybody is interested please contact Stan Kemp, Volunteer Support Officer, through the Tenterden office or telephone 01233-632042.

### **Museum**

As planned, the carpet was cleaned just before Christmas which allowed the holiday period for it to dry thoroughly. The final count for visitors in 2004 was 6182 which brought in £5528 in admission charges, £338 more than in 2003.

New acquisitions since the last report include:-

A place setting of cutlery stamped "ALR" for Ashover Light Railway. These were used in the "Where the Rainbow Ends" café at Ashover Butts station.

A Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway Third class ticket stamped 29 July 1909, four days before the line officially opened. Its serial No is 0000 and was probably issued for a trial run.

A uniform peak cap issued to Bert Sharpe, porter/conductor, probably in 1948 as it has a Southern Railway cap badge (which the K&ESR was never part of). It is most likely that decisions on British Railways insignia were not formalised at this time. We already have Bert Sharpe's uniform jacket and waist coat in our collection.

A Bere Alston & Callington Railway Key Token marked Callington – Gunnislake in brass with a pale blue insert.

Over the winter, two displays have been changed, with new material and better pictures. These are for the Snailbeach District Railways and the Bere Alston & Callington line. More would have been achieved if the Hon Curator had not had a mishap(!).

The Museum has reluctantly acknowledged the coming of the 21st century and replaced the short video about the railway and the Museum collection with a DVD presentation.

As ever, new attendants would be welcome to keep the Museum open each operating day. If interested contact John Miller.

### **News from the Rother Valley Railway** - David Felton

In November, Directors and representatives from the RVR, assisted and ably supported by Norman Brice, attended the Rother District Local Plan Enquiry. There was a public session for the Inspector to hear the cases of the two objectors to the part of the Plan which affects the Railway who had elected to appear and state their objections in person, together with the Council's responses.

After the hearing, the Inspector requested a site visit and in the afternoon, accompanied by the objectors and the Railway's representatives, the Inspector visited and inspected the recently reconstructed section of trackbed at Bodiam, the garden of Udiam Farm, the site of the proposed level crossing at Junction Road and the stretch of land between Northbridge Street and the A21 by-pass.

The Enquiry is still continuing and the Inspector's Report is not now expected until September next.

In the meantime, we requested and arranged an informal visit from a representative of HMRI who visited Robertsbridge in November. He seemed generally impressed with the work being carried out and the progress made but perhaps inevitably he pointed out a few matters and made one or two recommendations. One of these concerned modifications to the track layout and as a result, we have planned and prepared for an extension to our run-round loop, which will now extend approx. 100 yards parallel to the running line alongside the station car park. The area consists more or less of pure clay which has made the work both heavy and messy to say the least and the work for a time turned everything, including our dedicated volunteers, a slimy yellow colour. This area has however now been prepared and levelled and drainage installed and it will be ballasted in the next few weeks. Hopefully if sufficient concrete sleepers can be located

and acquired, track can then be laid and connected shortly thereafter.

### News from the CFBS

~ Philip Pacey

The total number of passengers carried during 2004, including the Père Noël trains, was 114,203, yet another record (bettering last year's total by 1,178) and the second successive year in which over 100,000 passenger journeys have been recorded.

To build on this success, the CFBS has included additional trains in the timetable for 2005. During the high season (from 9th July to the end of August) the first trains in the afternoon will leave St Valéry and Le Crotoy at 15.00, 30 minutes earlier than hitherto, and an additional train in each direction will be inserted, leaving from St Valéry and Le Crotoy at 16.15. This will mean that the train crews have

just 15 minutes to turn the train around, rather than an hour which provided some opportunity to relax.

To help carry this season's passengers it is expected that at least two of the ex-Berner Oberland Bahn carriages will have been made ready for use on the CFBS during the winter (I am writing this in January). Rebuilt 'Somme' coach no. 10302 will also be available, having had finishing touches of paint and varnish applied by lady members of the K. & E.S.R. during the working visit which took place on 18th-22nd November. Work has begun on renovating one of the ex-Yverdon-St. Croix carriages, and on rebuilding the second ex-Buis les Baronnies-Orange carriages. It is anticipated that Corpet 2-6-0T, no.1 'Aisne', will be returned to service, complete with new boiler, for the start of the season.

### Timetable 2005

Cayeux					14.45		16.45
<u>St Valéry</u>					<u>15.30</u>		<u>17.25</u>
St Valéry	<b>10.45*</b>	<b>14.30</b>	15.00	<b>15.30*</b>	16.15	<b>16.30</b>	17.30
Noyelles	<b>11.15*</b>	<b>15.00</b>	15.30	<b>16.00*</b>	16.45	<b>17.00</b>	18.00
<u>Le Crotoy</u>	<u><b>11.45*</b></u>	<u><b>15.30</b></u>	<u>16.00</u>	<u><b>16.30*</b></u>	<u>17.15</u>	<u><b>17.30</b></u>	<u>18.30</u>
Le Crotoy	<b>12.00*</b>	<b>14.30</b>	15.00	<b>15.30*</b>	16.15	<b>16.30</b>	17.30
Noyelles	<b>12.30*</b>	<b>15.00</b>	15.30	<b>16.00*</b>	16.45	<b>17.00</b>	18.00
<u>St Valéry</u>	<u><b>13.00*</b></u>	<u><b>15.30</b></u>	<u>16.00</u>	<u><b>16.30*</b></u>	<u>17.15</u>	<u><b>17.30</b></u>	<u>18.30</u>
St Valéry	14.00		16.05		17.45		
Cayeux	15.00		16.45		18.30		

**Bold\*:** operates on all running days: March 26th-28th; April 2nd, 3rd, 12th-14th, 16th, 17th, 19th-21st, 23rd, 24th, 26th-28th, 30th; May 1st, 3rd-8th, 11th, 14th-16th, 18th, 21st, 22nd, 25th, 28th, 29th; June 1st, 4th, 5th, 8th, 11th, 12th, 14th-16th, 18th, 19th, 21st-23rd, 25th, 26th, 28th-30th; every day in July and August; September 1st, 3rd, 4th, 6th-8th, 10th, 11th, 13th-15th, 17th, 18th, 21st, 24th, 25th, 28th; October 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 26th, 29th, 30th, 31st; November 1st

**Bold:** all Sundays in October; October 26th, 29th, and 31st, November 1st

*Italic\*:* March 26th-28th; all Tuesdays, Weds, Thursdays, Sats, Suns in April; May 1st, 3rd, 4th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 16th, 18th, 21st, 22nd, 25th, 28th, 29th

Regular type: every day 9th July - 28th August

*Italic:* diesel-hauled; Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Sats & Suns, 12th July- 28th August; also Friday 15th July and Monday 15th August

As usual, a lot of work on track and infrastructure was being tackled during the winter, including the installation of automatic barriers on two road crossings on the Cayeux line. Work on rebuilding the lock at St Valéry was due to commence in February; a temporary bridge was to be installed before the start of the season and is hopefully in place as you read this.

Special occasions during 2005 include 'Transbaie' on 19th June, an opportunity to enjoy a guided walk across the bay (highly recommended), travelling on the train from Noyelles (departing 10.20) to St Valéry, returning to Noyelles at 19.05. There will be two opportunities to see steam trains at Cayeux – at the Fête de la Gare de Cayeux on 10th July, and on the Journée de Patrimoine on 18th September when a steam-hauled mixed train will leave St Valéry for Cayeux at 14.00 and 16.00, departing from Cayeux at 14.45 and 16.45.

Evening dining trains are scheduled for Saturdays 30th April, 14th and 28th May, 11th and 25th June, and 3rd and 17th September, and on Fridays 8th and 22nd July, and 5th, 19th and 26th August. For these, early booking is essential; details are available from the CFBS, BP31, 80230 St Valéry sur Somme, tel. +03 22 26 96 96, fax + 03 22 26 95 66.

The next Fête de la Vapeur is scheduled for 22nd-23rd April, 2006.

All dates are inclusive.

The more complicated the timetable becomes the harder it is to render it in black and white. This version is offered in good faith, but intending visitors are advised to check dates and times on the CFBS Web site [[www.chemin-fer-baie-somme.asso.fr/](http://www.chemin-fer-baie-somme.asso.fr/)] or on the 2005 leaflet, both of which make excellent use of colour.

# THE K&ES 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

## HAVE YOU JOINED THE 300 CLUB YET?

### September 2004 - drawn - Pullman

1st Keith Brown	No. 178	£80.00
2nd Jen Webb	No. 145	£60.00
3rd N Swinburne	No. 586	£50.00
4th R G Sparrow	No. 616	£30.00
5th J Laslett	No. 215	£20.00
6th L G Head	No. 461	£15.00
7th L F Bailey	No. 419	£10.00
8th P W Goodhill	No. 441	£5.00

### October 2004 - drawn - Pullman

1st C G Butchers	No. 331	£60.00
2nd A W Dixon	No. 521	£45.00
3rd C Norman	No. 391	£35.00
4th W Watters	No. 606	£25.00
5th I Cook	No. 071	£20.00
6th Mrs M Colwell	No. 045	£10.00
7th P B Munson	No. 454	£5.00

### November 2004 - drawn - Pullman

1st Muriel Atfield	No. 115	£60.00
2nd Kent Evenden	No. 130	£45.00
3rd Frim Halliwell	No. 027	£35.00
4th Alec Carter	No. 011	£25.00
5th Mrs M I Bates	No. 328	£20.00
6th Ian Hunt	No. 505	£10.00
7th Mr A M Baker	No. 190	£5.00

### December 2004 - drawn - Pullman

1st A F Moore	No. 144	£100.00
2nd Max Dunstone	No. 300	£100.00
3rd Norman Brice	No. 154	£100.00
4th Wilf Watters	No. 606	£100.00
5th Pete Hemsley	No. 005	£85.00
6th Wilf Watters	No. 605	£75.00
7th Alan Dawes	No. 009	£65.00
8th Dave Petken	No. 093	£55.00
9th Derek Drage	No. 539	£45.00
10th J R Crawford	No. 171	£35.00
11th Janet Williams	No. 265	£25.00
12th J C L Emmott	No. 056	£10.00
13th Bob Forsyth	No. 230	£5.00

To join the 300 club, Phone Brian Heyes on 01622 744509 or Chris Garman on 01424 441645 for an application form.

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





*Return Ticket to France: K&ESR volunteers remove boiler from CFBS Locomotive No 25 at St Valery, 20th November 2004 (upper) and CFBS volunteers pay a return visit to the K&ESR C&W shed on 6th February 2005 (John Liddell)*





# Christmas in





# Colour

Photographed by  
Bill Oates





# Competing for the Leisure Pound

Philip Shaw has asked me to write the GM's article for *The Terrier* about comparing my knowledge of maximising the profitability of pubs and hotels with improving the position of the K&ESR. My belief is that all revolves around attracting and looking after the customer.

So what makes you choose to go into a particular pub?

Is it the particular style of hostelry that you are looking for? As there are different types of visitor attractions, there are different styles of public house, primarily influenced by location. Based on various factors, the offer might be aimed at young people (usually town centre), it might be a community local or a destination food outlet. Deciding the offer will be dependent on location and socio-economic factors.

Then there are measures of standards that influence our purchase decision.

If you haven't been before, is it reputation, or have you just pulled up outside?

If it's the latter, will you go inside? Is the car

park surfaced properly or are there puddles? Are the parking bays clearly marked so cars can be parked neatly? What does the signage say about what you can expect? Is it well maintained, is the paintwork peeling off? Are the hanging baskets full of fresh looking plants, or are they moth eaten and dead? Are the blackboards advertising last week's football (one of my pet hates!), or today's dish of the day? Is the garden in good condition, and is the play equipment safe, or is there dog's muck in the entrance and the grass uncut? Does it look like this pub and its customers are looked after?

Basic stuff if you're an innkeeper.

Now you want to choose a tourist attraction for a day out. Will the signage get me there? Is the entrance to the car park well marked? Is it clear how much the experience will cost you? Do you know if it is open? Will I get value for money? What is the catering offer? Does the site look well maintained? Is there anything special on today? And of course the list above.

Back to the pub – we're inside now. Do I get a welcome? Is it clean and tidy? ARE THE



*The new disabled access ramp to the Pullman dock under construction by the Tuesday Group, 5 February 2005.*

*(John Liddell)*

**TOILETS CLEAN?** Are the founts (beer dispense units) lit? Are the tables kept clean? Are the staff wearing uniform – are they readily identifiable? Do I have to go to a separate area for food, and what is the food offer, is it clearly marked with prices? When I make a purchase do I get a please or thank you, and a "thanks for coming, see you again" when we leave? If I get these I'll be back!

**Day out experience** – is it not the same?

Turn it round now, and we'll be the innkeeper and of course we're trying to get our appearance right.

**Am I charging the correct price for my offer?** If I increase the price of "Bud" will I sell less or sell the same and make more money? Am I buying at the best prices from my suppliers? Do I have the right number of staff to serve customers when they arrive?

**Are my staff and I courteous at all times?** Am I operating a safe and legally correct business? What can I do to keep my customers here for more time? If I put in some play equipment or a "fruit machine" how much extra will my customers spend. If I add a pool table will they play on the pool table and stay and have another drink? If my staff clear the tables and ask if my customers would like a dessert, will they take an order?

**Sound familiar?**

In the competitive market of community public houses, the good licensee is aware of the competitive nature of his business. He puts on regular activity to attract the punters. It may be Sky TV, showing sport or it might be music on an otherwise quiet night. Themed party nights are popular – not just Valentines and Halloween, but Cockney Nights, VE Day Celebrations, and the list goes on. The licensee is looking for an activity that will give his potential customers an excuse to visit.

In the competitive tourist industry the same applies.

So how do we maximise the business opportunity we have at K&ESR?

We identify which customers we want, we make sure we direct them here clearly.

When they arrive we look after them, ensure we keep them interested as long as we can, encourage them to spend as much as they can (always in sight of a spending opportunity!) but leave them believing they have had a value for money, enjoyable experience. We regularly

tweak the offer, so that the experience is not quite the same when the customer returns but it still holds the basic values. We look to give them an excuse to come here and come back. We look at what we do well – decide how we can add to this – and set about it.

Now there isn't any rocket science in any of the above. Above all, I don't wish to sound patronising by stating the obvious. It might help you see why I have been keen to speedily introduce a couple of changes to the offer at Tenterden, and why I'm keen that we operate a tidy railway. I quite like Pete Salmon's slogan "A tidy railway is a happy railway". There will at least be a happy GM.

Our customer care package is not just being polite when we take the customer's money off them. It is readily identifiable members of staff, clean toilets, clean and tidy tables in the buffet, a range of suitable meal options and snacks "on board". It is tidy storage areas showing that we care and take pride in our appearance. It is making sure we "do what it says on the can" – with no unpleasant surprises!

I have asked Brian to stock a range of promotional clothing with our excellent logo. Claret will be a staff colour. If you are going to be on site and not in uniform, please purchase a shirt or fleece or something you will feel comfortable in. Wear it, when you are on the premises, with pride. Say hello, good afternoon or similar to our visitors. Ask them if they are having an enjoyable visit. Have they visited Carriage & Wagon and the Museum? Have they eaten? There is an excellent menu at the buffet, and snacks on the steam trains. Have they travelled the line in the DMU – it is an excellent way to get a view of the scenery and you can watch the driver too. Tell them we hope to see them again soon. Make them feel as though we value their visit.

If they enjoy their experience "Do you know, one of their staff actually came up to me and told me about the Pullman trains, and they told me where to stand to get a great photo of the train coming into the station...." they'll tell others and come back.

Most of the station staff do this already, but adding value to the customer experience can be achieved by all of us.

If we do this we'll be like the good licensee, who knows how to look after his customers, and how to get them to come back for more.

# How We Organise the Finances

**Company Chairman, Norman Brice, explains how the budgeting process keeps our finances in order**

This article seeks to unveil some of the mysteries of how the annual budget is set; and describe the principal features of the 2005 budget.

In an ideal world, the year's budget would be set in that mythical period after 31 December, when all the facts were known about the year's trading performance, but before 1 January when the new budget will be needed. Since that ideal is clearly impossible, the actual process has to be a compromise and be based upon inadequate and old data. Indeed, the budget setting process needs to begin even before our main summer running period starts, driven to a large degree by the need to conclude our timetable in good time for coach companies and others who want to start planning their following year's planning as early as October. And, of course, the timetable and budget are inextricably linked.

The first step is in the late Spring when the General Manager asks each departmental manager for his or her income forecasts and expenditure bids, based upon the previous year's actual data and informed by the current year's budget and any actual trading and operating experience we may have noticed so far. At this point, any sensible person would quietly close the office door and tiptoe away; or break down and weep. For the gap between forecast income and expenditure demands is usually horrendous. Revenue-earning managers naturally set cautious income forecasts so that they can be confident of achieving them. And, at the same time, spending departments will eloquently explain the need to spend vast amounts of money on engines, coaches and track in order to deliver the published service and improve the "visitor experience", pointing to years of under-investment when assets have not been renewed as they should have been. To a real extent, they are all correct. We have not spent enough in the past. But only because we have not earned it first. History has shown the risks of spending what we hoped to earn, rather than what we actually



**Kent & East Sussex Railway**

**Steam Trains**

**TENTERDEN - NORTHIAM - BODIAM**

**The Kent & East Sussex Railway Company Limited**

(Limited by guarantee and not having a share capital)

Charity Number - 262481 Company Number - 01007871

**Thirty-Third Annual Report & Accounts**

**31st December 2003**



Photograph: Tom White

brought in. But our General Managers are made of sterner stuff so the "negotiations" (perhaps less eloquently called horse trading) have to start.

Income predictions are reviewed: Pullman dinners are always very popular so can we safely add another couple of pounds to the price? What about fares – how do we compare for a "good day out" and what about the level of discount on the all-important Family ticket? Are there any signs of price sensitivity and resistance; how are other local attractions faring? What scope is there for differential pricing between shoulder and peak periods? On the expenditure side, what is an absolute must and what can be held over? And even if we have the budget to spend, do we have the manpower to carry out the work? Eventually, a compromise is reached where everybody is more or less equally unhappy. Then over to the Accountant and Finance Committee who will say that the projected surplus is inadequate for debt repayment



and the monthly profile unmanageable from a cash-flow perspective. Income forecasts cannot be increased, so expenditure must be cut further. Back then to the managers for another round of salami slicing. So, by about October, on to the Board, who will have their own views on such matters as membership fees and how much can be allowed for salaries and salary increases. Finally, if all has gone well and there have been no external shocks - changes in the Gift Aid rules after the 2003 budget had been approved to take one recent example - the Board will formally adopt the budget and it will be issued to all departmental managers. Once the budget has been set and issued, it is set in stone and all future changes will be taken as variations to the forecast out-turn rather than by changing the budget itself.

In terms of what we are trying to achieve with the annual budget, the Kent & East Sussex Railway, as a charity, does not need to make a large "profit". What we need to achieve is to have a sufficient cash reserve as a buffer against that inevitable rainy day as well as being able to manage the cash-flow in the difficult period from Christmas to Easter; together with a reserve fund for debt repayment (including £175,000 for the Northiam bond issue falling due in 2007 and £500,000 for the Bodiam issue in 2013). Any monies surplus to those specific needs should be reinvested to improve the product we offer the public and to satisfy our educational and heritage ambitions.

What does all of this mean for the actual figures for 2005? First of all, by way of more background, the company's financial position is considerably stronger than it was just a few years ago. We no longer need an overdraft, creditors are paid regularly and our overall debts have more or less halved. But, as I have pointed out at Annual General and Volunteers' Meetings, we are not profitable as a business and it is only the charitable aspects of the Kent & East Sussex Railway Company Ltd which balance the books.

We are faced with a number of difficult factors: variable income; rising costs; and a high proportion of our costs are either fixed and outside our influence, or they are directly related to increasing passenger numbers - if we sell more Pullman dinners, we must buy more food. Then, after essential expenditure, the first calls on any surplus are the need for £30,000 for

repayment of the capital element of our bank loan and £50,000 to set aside in the bond redemption fund. These are monies we have to spend now to repay debts incurred in times past for earlier investments.

Looking first at trading income, we have developed a number of highly successful niche products, notably our Pullman catering services, Santa and Thomas" services, as well as our shop at Tenterden. Of our total forecast income for 2005 of £1.4m approximately 30% is derived from ordinary passenger fares, either as "turn-up-and go" or groups and charters, the numbers for which are stagnating. Pullman and on-train catering bring in 19%; Thomas" fares bring in 12%; the shop 10%; and Santa 10%. Gift Aid on tickets, membership subscriptions and donations makes a very welcome contribution of £36,000.

Budgeted expenditure for 2005 is £1.3m of which far and away the largest single cost is salaries and casual wages, accounting for 30% of all expenditure. After that, we have the purchases for running the railway and selling to the visitors (shop, catering, coal, water etc) at 29%. Essential work done by the engineering departments, mostly on keeping the current infrastructure and rolling stock in a safe and presentable condition, devours 16% of total expenditure. Finance and legal costs (not just interest on bonds and loans but including credit card fees, bank charges and audit fees) swallow up a further 7%. Not to mention electricity, gas, water, insurance (itself £55,000) and advertising. All before we have invested in real improvements or restorations and renovations.

So, at the end of the day, there will be little money left after meeting or providing for our debt repayment obligations. Costs cannot be cut further without damaging what we offer, which is why we must earn more. Think of this: if we could provide enough attractions to encourage every visitor to stay an hour longer and to buy one extra cup of tea, we would be on the road to a secure and profitable future. Or if only 10% of our visitors came back once more, we would generate the same amount. And if we could achieve both ....

But how we will aim to achieve higher incomes is outside this article on budgets and for another time.

# Tickets Please!

Our annual review of passenger numbers compiled by Ken Dow with commentary by Duncan Buchanan

	2003				2004			
	op days	trains	pass	av/train	op days	trains	pass	av/train
January	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
February	6	48	5747	120	11	76	7324	96
March	6	50	4782	96	2	10	377	38
April	17	93	6937	75	20	122	6252	51
May	22	130	8715	67	24	139	7928	57
June	21	121	10794	89	23	131	11185	85
July	26	138	10526	76	26	136	9487	70
August	31	167	15684	94	31	167	15408	92
September	19	112	11033	99	23	132	10877	82
October	13	66	4017	61	18	83	3994	48
November	2	10	301	30	2	12	453	38
December	12	83	12221	147	10	75	13090	175
	175	1018	90757	89	190	1083	86375	80
Pullmans	33		1659	50	35		1926	55
Charters	21		1136	54	11		834	76
Sunday Lunch	20		1175	59	23		1280	56
Privileges			1853				2488	
			96580				92903	
<i>Bookings from</i>								
<i>Tenterden</i>			42925				36105	
<i>Northiam</i>			4710				4237	
<i>Bodiam</i>			4645				4239	
<i>On train</i>			1647				1621	
<i>pre-booked</i>			36830				40173	
			90757				86375	-5%

Average passengers per train:- 1999:58 2000:83  
2001:70 2002:87 2003:89 2004:80

There has been a litany of praise heaped on many other railways by the press following record breaking passenger numbers in 2004. In the light of this, our near 5% reduction is disappointing. Coupled with a 6.4% increase in trains run on 8.6% more days the numbers do not make the best of reading. As a result, there has been a reduction in the numbers carried per train to 80 from 89. However there are some positive points. Santa Specials continue to improve with 2004 our best year since 1990. The combination of a dedicated group running the event and close attention to detail has resulted in repeat business year after year.

Thomas the Tank Engine continues to benefit the railway and is responsible for significant numbers of passengers, especially at off-peak or shoulder periods. In February, when there is no other income, Thomas is especially welcome and visitor numbers are increasing. However, on the general travel front, despite an increase in fares at the beginning of 2004, total fare income hardly changed. Fortunately, our income from other activities such as catering and the shop has

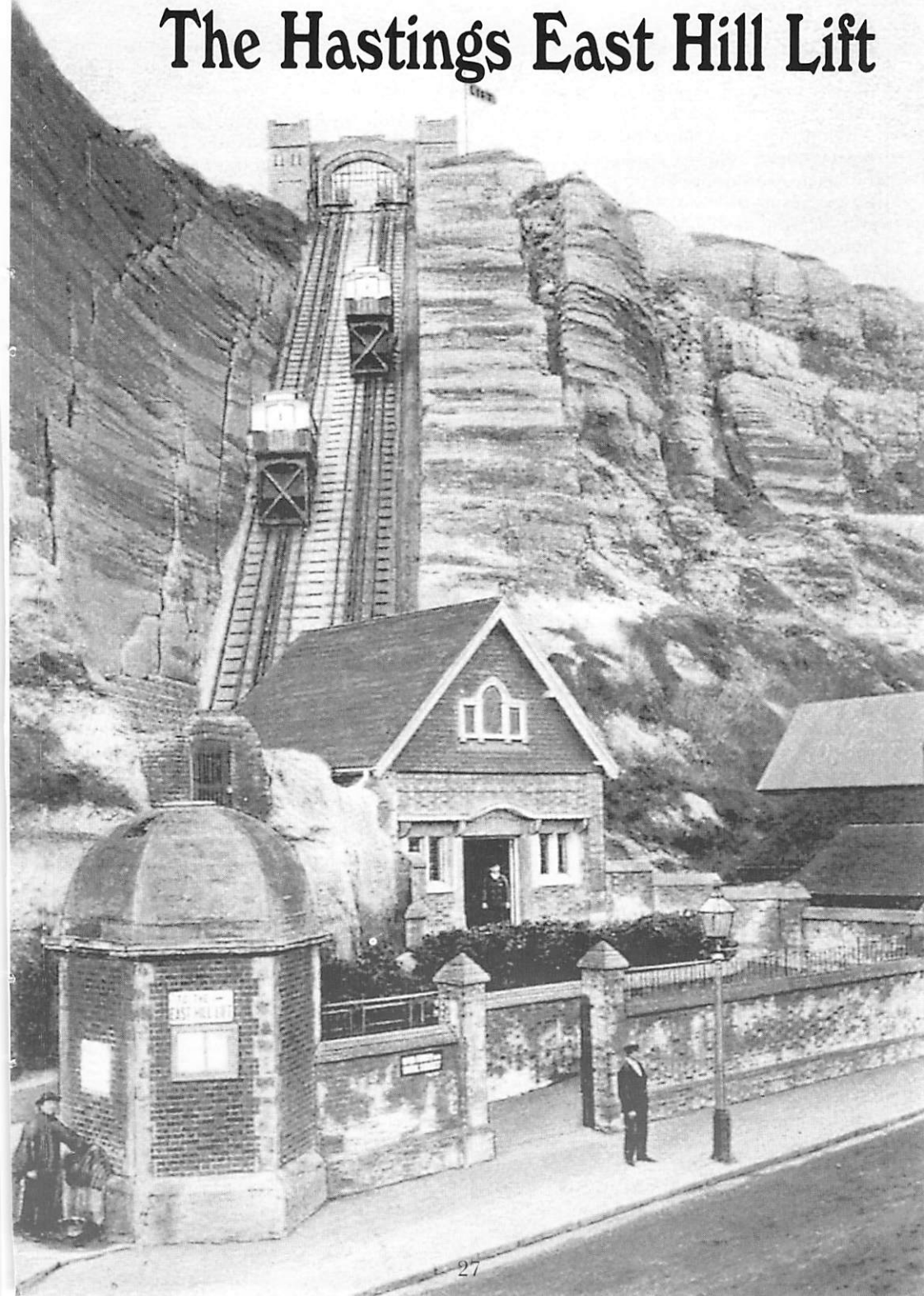
held firm or increased despite the reduction in overall passengers.

It is always interesting to look back at previous years for comparison. August passenger numbers have shown a consistently high figure- 15,500 in 2004. Prior to extending to Bodiam this was more variable and typically around 14,000. It is the off peak season where we continue to do poorly, especially mid-week. We must consider, either trimming the service or seeking ways to improve the number of passengers turning up.

The almost complete removal of our three train service from the timetable for 2005 is an example of how we are tailoring the service to meet demand. This level of activity is very heavy in use of crews, 4 steam crews are needed compared to 1 or 2 and it uses almost all our available rolling stock. History shows that when we do run a three train service, the numbers carried per train are well below average. Eliminating it is good housekeeping and will result in significant cost savings.

Our star Pullman service continues to blossom with average evening loadings up another 10%, a good lead for the rest of the railway to follow.

# The Hastings East Hill Lift



Now that traditional minor railways are becoming rare outside the ever-expanding preservation and heritage movement, enthusiasts may have to take an interest in types of railed transport they would once have ignored. One example is the funicular railway, or cliff lift, of which the Sussex resort of Hastings enjoys two, both still carrying passengers after more than a hundred years.

This article outlines the history of the East Hill Lift. However, this was not the first cliff lift in Hastings. The West Hill Lift, which ascends from George Street, through a 363-foot tunnel which incorporated an existing cave, to an upper station not far from the remains of Hastings Castle, was opened on 25 March 1891. This was twenty months later than planned, and it cost £16,000, compared with an initial estimate of £10,000. The resulting high level of debt drove its owners, the Hastings Lift. Co. Ltd., into liquidation in 1894, and the lift was purchased at auction by the newly-formed Hastings Passenger Lift Ltd.

The original Hastings Lift Company had plans for a second lift up the East Hill, which had recently been purchased by Hastings Corporation for public recreation at a cost of £11,000. However, in view of the company's financial difficulties, the Corporation decided to build the lift itself. Plans were drawn up by the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, Mr Philip Henry Palmer AMICE, and legal powers for the construction were given by Section 74 of the Hastings Corporation Act of 1900. Incidentally, this Act also empowered the Corporation to purchase the West Hill Lift, although this did not in fact occur until 1947.

Excavation of a cutting up to 120 feet deep in the sandstone cliff employed many local men. Progress was delayed somewhat by beds of clay within the sandstone, and the remains of a Roman camp were unearthed during the work. The East Hill lift is shorter but steeper than the West Hill lift, 265 feet (81m) long and rising at a gradient of 1 in 1.28. It is in fact the steepest funicular now operating in the British Isles. The double

track is laid to a gauge of 5 feet (1524mm) compared with the 6 feet (1829mm) of the West Hill lift.

Unlike the West Hill, which was powered by a Crossley gas engine, the East Hill lift originally operated on the water balance principle (thus some contemporary references describe it rather confusingly as "hydraulic"). The two cars, one on each track, were connected by wire ropes passing round a tensioning pulley and brake drum at the upper station, and a crossover pulley at the lower station. Under each car was a water tank. At the upper station, the top car's water tank was filled from a standpipe, allowing it to descend under the control of the brakesman at the top station, pulling the lower car up as it did so. On reaching the end of the line, the tank of the car now at the bottom station was emptied into a tank below the track, the tank of the top car was filled, and the lift was ready for another journey. The water was pumped back to the upper station by pumps driven by steam generated by the nearby refuse destructor works. Some remnants of the pipework are still visible.

The lower station, in Rock-a-Nore Road, is built over a 23 feet deep chamber for the crossover pulley and water tank. In red brick, with tile hanging and stone details, the booking office echoes the "Arts and Crafts" style fashionable when it was built. The upper station resembles a miniature castle, in brick and local stone, and is indeed sometimes mistaken by visitors for Hastings Castle. Each of its two castellated towers contained an iron water tank holding some 1200 gallons.

The cars were built with mahogany framing and pitch-pine underframes on inclined steel chassis. Clerestory roofs gave good ventilation. They seated twenty passengers, with enough room between for bath chairs.

By April 1902, the lift was nearing completion, and on 30 April the Town Clerk wrote to the Board of Trade, inviting inspection before the lift opened to the public. This request caused some consternation. After perusal of the files, it was found that one of HM Inspectors of

Railways, Major-General C.S. Hutchinson, had indeed made an informal visit to the West Hill Lift. However, in view of the fact that the Hastings Corporation Act made no provision for the inspection of the East Hill Lift, the Board of Trade informed the Borough that they should themselves engage a competent engineer to inspect the lift and take responsibility for its safety.

This decision was not well received locally, and a rumour was circulated that the Board of Trade had condemned the lift. By July the lift had still not opened, and the Borough Engineer had to make an official denial of rumours that something was seriously wrong, explaining to the Hastings & St Leonards Observer that "the work has only been stopped because of the Coronation holidays. The task of completing the structure will be continued next week, and a great deal of testing of the cars, machinery, etc. will take place. The lift, it is expected, will be thrown open to the public at the end of next week or the beginning of that following."

At the same time, the Borough advertised for tenders to sell light refreshments and collect fees for use of the lavatories at the upper station, quoting a starting date of 2 August.

In fact, the lift opened to the public on 9 August. This was also the Coronation Day of King Edward VII, which no doubt explained why there seems to have been no particular opening ceremony, all local dignitaries being already committed to celebrate the first Coronation that most of the population had experienced.

In its early years, the lift operated from 7 a.m. until sunset; Sunday working had been the occasion of some debate among Councillors before opening.

Some teething troubles were experienced. The Sussex Daily News reported that "on one occasion the car ran off the rails. An expert advised some changes, which were made, and since then the lift has been running at a very satisfactory profit."

This happy situation did not last long. On 22 September Mr Palmer, the Borough Engineer, visited the lift in the morning

and found it working smoothly. However, at about 5 p.m., "several people in the vicinity heard a loud whizzing noise followed by a resounding crash" (again according to the Sussex Daily News). When the descending car was about twenty yards from the bottom, the brake failed and the car crashed out of control into the platform. The nine adults and three children on board (mostly visitors) suffered cuts, bruises and shock, four being seriously injured. Most of the injuries resulted from broken glass, as the car's windows were smashed and its wooden framework damaged. Fortunately the ascending car was empty, and there were no injuries at the upper station. Services were immediately suspended pending an enquiry.

The Board of Trade took note of the incident, and were no doubt relieved that they had declined to take responsibility for the lift's safety.

After this inauspicious start, the East Hill Lift settled down to many years of uneventful and (at least in earlier times) profitable operation.

The Second World War saw the lift under military control for access to defence installations on the cliff top. In the post-war years, there was a surge in the number of visitors to the seaside, as wartime controls were lifted. However, in common with many other British resorts, Hastings experienced a decline in tourism from the 1960s, and when the lift was closed following a safety inspection in 1973, there was some doubt as to whether it would re-open. Indeed, between 1966 and 1990, cliff lifts closed down in Folkestone, Margate and Broadstairs. It is much to the credit of Hastings Borough Council that instead of accepting the argument for closure, they invested some £35,000 in modernising the East Hill lift. An electric motor replaced water balance operation, and new cars were provided, now seating sixteen. At present, the lift runs from April to October between the hours of 10.00 and 17.30, and, with its counterpart on the West Hill, is well worth a visit.

**Tom Burnham**

# Our Railway's War

*Although operations were wrapped in secrecy, in 1945 W H Austen wrote a couple of papers recording the K&ESR's wartime achievements. What follows is broadened and considerably expanded for the today's reader. However, whenever possible, Austen's own words are used.*

In the run up to war the government had asked the railways to prepare. The K&ESR was, after 10 years of the most stringent economy it was in Austen's words, in 'a very low condition regarding its general maintenance' and indeed he had told the Board that without assistance he would have been compelled to close. The Southern however came to the rescue in 1938 with a gift of track materials and when the government took control on the outbreak of war limited funds were made available to do more. By the end of the war some nine to ten miles of track had been entirely or partially relayed. Without this none of what follows would have been possible.

With the fall of France the Railway was in the front line. On Sunday, 18 August 1940, when the Battle of Britain was about at its peak, several enemy high-explosive bombs were dropped in the Tenterden district, one of which pierced the northern entrance to St Michaels Tunnel, Tenterden. The bomb, however, did not explode until it had penetrated about 8 feet of cover soil and the brickwork in crown of tunnel and struck the permanent way. One length of track was badly distorted and had to be renewed and a considerable amount of clearing had to be undertaken by removal of brick rubble, coping etc which had been brought down and fouled the track as a result of the explosion. Permanent way gangs were soon on the scene and immediately set to work. The track was repaired and such work carried out so as to enable the ordinary train service to run to schedule the following morning. This was not quite the end of the story though for the brickwork still had to be renewed and Austen struggled for the next year to find bricklayers in an area denuded of ordinary labour. The work was finally completed in November 1941 by T W Fuggle & Son, Builders and Contractors and 'Complete Funeral Furnishers' for £157/ 7/ 6

Shortly before this all the railway staff had been recruited into the Home Guard and had their own battalion (part of the 28th, 1st Southern Railway K Battalion - commanded by Lt. Colonel J A Plummer). Cyril Packham was the Sergeant and Bert Sharpe and Arthur Harris the Corporals. Eric Thompson, a Benenden resident who joined the railway as a fireman in February 1942, recalled that their initial antics such as parading with sticks before rifles were available was the same as most stereotypes of this very worthy body. More seriously they certainly practised firing on an informal range slightly north of Tenterden Station and they spent many long hours guarding and patrolling the entire length of the railway particularly at night. Thompson recalled that one day an officer asked 'What would you do if an enemy aircraft came over the station now and started firing at you?' (a highly probable occurrence at the time). They said 'Run for cover' but he said 'No you wouldn't - you would stand and fire back'. Home guard officers were not always battle hardened!

Several very close misses by bombs were recorded from time to time throughout the System presumably during the battle of Britain, the Blitz and through hit-and-run raiders. Although these must have died out, in summer 1944 came a new threat. This was a flying bomb, the Vergeltungswaffe 1, V1 or 'Doodlebug', about 5-7,000 of which were launched from France towards London between 12th June and 1st September 1944. They carried nearly a ton of explosive. Many fell short in the coastal counties either because of mechanical failure or defensive measures. The line was within the flight path of these devices, an area known as 'Doodlebug Alley', and Tenterden had more incidents (238) than any other district in the country.

On 22 June 1944, at about 5.10 p.m., a flying bomb was observed by the driver of the 4.35 p.m. train ex-Tenterden to Robertsbridge falling to earth in a direct line for the Railway towards Bodiam. The driver had the presence of mind to stop the train. Fortunately he did so, for the bomb dropped within 50' of the Railway. Eric Thompson was fireman and recalled that



they sheltered behind the engine's tender (an irregular working, as these were not officially allowed west of Rolvenden). When they went forward after the explosion metal shards, still red-hot, were scattered across the track. Austen concluded that had the train continued without a stop it would, undoubtedly, have been opposite the spot at the time the bomb struck earth and exploded, in which case serious injury might have resulted to passengers travelling on the train.

Another flying bomb incident happened on 2 August 1944 when one of these missiles fell and exploded almost opposite Bodiam Station. This resulted in considerable damage to the Station building by way of partially lifting the roof, blowing in all doors and windows. Lumps of soil from the crater weighing as much as ½ cwt were cast on to the platform and even over the roof of the Station building into the Goods Yard. Fortunately no one was in the building at the time. Several men were working in the Station Yard and seeing the bomb falling took refuge under trucks in the Yard and thus avoided injury.

Traffic picked up slowly during the 'phoney war' period but the first special traffic demand came in the early part of May 1940 with the imminent threat of invasion. The Railway was called upon to receive and deliver to its various stations special train loads of barbed wire for distribution in connection with the defence works to be erected in the area; these trains continued to run at all times, both night and day, for a considerable period.

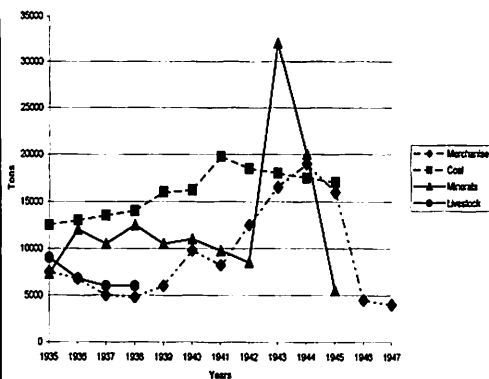
During a period of September and October 1940, as a result of enemy action, Hastings was entirely severed from main line rail connections via Ashford, Tonbridge and Polegate. It was only by working all traffic over the Kent and East Sussex System via Headcorn and Robertsbridge and vice versa that rail-borne traffic could enter Hastings. Some 500-600 wagons were specially hauled with some assistance from the Southern Railway Company's engines and staff working between Headcorn and Robertsbridge, in conjunction with the Kent & East Sussex engines and staff. Hastings was thus kept open for goods and mineral traffic until the Southern lines could be cleared and normal working resumed. Indeed there is anecdotal evidence that if any out-of-gauge box wagons were, as

frequently happened with wartime wagon pooling, inadvertently consigned to Hastings line stations, then they were routed via specials over the K&ESR.

On 10th February 1941 the War Department entered on the System with two rail-borne super heavy battery pieces of artillery, each weighing approximately 82 tons, mounted on six wheeled bogie vehicles hauled by WD 0-6-0 six wheeled tender engines (Dean Goods). The story of these coastal defence guns has been told elsewhere (Terrier 39). Initially at least one was at Rolvenden and one at Wittersham Road. The gunnery officers were billeted in local houses with HQ at Wassall Court, Rolvenden but the troops were housed in a special train of French Ferry Vans converted with bunks and cookhouses in the unused platform 3 at Tenterden. A memento of this stay is a kitchen knife, now in the Museum, that a cook presented to platelayer Arthur Smith. The guns probably caused, through concussion when they fired, more damage to the railway than the enemy did. Substantial damage was done to Rolvenden Station building and rolling stock on May 3rd 1941 amounting to £171 and to Wittersham Road station building and Bungalow on 3rd and again on 5th May to the tune of £37. Fuggle again doing much of the repair work. The batteries remained until 8th August 1944. During that period the WD trains ran 2,689 train miles over the System.

Compensation for the actions of the Military seems to have been a constant feature of the times with road vehicle damage to property and seemingly regular derailments of the Dean goods. The Railway also made a steady income from supplying water and transporting supplies. However early in the war in July 1940 the Military must have given Austen quite a turn by claiming that a consignment of high-explosive artillery shells had gone missing and claimed £1150! In the event the claim was settled in December with a cheque for 2/9 (14p) in respect of some percussion tubes so the shells must have turned up. The settlement papers still survive and the amount of work and people involved dealing with the Military for even such trivial sums must have accounted for many of the long clerical hours worked during the war.

But the real demands on the Railway came with preparations for the invasion of France



From May 1943 to May 1944 some 110 special trains conveying materials for aerodromes in the vicinity were run over the Railway between Headcorn and Tenterden. There were two temporary airfields (aerodromes) called Advanced Landing Grounds (ALGs) in the vicinity of the K&ESR. These were constructed for use by fighter and fighter-bomber aircraft flying bomber escort or ground attack in the build up to the invasion of Europe. They were constructed of metal strip laid on agricultural land with associated temporary buildings. One ALG, High Halden, was situated in countryside about 1 mile east of Biddenden and 1 mile north of High Halden Station. It was initially built in June 1943 but before use was considerably rebuilt over the following winter to take heavier aircraft. It was initially used from April 1944 when US Army Airforce (USAAF) P-47 Thunderbolts arrived for ground attack work over France before moving to bases over there on 3rd July. In August it was used by the first RAF jet fighter squadron flying Gloster Meteor 1s against the V1. They left after a few weeks and by the New Year the land had returned to agriculture. The second ALG was at Lashenden - still with us in part and now called Headcorn. It was operational from August 1943 till late June 1944 during which time the USAAF flew escort, ground attack and V1 duties. The K&ESR would have had little traffic from this one because of the proximity of the main line.

The building of the PLUTO (Pipe Line Under the Ocean) that fed the European invasion forces fuel needs in France) supply pipe also created traffic. The land based feeder pipeline passed under the track

between High Halden and St Michaels Tunnel on its way to the coastal stations around Dungeness and Camber, and components were kept at Tenterden using the Romney buildings one of which is now used for the Museum. The components were brought in by rail using a siding, which ran alongside where the carriage shed now stands. This vital feeder pipeline was in fact part of the second (the first phase had been based on the Isle of Wight,) and most substantial stage of the Pluto operation codenamed Operation DUMBO. By the spring of 1945 the pipeline fed 17 underwater pipelines laid between Dungeness and Ambleteuse near Boulogne delivering over 1 million gallons of fuel per day.

A glance at the graph will show how dramatic was the increase in Goods and Mineral traffic on our railway. This tonnage does not include through traffic of the type described to relieve Hastings.

The permanent way was not the only neglected feature of the Railway in the 1930s and government control provided the opportunity to renovate and repair what is now Station Road, Tenterden and get it adopted by the Council. The road was simple gravel and had not been touched for 20 years, increased wartime traffic (including that to the Food storage ('Buffer') depot established at the station during May/June 1944) made the matter urgent. The estimated cost was high for the road needed tarring, drainage and curbs. Negotiations went on from early 1942 but final agreement to the expenditure had to be secured from the Minister of War Transport himself which took nearly a year. This was not the end of it for the Council stalled (the Southern Railway Solicitor calling them 'unreasonable'), and the work was not finished till sometime in early 1944. The road, undertaken by Johnson Bros. (Aylesford)) Ltd., Vale Road, Tunbridge, finally cost £781/1/4. The Council seems to have accepted responsibility for the road and its ownership during 1944 but financial affairs were not settled until 1945.

Between March 1942 and September 1944 22 heavy troop trains, composed of L&NE, GW, LMS and S Railway bogie corridor stock, were worked over the Line. In most cases such specials had to be worked double-headed on account of the severe gradients on some parts of the System. However, as

Eric Thompson recalls, the most used tactic was to charge Tenterden bank and hope, and if that failed back up and try again. On one occasion with a load of Bren gun carriers they had to back well beyond Rolvenden and, with the level crossing gates there open, charge the bank with warning whistle blowing continuously for the ungated Cranbrook Road and the Tenterden crossings. He described this as somewhat risky as at the time the roads had many unlit army convoys and everything was of course 'blacked-out'. The enemy was not the only hazard in wartime.

To cope with all this traffic Southern engines were drafted in. One or two locomotives had been on hire since the late thirties. However in 1940 an ex LSWR 0395 class No 3440 had come for what proved to be the best part of a ten year stay and our Terrier 2678 came for what was to prove a long and close association. As traffic increased OIs were drafted in. The first No.1426 came on 4th December 1942, to be joined by 1373 in late 1943 and 1248 and 1370 in 1944. There were always at least two working on the System during the peak period. Although absent by the end of the war they came back at Nationalisation and become a feature of the Railway until closure of the northern section in 1954. Through trains were worked by Southern engines and one suspects that a quiet veil was drawn over the types used. One must recall that nothing larger than a Terrier was permitted from Rolvenden to Robertsbridge Junction in BR days.

Passenger traffic remained relatively unimportant and with the evacuation of the area in the early part of the war passenger numbers continued to fall from an already low base. Only coaches Nos. 3, 4 & 5 were in use in March 1943 with the remaining bogie carriage 2 under overhaul. However with petrol rationing and military activity traffic picked up during the last three years, with a peak of 31,000 in 1943 against 25,000 in 1937. R A Whitehead who visited the railway in that March reported the single coach on his train from Rolvenden to Robertsbridge was comfortably filled and timekeeping not at all bad. Trains and engines were clean and staff smartly dressed with stations and track in a good state of maintenance.

The movement of such exceptionally heavy traffic on a Light Railway called for special vigilance and attention to be given to

supervision and maintenance, especially as 12% of the Company's Staff were serving with HM Forces. With the limited motive power available many were the long hours spent by traffic staff to keep something moving. However ways were found to get labour for some of Colonel Stephens' favourite money making sidelines. There were continual sales of osiers, willow wood and hay from the lineside. Least these should be thought trivial wartime shortages had driven up prices to such an extent that a single haystack at High Halden was sold for £40 (£1200 today) in 1944 -more than passenger income at Tenterden in a peak month. Willow yielded even more, bringing in £149 in 1944 alone.

The K&ESR had performed remarkably for a rundown light railway with minimal resources. This is best summed up by the fact that goods train mileage (including through trains) comfortably doubled from a healthy mid-thirties annual average of 173,000 to an annual average in 1943 and 1944 of 377,000. A considerable contribution to Victory.

**Brian Janes**

#### *Sources and Acknowledgements*

*Colonel Stephens Museum Archive*

*K&ESR Board Minutes PRO RAIL 332/2*

*Various Tenterden Terriers*

*Action Stations 9 Military Airfields of the Central South and South East, C Ashworth, Patrick Stephens, 1985*

*John Miller*

The Kent and East Sussex Railway is to celebrate the 60th anniversary of VE day (8th May 1945) by holding a special event entitled "Steaming Home" on the 23rd and 24th April 2005. Tenterden, Northiam and Bodiam stations will have displays from museums, allied re-enactment groups and civilian and military vehicle and equipment owners. To reflect those times a 'female only' operated train will be run and, subject to operational constraints, a loaded military train will also run.

As part of their National Curriculum work period 'Street Parties' will be held for invited children and visitors will be encouraged to dress in suitable period costume.

# Letters to the Editor

## Summer outing to Shepherdswell

Sir – I travelled on the Kent and East Sussex line about 55 years ago, when the railway formed part of the Southern railway network and have visited the line on and off ever since. In fact I became a Life Member some years ago.

I became a friend of John L Smith, late of Lens of Sutton, on my travels and together we joined the excursion to the East Kent Railway. The article on your journal brought back many happy memories. One event still sticks in my memory. I wasn't old enough to visit a pub in those days, but I seem to remember a small convenience store – as it's called these days – a sort of Ronnie Barker "Open All Hours" type shop, where we thought we might get something to eat and all the proprietor had to offer was Weetabix! Needless to say we went hungry.

John's passing left a gaping hole in the railway enthusiast movement. He will be fondly remembered.

Bognor Regis

John Simmons

## Steam and Country Fair (2003)

Sir – My father and I, being members who cannot attend as volunteers on any regular basis, thought we could increase our armchair support by paying a fee in bringing an ambulance for charitable purposes, whilst continuing to advertise the K&ESR at other steam rallies/railway exhibitions that we attend. We were in the field next to Northiam station three years ago and similarly crossed the main road for the last two years, along with a huge amount of campers, stall holders, exhibitors, voluntary groups, etc. Railway passengers came in their droves to these events and the publicity and use of the railway was increased considerably on these summer weekends. Even the French Somme railway paid us a reciprocal visit with its railcar for the 2003 event.

Amazingly, the whole tone of Issue 95 of the magazine is of a lack of visitors, and I quote: – "Falling passenger numbers, 8%

down; Bodiam extension has not produced expected results; We must be satisfying our visitors if only there were more of them; Museum closed for 8 days due to insufficient staff; we are still not profitable as a business each year; a plateau of 80,000 visitors; very modest amounts available for improvement; compete we have to; we must find sources of funding.

At the three events since 2001, the Northiam Fair was a very successful weekend for all its visitors and participants and the railway must have greatly benefited from the additional traffic of passengers generated by the facilities and attractions on offer. The evening entertainment alone ensured that traders, charities, exhibitors, etc. all continued to support such an event in the following years. They would not have done if it wasn't in their interests to do so and consequently the K&ESR was the ultimate beneficiary.

I appreciate that in previous years, I the 80's and 90's, the weather played some part in throwing doubt upon the suitability of such outdoor activities, but if you arranged nothing due to doubts over England and its weather you would never leave your home.

Bexleyheath, Kent

David Bone

*The Steam and Country fairs were very popular and did attract a fairly large number of additional visitors. However the costs of putting on each event was high – in excess of £20,000 and the investment return was comparatively modest. Had we experienced poor weather the losses would have been very substantial – more than the company could have afforded to bear. This is why it was decided to concentrate on low cost events in the future. A small scale fair will be held at Rolvenden on 23/24th July this year, with a budget of £5,000. Obviously if any additional sponsorship can be found this will enable a larger event to take place. Ed.*

## The Kipling Connection

Sir – The interesting correspondence from Rudyard Kipling reproduced in Tenterden Terrier No 95 suggests that Kipling had become disenchanted with the railways in

the quarter-century or so since he wrote (in "The King", 1894)

"Confound Romance!... And all unseen Romance brought up the nine-fifteen."

This may have been due to general factors such as the railways' long struggle to overcome wartime arrears of maintenance and difficult post-war conditions, and Kipling's own sense of loss at the death of his son and so many other young men in the Great War.

However, I wonder whether financial considerations also played a part? The index to the Kipling papers in the University of Sussex library shows that in the period from 1918 to 1923, Kipling's investments included shares in the Great Central, Hull & Barnsley, London Brighton & South Coast, London Chatham & Dover and North Eastern Railways. In 1919 the North Eastern paid a seven and a half percent dividend on its ordinary shares and the "Brighton" and even the Hull & Barnsley gave a reasonable return to their shareholders. But the "Chatham" and the Great Central paid no dividend on their ordinary shares. Anyone who had been captivated by its promoters' vision of the Great Central Railway's London extension as a great national and even international artery of trade, and invested their hard-earned money accordingly, could perhaps be forgiven for taking a jaundiced view of the romance of the rail.

In 1928, when Kipling was "working the Great North Road", even the once proud North Eastern Railway, now part of the London & North Eastern Railway group, was beginning to suffer from the slump that was to decimate the heavy industries of its region. Little wonder that after the General Strike of 1926 felt that "a good deal of it was suicide on the part of the Railways and their people".

Staplehurst, Kent

Tom Burnham

*The hand-written letter from Kipling to Stephens, dated 10th July 1918 and reproduced in the article entitled "The Kipling Connection" was difficult to decipher. As a result there was an important transcription error; which can now be corrected and which puts the contents of the letter into a better context. In line nine, where Kipling is quoted as saying to Stephens "So*

*please tell the ellentines how sorry I am", the word ellentines should read eccentrics, meaning members of the Eccentric Club. Stephens was a member of the Eccentric Club in Ryder Street, London, and used the club frequently. He had been proposed for membership by H. Montagu Bates, who was Chairman of the Club's Committee of Control of Hostels for Limbless Sailors and Soldiers. Bates, who retired early from the Corporation of London where he was Principal Clerk to the Public Health Department, was a close friend of Stephens and served on the boards of the Kent & East Sussex Railway, the Selsey Tramway, the Snailbeach District Railways and latterly as Chairman of the North Devon & Cornwall Junction Light Railway.*

*The Club always and had strong theatrical links amongst its membership, and with it the generosity that is sometimes associated with show business. During the first world war, it raised £25,000 for limbless soldiers and founded homes for orphans. In writing to Kipling, Stephens appears to have been soliciting his assistance for fund-raising. Kipling's dislike of aliens in general and the Germans in particular, was common knowledge, and the request might have evoked a positive response, but for his heavy war time commitments elsewhere.*

*Bates died in 1929 and Stephens replaced him on his various railway boards with Jeremiah McVeagh, the erstwhile Nationalist M.P. for County Down and a director of the Dublin & South Eastern Railway. McVeagh also emerged as a promotor of the ill-fated Southern Heights Light Railway, which was arguably Stephens most important light railway scheme.*

*After the establishment of the Irish Free State, McVeagh unsuccessfully contested Sunderland for Labour in the 1924 General Election, an election that brought the party to power for a brief period and Ramsay MacDonald as Prime Minister. Ramsay Macdonald also served a second term when the labour government was elected again in 1929. According to Arthur Iggulden, a member of the Tonbridge office staff, Stephens is known to have met Ramsay MacDonald on at least one occasion, probably due to McVeagh's influence. Iggulden maintained that Stephens was angling for a knighthood for his services to transport. In this respect, he was to remain a disappointed man.*

ED

# Return Two Decades On

## Has the K&ESR Lost Its Light Railway Atmosphere?

It was July 1980: single man late 20s, recently passed driving test, staying in Bodiam to do a tour of the South East's heritage railways and I was really taken by the Kent & East Sussex Railway. I enjoyed it so much I was back in 1981. Forward to August 2004: married man early 50s, holidaying in Cranbrook with just my wife now that the two daughters are grown up. My first visit to Tenterden for 23 years. Will the comment in Spring's "Tenterden Terrier" about the railway becoming more commercialised mean that it has lost the light railway atmosphere that captivated me over two decades ago?

Thanks to the K&ESR and the Bluebell Railway having stands at York's Railfest, so that I could buy their house magazines, I got the idea for a short holiday in Kent when our planned break in the South West fell through. Having liked Kent two decades back I 'sold' the idea to Barbara and we began the 330 mile drive from our home in Durham.

Driving into the car park at Tenterden seemed familiar but there were changes to be seen. A good look round the main street with its interesting building styles left just a few minutes to get tickets for the 11.45 train. Not wishing to impose ourselves on another compartment's occupants I paid the first class supplement for the SECR saloon. Not only was there more room but the plush seats and upholstery probably impressed Barbara more than me as we sat in the end coupe. Soon our locomotive, SECR Class P 753 took our vintage train away. What an impressive change: last time it was Austerity saddletanks and Mk 1s with just one vintage coach-District Railway No. 100. Now we had a five coach vintage train hauled by a vintage steam loco. Barbara was also impressed by the well-kept station building and their flowers.

Rounding the curve to Rolvenden was a pleasant sight again followed by the same crossing over the A21 before the station. This time though there are roller shutter doors on the shed plus a large building on the other side of the tracks. Orpin's Curve was familiar but a surprise was to see Class 33 and 73 there: a sign of the times. After all Col. Stephens would have acquired redundant ex-

mainline stock from the mid C20 if he was still with us. I don't remember the sewage works or the timber yard. As Wittersham Road came we waited for a train of an Austerity and green Mk1s plus a Maunsell coach to pass. This was the end of the operational line in 1981 and weren't the Mk 1s then in chocolate and cream? As we waited several minutes the Guard helpfully explained our delay. This friendly, helpful attitude of the staff was the same as I found back in the 1980s.

Our journey continued under overcast sky onto 'new' territory for us both. Looking out of the window found the imposing sight of Bodiam Castle, as impressive as ever. Bodiam station was more active than over 20 years ago! Then I walked past the closed building to the end of the line; a Ruston shunter in use as a buffer stop! Today the station still looked like a Col. Stephens station. Yes, there are toilets- essential for a modern leisure facility but at least they are disguised as a coal office. It was good to see that many passengers were using the train to reach the castle. The railway staff were pleasant and friendly. I remarked to them what a change there had been at Bodiam in 20 years.

For the journey back we were next to the locomotive. Glancing out of the window past the narrow Class P it was almost like being in the cab and seeing the crew's view of the line ahead. The outlook was interesting with land stretching away on either side of the railway embankment. Just as I was about to ask Barbara her opinion she told me, "This is one of the better train journeys you've brought me on." All too soon we were back at Tenterden. Then guess what, the sun came out!

So has the railway lost its atmosphere? There have been changes in response to being a modern, commercial attraction. Yet there remains enough of the light railway ambience with the steam locomotives, vintage coaches, Col. Stephens type buildings and friendly staff which more than balance these new developments. The railway remains sufficiently unique, as it did in the early 1980s, for me to want to visit again some time in the future.

**Phil Champion**



# Placing a Call to Bodiam



*Chris Lowry up the Pole at Bodiam Station 20th July 2004 (Alan Sampson)*

## ***Chris Lowry outlines the story of the final link in the Railway's telephone system***

One of the features of the Kent and East Sussex Railway has always been its internal telephone system, most of it carried on traditional telegraph poles. During the period before the line's reopening the track was broken in several places and it was only the telephone wires that connected up all the stations.

So it was only natural that the planning for the Bodiam extension should have included reconnecting that station with the rest of the railway's telephone network. The idea was to run two wires between Northiam and Bodiam for a telephone circuit together with an additional one from just past Padgham's curve for a treadle to warn the Bodiam station staff to open the level crossing gates for an approaching train.

Most of the original poles had been discarded when the formation was cleared for relaying, although a few survived. New ones were sourced from the firm of Burt Boulton in Newport in South Wales at a cost of £30-£60 each and transported to Northiam, from where they were taken by lorry out along the trackbed. All 84 of them were erected by the contractor during September 1998. Individually numbered, they formed useful reference markers for the subsequent tracklaying gangs.

There matters sat until the autumn of 2002, over two years after the reopening of the extension. On the sunny morning of 15 September I walked the length with Duncan Buchanan taking detailed notes, and later that day I went on holiday in South Africa while Duncan started work on a detailed schedule listing all the cross-arms, insulators, stays and

braces that would be needed to complete the installation.

The next few months, when not doing jobs on the operational section, were occupied in building up all the necessary stock. Much came from a reclamation yard at Romsey in Hampshire. Many stays were reconditioned from old ones recovered from various locations on the railway. And in a good example of interdepartmental co-operation new cross-arms were manufactured in the Carriage and Wagon workshop at Tenterden. To give some idea of the scale of the task, every sixth pole needs at least one stay to counteract the stress imposed by the weight of the wire. And each stay needs to be anchored to a concrete block or piece of old sleeper and buried three feet in the ground.

Nor had we forgotten the wire, all nine miles of it. This was purchased new, and in order to save money for the Railway it was funded privately to the tune of £2,000.

Unfortunately when it arrived we found that all the drums were of different lengths, which led to Boris Perkins having to devise a complex spreadsheet to ensure that there weren't too many wasteful offcuts. We also found that we were short, so we had to order some more.

In due course most of the equipment was dropped off along the track from passenger trains, with the heavier items such as cable drums being unloaded from works trains, and the long months from August 2003 saw us digging in the stays and climbing each one of the poles to fix the cross-arms in place. A day of particular activity was 6 April 2004, when a joint S&T and permanent way class 33-hauled works train was involved in wiring work by the Tenterden home signal before delivering items along the whole length between Northiam and Bodiam. As part of the work that day a number of stays were dug in and several telegraph poles re-erected, including the tall one next to the station building at Bodiam.

The laborious and physically demanding task of wiring started last August: we were out in all weathers including some blistering hot days when we were grateful for bottles of water thrown to us from passing trains. By early September all three wires were in place between Bodiam and Padgham's and work switched to the Northiam end of the section.

Late October saw us finished as far as Mill Ditch and by 17 November it was complete. The only real problem was at Mill Ditch itself where there is a 100 yd stretch underground where the main electricity pylons cross the railway. The necessary piping had been laid some years previously before the track was installed, but when the time came to thread the wires through it, both ends had disappeared under two feet of granite ballast! The problem was solved by borrowing 100m of rodding on a drum. This required transport to site and so the Ford diesel was employed, as it was available due to driver training on the day, and the end of the duct was found under the ballast, 3 hours later. I completed much work afterwards to tidy up the access and ensure no repeat of the problem.

Wednesday 24 November was spent connecting the wires to the internal telephone exchange at Northiam, and on the following Tuesday we heard a dial tone at Bodiam, for the first time in many years. And on Wednesday 1 December I made the first telephone call from Bodiam to the signal box at Wittersham Road. The line was complete again.

All that remains to do now is to install the treadle, and this is planned for before the start of the 2005 operating season – much to the relief of the long-suffering Bodiam station staff.

Was it all worth it? Yes. Lengthy pole routes were once an everyday part of the railway scene in this country, but now they have all but disappeared. It's all part of creating the atmosphere: not as glamorous or obvious as some aspects of a preserved railway but important nonetheless. And now we believe that we have one of the longest pole routes in railway preservation. Next time you gaze idly out of the carriage window, think of all the work that goes into maintaining the telegraph wires. And if you see someone up a pole, give him a wave!

Finally, I'd like to thank those who helped – all of them volunteers giving up some of their spare time. They are Mike Artlett, Duncan Buchanan, Max Dunstone, Simon Marsh (who assisted me with this article), Boris Perkins, John Pocock, Alan Sampson and Paul Vidler. It was a real pleasure to me that many of us and our families were able to meet up for a celebration lunch at the Swan at Wittersham in January.

# A Terrier in Yorkshire

Our Terrier locomotive Knowle paid a visit to the West Somerset Railway in September 2004. So her visit to the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, in October 2003, is now just a memory and these lines are penned in the hope that they may still be of interest. Be warned, however – the writer may well lapse into memories of August 1953 and January 1954. Those early trips, to the "old" K&ESR, provided his first memories of Terriers in action. Another warning, however – the writer is also a "timing" fan!

Perhaps one might go even further back down memory lane, to a wartime home at Tangmere in West Sussex and boyhood tales of a railway, inhabited by a species of 0-6-0T known as Terrier, on an island called Hayling, some miles to the west. Eventually one paid a visit to that line, in July 1960, and spent a pleasant day *toing* and *froing* between Havant and Hayling Island. Curiously, my trips, on a Sunday, were a month before a visit paid by Derek Winkworth. His recordings were described by the late O.S.Nock in *The Railway Magazine* for August 1964 (page 629). No. 32661 attained 53 mph before the slack over the wood timber structure of Langstone Bridge. These runs were with 3 modern coaches, about 100 tons.

So, the capabilities of these little engines were held in high regard. On the K&ESR, even the Bluebell, there is little opportunity for "running" – maybe No. 32678 had a chance on the West Somerset, but, knowing that line, maybe not? Again, the Severn Valley Railway, which No.32678 visited on her way to "the Moors" in September 2003, may have provided an opportunity. I do not know. But, when I learnt that, on the NYMR in October 2003, Knowle would be used only on shuttles from Pickering to Levisham and back – yes, here was an opportunity!

Firstly, a brief word on topography. From Pickering, the line rises at 1 in 332 for some 4 miles, to MP 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (New Bridge Crossing is half a mile north of Pickering). This is followed by a half mile of 1 in 229, to Farworth Cottages, and then almost a mile of 1 in 179 before the gradient eases to 1 in 238 through Levisham Station. The only curvature of note is the reverse curve at Kingthorpe (MP 9), which are restricted to 15

mph. So, in distance alone, some 5 miles, just a bit further than the Hayling Island branch, which is more or less level. Secondly, the loads. For my first three runs we had two coaches, not more than 65 tons all told. However, for my final run, on the Saturday of "Wartime Weekend", we had 3 Gresley coaches, 103 tons tare.

The drivers all took to the Terrier with the greatest of ease – I say this as a passenger, with little knowledge of "what was going on" on the footplate. Indeed, on my first run, with Driver Dave Jackson, he seemed to be thoroughly at home, and one recalls him buffering up to the coaches at Levisham, after running round ..... He "knew his brake". On the initial runs, with the light 2 coach load, there was no problem in running up to the line limit.

The real test came on the final Saturday, with 3 "Gresleys". Although Pickering station platform was crowded with service personnel – so it seemed – the 11 am shuttle was lightly loaded. The start was hampered by "operational reasons" and Driver John Fletcher took matters very steadily out to Kingthorpe. He then let fly. Along this stretch of line, gently curving through the wooded part of lower Newtondale, "our" Terrier must have made a fine sight. Line speed was well maintained over the last stretch, more steeply graded, and the fireman did not seem unduly concerned by his efforts on arrival at Levisham. Pressure was 120psi, but this was the last uphill stretch. The line now practically straight, was always a great source of joy to those who rarely heard the chatter of a Terrier at speed! However, there did seem to be something different about the "stack noise" from the chimney of "our" Terrier on these Yorkshire occasions. Subsequent reflection reminded me that – yes! – No 32678 carries a Marsh (or is it Drummond?) chimney.

There must be few such stretches of line where it is possible, today, to hear a Terrier hard at work, and at speed, over such a length of time. Even on the Hayling Island branch of long ago, the effort required to attain 53 mph from the start (*as above*) could not have been sustained for more than 5 minutes. Yet here was No.32678 "going

home" for over 7 minutes, from Kingthorpe curves to Levisham, and mostly on an upgrade. The Severn Valley Railway (*as below*) has its stretches of line where an engine may be put to it, but I was not present for Knowle's visit. At least, the Winter 2003 issue of *The Tenterden Terrier* (No.92) tells us, on page 5, that the Terrier "chirruped along in great style, surprising everyone with its turn of speed". This was on a load of two well filled coaches and a PMV, and over the relatively level road between Kidderminster and Highley, some 8 miles. I can well believe it!

There are photographs of "our" Terrier in *Moors Line* for Autumn 2003 (No 140) and again in Winter 2003/4 (No 141). In the latter No. 32678 is reported as running 304 miles in 2003 on the NYMR – compared with 12,024 by schools No. 30926 *Repton* and 40 by Beattie No. 30587! The Terrier was based at Grosmont and although she worked out light engine one morning, she usually piloted (and usually to a Black Five 4-6-0) on a regular working. However, *Moors Line* 141 does have a photograph (p 33) showing the 3.20 Pickering to Grosmont on 18th October, 32678 piloting 45157 tender first; this train did have the Schools assisting, alone in the rear! This was probably "as near as one could get" to seeing a Terrier paired with the Schools. However, it was amusing to note that No. 30926 was used, solo, on Pickering

to Levisham shuttles during the May Gala Weekend.

The writer has great memories of the Schools class in normal service on the Hastings line, and elsewhere. So, may I finish with a couple of vignettes, please? One is of the Standard Class 5 4-6-0 No.73096 hurtling down the hill from Wadhurst in July 2003, on a "Steam Dreams" special train to Hastings (then Eastbourne), and the other is of Schools No. 30926 hard at work during the course of a visit to the Severn Valley Railway in September 2004. It was with great interest to learn, too, that this Schools was standby to No.21C123 *Blackmore Vale* at Railfest, York, in May 2004 – a schools paired with the Chatham coach S3554? What an even more remarkable sight that would have been – and my thoughts here are with those who do the C&W at Tenterden, Pickering and Ingrow ..... Lastly, we had better not write, just now, about the present-day exploits of No. 34067 *Tangmere* either ....!

If readers are interested in some references, then please dip into *The Railway Magazine* for 1950 (p 299, the LBSCR and Yorkshire), May 1951 (pp 346/7 A Memorable Run by a Brighton "Terrier") and September 1953 (pp 579-583 On the Brighton Line Fifty Years Ago).

I am indebted to John Meredith, of York, for his comments in reviewing my first draft.

**A.G.S. Davies**



No 32678 at the water column, Pickering, 3 October 2003.

(Tony Davies)





No 32678 coupling up at Levisham, (top) and approaching New Bridge on the 1pm train to Levisham, 3rd October 2003 (Tony Davies)





