



JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

Tenterden Terrier

Winter 2022

Number 149



**Robin Coombes, the New General Manager
Glamping at Bodiam Station
Completing the Railcar
Obituary: John Liddell
2022 Volunteer Survey**

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Editor:
Nick Pallant

Assistant Editor:
Jon Edwards

Editorial Assistants:
Chris Fautley
Paul Heinink
Lucy Sayce
Ian Scarlett

Layout & Design:
Jon Elphick

Editorial Office:
Tenterden Town Station
Tenterden
TN30 6HE

E-mail:
terrier@kesr.org.uk

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FRONT COVER

'Slim Jim' Crompton 33202 approaches Rolvenden level crossing with the 'A' set.
(Jake Lewis)

BACK COVER

With the return to steam on the easing of the weather, Swiftsure is seen on Tenterden loop on 4th September.
(Phil Edwards)

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All were welcome at Tenterden Town's Refreshment Rooms on 19th September.
(Robin Coombes)

Tenterden Terrier

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Editorial

Whatever Next?

I think most people would agree that we are living in strange times. Economic turbulence looms large among the ‘unprecedented’ and ‘not for many years’ events regularly dominating the headlines, and the Kent & East Sussex Railway cannot help but be affected by this, along with most other heritage and tourist organisations. The Chairman writes about these

issues in his column in Lineside News, and the point has been reinforced by our Finance Director in a recent message to volunteers and staff.

The extraordinary temperatures of mid-summer (although apparently appreciated by the South East’s wine-growers!) resulted in a parched landscape and the need for us to resort to diesel traction. We acknowledge the part played by internal combustion in keeping the K&ESR running during 2022, and this issue of our house journal has a decided diesel theme.

Nick Pallant



With the Union Flag at half mast, the Kent & East Sussex Railway marks the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II. Tenterden Town Station on 9th September 2022.

(Robin Coombes)

FROM THE CHAIR

As I write this, we are approaching the end of the main 2022 season. Much has happened, on the international and national stages and within the railway, and I think it important that we are honest and realistic with ourselves about what it means.

The economic situation is grim, and the prospects are that it will get worse. This has had, and will continue to have, adverse effects on both our income and our expenditure, on which more below. In short, we will have to spend a lot more money to run our trains and keep up with maintenance and overhauls while our customers will have less disposable income to spend with us. We are not alone in this in the heritage world, and we ignore the implications at our peril.

The weather has been extraordinary, to the extent that during August we were unable to run steam trains, necessitating the hiring in of a mainline diesel locomotive. This may be a portent of things to come.

We have also seen the sad death of Queen Elizabeth II, at the beginning of whose reign the Kent & East Sussex Railway was still open to passengers and freight, and along the whole length from Robertsbridge to Headcorn. Much has changed in the intervening 70 years. I am

proud that we as a railway responded appropriately, lowering our flag to half-mast, posting a message of condolence on our website, and hosting a community event for the funeral.

On a positive note, we have welcomed Robin Coombes as our new General Manager. He has been spending his early weeks establishing a profile, settling in, and deepening his understanding of the changes we need to make and how to go about them. In this, of course, he will be questioned and supported by the Trustees. He is certainly going to have his work cut out in leading our response to the challenges that confront us.

I wrote in the last *Terrier* about those challenges, and our approach to them. I am not going to repeat that here, but I will quote a couple of new examples. Our August visitor figures were 24% down on the pre-Covid base year of 2019, and the prognosis for 2022 as a whole does not look good. On the expenditure side, our insurers have withdrawn from the railway market and the cost going forward with a new company is going to be significantly higher. We are, as I have said many times before and will doubtless say again, going to have to look for more, and more radical, ways of cutting our coat according to our cloth. The



A rare photo of most of the board. Back row (l-r): Philip Shaw, Neil Sime, Andy Papworth, Paul Vidler, Matthew Hyner, Ian Legg and Kevin Bulled. Front row: Robin Coombes (the GM), Geoff Crouch, David Nibloe and Robin White. (via Robin Coombes)

reserves that we built up for a rainy day are steadily diminishing; the rain is heavier and longer lasting than we could reasonably have predicted.

We have no intention of being passive. In the coming weeks we will be signing off on our 2023 offer, which is likely to look significantly different from what we have been doing this year. We continue to look for more innovative marketing techniques, and for ways of encouraging our visitors to spend more money with us. We are developing new partnerships, locally and further afield. We have made considerable progress in ensuring that we spend wisely and get value for money; we are clearly going to need to go further. By the time you read this I hope we will have agreed a 2022/23 budget that balances the books and incorporates assumptions at the pessimistic end of the scale – which will be even more of a challenge than it was last year. There will be fewer locomotive and carriage miles, for example.

I'd like to say a word about our human capital. On the one hand it is exceptional and is what keeps us going. On the other hand, however, it is limited. The reality is that to lay on an event, or develop any kind of new initiative, we need people who are prepared to step up to the plate in the common interest and, crucially, share in the responsibility. Many of course already do this, and we could not manage without them. But we must protect individuals from burning

out and jeopardising their wellbeing. The risk is a real one. We always need more volunteers, not only in the obvious front-line roles but in the back room too.

Developing this theme, the trustees have been busy, individually and as a Board. Together with the new General Manager we have been reviewing our risks and how to manage them, as well as looking at what hasn't gone as well as it might have done – and how to ensure we don't make the same mistakes again. There are of course a number of things that haven't gone as smoothly or as quickly as we would have wished. We know this, and you as members will know it. But all too often the root cause has been the sheer lack of bandwidth across the railway. There are times where we know what we need to do, but just can't find the capacity to do it. Collectively, at all levels, we are close to, or at, the limit of what can be managed effectively. Perhaps it is time we all recognised the fact.

So, there you have my honest and realistic view of where we currently stand. Will we be successful for the rest of 2022, in 2023, and going forward? Yes! But only if we keep focused on increasing revenue and getting value for every pound that we spend, if we are prepared to take difficult and perhaps unpopular decisions, and if we continue to evolve as an organisation.

Simon Marsh
Chairman

FROM THE OFFICE

I have now been in post for one month.

As Simon, the Chairman, has noted the month was overshadowed by the sad news of the death of Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September, the period of official mourning, and the funeral on Monday 19 September. The railway had reviewed its Operation London Bridge procedures in advance and was therefore able to issue its message of condolence and lower flags to half-mast within ten minutes of the announcement. We organised a community event for the funeral by opening the Tenterden tea rooms where we live streamed the funeral service. Locomotive No.25 *Northiam*, adorned with a wreath, and traction engine *Buller* were present at the station and sounded their whistles as a tribute to the life of the late Queen following the national two-minute silence, and

playing of a lament by the lone piper. The wreath was later laid at the town's War Memorial along with other community flowers and tributes.

My focus during the remaining period has been:

- to be visible as the K&ESR General Manager (physically about the railway, in the traditional print press and on social media);
- to understand the overall operating environment of the railway; and
- to listen to staff and volunteers – their ideas, concerns and aspirations.

I have taken part in a series of events and activities which provide a snapshot of the variety of the railway. These have included Hopper's Festival, vintage buses, Pullman service, the vintage set, fish & chips and real ale trains, teddy bears' picnic, volunteer awards evening, pop-up



Evacuees on their way to the country.

(Robin Coombes)

cinema, loco cleaning, signalling, booking office, footplate, carriage & wagon, lineside walk (part) and today the evacuation. The evacuation day was particularly good, and demonstrated what the railway does best. It was well organised and well attended by volunteers and re-enactors. The children were totally engaged with what was an important educational experience, which they will remember and maybe, just maybe, spark a lifelong interest in steam and heritage railways.

My overall impression after one month is of a charming, friendly, welcoming railway with much to offer its visitors and supporters. The jewels in the crown are the Pullman service and the vintage train. The railway has, however, suffered under-investment over many years – in rolling stock, infrastructure and people, with some singular points of critical failure.

The railway appears to be too reliant on a small number of key committed individuals who are often covering shortages. These areas of concern are recoverable, and fixable on a step-by-step basis, but we clearly need more volunteers and funding to run the railway we all want to see.

The picture is made more complex and complicated by the external environment. It is easy to use words such as ‘unprecedented’, and it is a fact of life that the future is unknown and thus uncertain, but we are facing a combination

of circumstances most of us have never experienced – climate emergency, cost of living crisis and war in Europe, while recovering from a global pandemic. In the past few months we have had a new King and a new Prime Minister (twice), and recently the pound has been in free-fall.

All these will, in one way or another, directly affect the future success of the K&ESR – be it the affordability of travel for visitors and volunteers, the cost of materials skyrocketing, feelings of fear, stress and helplessness, changes in operating conditions due to extreme weather conditions, together with changing social trends and the need for continual renewal of assets and succession. Effective leadership, maintaining a positive cash flow and agile responses to rapidly changing events will, I believe, be the key to our survival. I do not minimise the importance and significance of the word ‘survival’. We, along with every heritage railway, need to prove our resilience like never before.

Due to previous under-investment our overall starting position may be regarded as weak. However we do have strengths in committed people, a light railway culture of ‘make do and mend’, no major infrastructure (viaducts, tunnels, significant embankments, cuttings, large buildings etc.) and currently some cash in the bank.

During the past month I have visited several external events, both railway and non-railway, and all but one was significantly quieter than I have experienced in the past. Our own passenger numbers show a similar pattern. In 2018/19 (November to October), my base year, there were 81,107 visitors; in 2021/22 we will struggle to achieve 55,000 by the end of October, a reduction of 32%, and the cost of living rise is only just starting to bite. For August, our busiest and most recent month, the figures are 12,481 down to 9,537, a drop of 24%.

The big question is, what will next year look and feel like? Unfortunately, even though the crystal ball is very cloudy, we must make decisions now on next year’s working timetable, and our list of events, and what we will be charging for tickets. I have listened to one of biggest frustrations – last-minute changes to the programme and rosters.

The strategy going forward will be to maximise revenue (the positive contribution each train and event makes to the overall bottom line), and to have visibility of events for the full year, but we will need the ability to change as circumstances

change. What success looks like will be meeting and exceeding the 2023 revenue budget, with minimal changes to agreed programme.

Where we are is that an initial version of the Working Timetable (WTT) has been produced. The Marketing and Commercial department are producing a list of proposed events and activities; this will be married with the WTT as a second version. The strategy for events is 'something' to happen on as many weekends as volunteers can resource. This will vary from low-key events – a behind-the-scenes tour, a Colonel Stephens talk; mid-scale events such as a car rally or a film night; to larger events such as a 'VJ-Style' Day, Steampunk, Gala, Fright Week and Santa. My objective is to present a final signed-off version to the Board on 26 November together with a communication plan, and to release this as soon as possible.

Only then can the loco requirements be generated, though I appreciate that this is an iterative process as the railway only has limited availability. It has been fascinating to read on social media the decisions that are yet to be made. I am still at the stage of asking lots of questions about every aspect of the railway; I am also very happy to hear advice, have suggestions made or listen to ideas put forward. My door is open, and I am regularly to be seen standing on the platform, or travelling along the line.

Our margin for error going forward is going to be ever smaller, and we need to make timely decisions based on the best information and data available, rather than be rushed, basing them just on opinions, what we have always done, or what

we only wish for. Everything we do has to be in the best interests of the whole railway.

Although the outside world is uncertain, there is so much to be positive about. We are a repository to a unique collection of historic assets, we are an important part of the community, and we bring much economic value and social benefit. We are a place to make friendships (many lifelong), learn skills, have fun, enjoy our hobby. We can inspire and give educational experiences to the next generation and, when visitors walk through the gate, we can create a little magic and nostalgia for a time gone by, whether fine dining on the Pullman or riding in Victorian carriages.

Each morning I pinch myself when I walk along the platform at Tenterden and see my favourite view of the station, gardens, level crossing, signal box and onward to the rolling Kent countryside. It is something very precious. We perhaps need to remind ourselves of how special what we have is.

Finally, another good news story. The Railcar has been relocated from the CSS to C&W at Tenterden for restoration work to commence in earnest. There will be a fundraising campaign titled '20 for 20' and there will be a major feature in Trakside magazine. In the article I have stressed the importance of the Railcar both to the K&ESR and to the wider preservation movement. I have made a public commitment to have the railcar in service for 3rd February 2024 (50th anniversary of the K&ESR reopening) along with the Ford diesel and a Terrier. Please help us to make this happen.

*Robin Coombes
General Manager*



The GWR Railcar shines in the evening sun as it is returned to Tenterden.

(Robin Coombes)

MOTIVE POWER

Rolvenden MPD – *David Brenchley*

We were delighted to be able to return to steam haulage from the beginning of September and are pleased to report that our very own No.25 *Northiam* and hire-locomotive *Swiftsure* are holding their own and maintaining the service, ably supported by the DMMU, and the hired Class 33 and Class 14 diesels.

We were however sad to say goodbye to visiting prairie locomotive 4144 this month, and hope that we may see her run on our line again some time in the future.

USA tank No.65 *Maunsell* continues her overhaul. The boiler progresses well; the tubes are in and have been expanded. Now comes the hydraulic test to find out if we have any leaks. Her cab is currently in the workshop being stripped of black paint, in preparation for repainting in a nice shade of green...

Charwelton

The overhaul of *Charwelton* is slowly progressing in Rolvenden Works. To date the Rother Valley Railway has invested £149,000 in their locomotive: this is made up of £115,000 on a new boiler, with the remainder being spent on the design, pattern making, casting and machining of the replacement cylinder block and materials. A private donor has paid for the retyring of the engine's wheelsets.



Charwelton's new cylinder block in place.

(Alan Crotty)

Although not mentioned in the above reports, we are sorry to have to report that both of our Terriers are currently out of service.

Knowle has been withdrawn due to the condition of its bottom end; an independent inspection has taken place to determine exactly what works are required. Having only recently returned to traffic, *Poplar* suffered a serious failure of its motion while running at the Bluebell Railway's

The project – being managed by Alan Crotty – has been severely hindered by the Covid pandemic, which closed down the companies dealing with the above works; but the end is finally in sight! Thanks mainly to two Rolvenden volunteers, Jerry Preston-Ladd and Mike Pearson, the cylinder block has been hydraulically tested and has now been fitted to the frames and correctly aligned.

The boiler, which is being made in Stockton-on-Tees by Northern Steam Engineering, is almost complete; it requires only the tubes to be fitted, followed by pressure testing. Provided the German tube supplier delivers the materials on time the boiler should be delivered to us in January 2023.

This leaves the K&ESR to complete the overhaul of the remainder of the machine.

Terrier 150 event. As a result *Poplar* is also withdrawn while a course of action is decided on.

We are however pleased to be able to report that Manning Wardle *Hastings*, belonging to Mike Hart, which failed while on test on the K&ESR, is making good progress with repairs at the premises of JM Steam Engineering at Quanton. It is hoped that *Hastings* will be back with us before the end of the year.

On Track Machines – *Jamie Douglas*

Tamper DR73434 – Having carried out significant tamping works around our railway during the early part of the year, this machine finally had its engine change completed over the course of ten days in mid-July. It has since spent August, September and October at work at the Epping Ongar Railway where we have carried out maintenance tamping and ballast regulating over the entire six-mile line. In addition we undertook some major re-alignment and cross-levelling works in a few specific areas – reducing the track cant from up to 100mm down to 20mm – to resolve some ongoing problems that they had been experiencing with wheel wear. Over the winter this machine will be in the workshop at Tenterden undergoing major maintenance, including some refurbishment works on the tamping units and installation of a modification to the tamping depth control system, as well as the next phase of body repairs and repainting.

Tamper DR75201 – Maintenance and recommissioning works are now all but complete, including repainting into the original yellow livery – the machine now looks outstanding! A few ‘shakedown’ tamping sites have been completed successfully, however we now await finalisation of a hire agreement with the K&ESR before formal entry into general service can go ahead.

Ballast Regulator DR77329 – This machine has also seen extensive use over the course of 2022, both at the K&ESR and at the Epping Ongar Railway. It has been very interesting to work with the guys at the EOR with this machine;



Tamper DR75201 with the repaint team.

(Jamie Douglas)

they have been most impressed with the ability of the regulator to recover material from the ballast shoulder that had migrated over time away from the track area. This machine will need some works in the not-too-distant future to repair/replace worn-out ballast plough wearing components, to ensure that the machine can work as efficiently as possible.

TRAMM DR98211 – Unfortunately only minor works have been carried out on this machine to bring its return to service closer. Major body repairs to the tractor unit, including reconstruction of much of the engine bay housing, were completed some time ago, including some repainting. Refitting of the cab interior is now required, as well as completion of major maintenance, some minor rewiring of engine sensors, and replacement of perished pneumatic hoses. This shouldn't be a major project to complete, subject to availability of staff – which of course is subject to other priorities!

ROLLING STOCK

Carriage & Wagon – *David Brailsford*

SECR Family Saloon: Back in service towards the end of August, the Family Saloon is an absolute credit to all those who have worked on it. The final jobs completed by the department were French polishing of all the internal woodwork, repainting of all the ceilings and the Guard's compartment, plus a deep clean of all the carpets and seats. Many thanks to the K&ESR Locomotive Trust which sponsored 50% of the full repaint.

Pullman Car *Barbara*: For some time *Barbara*

has been running around coupled to the SECR four-wheeler 2947. This has been providing the extra brake force necessitated by a defective vacuum brake cylinder on the Pullman. New parts had to be ordered for the cylinder, and the shunt into the shed took some time to organise.

Great Western Railcar: This vehicle entered the shed at the beginning of September and has taken the space vacated by the Family Saloon. It will be with us until the end of December, with the aim being to try to get the roof fully fitted and as many windows in place as labour availability and time will permit. Project leader



The newly outshopped Family Saloon. (Robin Coombes)

Neil Edwards would welcome any offers of help to expedite these tasks.

Mk1 BSO 73: Currently in service. All the remaining window woodwork has been renewed and varnished. An 18-month exam was carried out before this coach left the shed.

Mk1 TSO 85 has been withdrawn from service due to a number of leaking windows. The repairs will have to wait until a slot becomes available in our very busy programme.

Mk1 CK 63: All the compartment and corridor ceilings are being replaced, as they are life expired. While this work is taking place a partial re-wire of the coach is being carried out. One platform end door has a broken frame, so this will be replaced using one of the new frames being manufactured by Richard Giles. It is also possible that a new door skin will be required – these are on order from South Devon Railway Engineering. Some revarnishing is also taking place in the compartments. Two wheelsets will have to be replaced due to flats.

Mk1 75 Petros: Due to come into the shed in November for a total repaint, a partial re-wire and the replacement of the internal ceilings.

Mk1 RU 1987: Much work is still required on the electrical systems and the kitchen in this vehicle. Many small but time-consuming jobs remain to be done before the inside of this coach can be considered finished. Mike Hobden and Andy Hopper are building a linen storage cupboard in the main vestibule. Julian Coppins and Oliver Brice have been refurbishing a number of free-standing Mk1 chairs for this vehicle; many of the joints have had to be re-glued, and new moquette will be needed. Sourcing of the final steam heat system fittings is proving problematic.

New springs are on order for both bogies as the

originals are in a very tired state. The bogies have been laboriously cleaned by hand and will be painted once the new springs are fitted. All the shock absorbers and yaw dampers have been sent away to Sabre Rail for overhaul. Two wheelsets will require reprofiling.

Mk1 BCK 21245: An assessment of the work needed to bring this vehicle into an operational state has been carried out. The work required will probably take six months and will involve the replacement of all the

crash pillars, re-installation of some steam heat pipework, some new door skins and replacement of some of the compartment ceilings. A new electrical regulator box is needed to replace the one that is missing. A full repaint including the roof is also needed. This is yet another vehicle that will have to fit into our busy programme.

SR Brake Van 11934: Currently stored outside the C&W shed and, although it looks finished, it most certainly isn't. Since the rain has started to fall again it has become clear that the roof canvas needs replacing. This is another vehicle that needs storing in the shed at Rolvenden until such time as the department can carry out the work.

The frames of the SR Ling and the GWR Box Van have recently been sandblasted at Wittersham Road. The job of painting the bare metal should be well under way by the time you read this, and then they will both be moved to Tenterden so that the new woodwork can be installed.

Many thanks to the electricians who volunteer on the railway. Their efforts have seen a number of upgrades completed in the shed, including new lighting in both the office and the tool store, and correct sockets in the mess room.

On the people front we are sorry to report that Peter Blythe left us in mid-July and moved to an engineering job closer to his home. Thank you for all your efforts Peter, they are much appreciated! Sadly we have to report the passing, in early July, of former volunteer and one-time coach owner John Liddell. In his later years John would come to the shed and find small jobs that he could take home and complete. He always derived great pleasure from the time that he spent working in the department. Our thoughts are with John's family at this difficult time. An obituary appears on page 41.

Operating Department

– Jake Lewis

Well, we like a challenge; and that is certainly what we have faced this summer. 2022 has provided us with many challenges, from coal prices to the unprecedented heat and exceptional risk of lineside fires – which required us to switch to diesel power for most of the summer – to dealing with ever-changing crewing requirements connected to this. It has certainly been quite a season, and we would like to thank all our volunteers for being patient and understanding during these challenging times.

So where are we now?

We have recently (as of the start of September) started running steam services again – a big step to returning to our planned schedule and a huge relief to steam crews and roster clerks alike. However this does not mean our diesel fleet will be side-lined. The increased use of diesel power has certainly saved the day – it has also brought in new customers who may not otherwise have visited us, especially since the Class 33/2 arrived – so hopefully we will see 33202 and Class 14 D9526 make a few more trips while they are with us.

News

During this summer we have seen some new locomotives arrive, and some new and existing volunteers pass out for new or additional roles. Richard Stone has passed out on the Class 14 as additional traction, Paul Hutchinson has passed out as both Guard and Shunter, Lesley Lee is now qualified as a Signaller at Wittersham Road, and Ed McNaughton and Matthew Webb have passed as Firemen! It has been a busy summer for our Inspectors, and we look forward to seeing more people pass out in the coming year.

Class 33/2 No.33202 arrived in early August at short notice to assist us with our need for diesel traction, and has performed fantastically along our line. It has also been popular with our customers.

Coal

The coal situation could be better. It is a



*Our Operating staff on the morning of the Queen's funeral.
(via Robin Coombes)*

challenge that is not going to go away any time soon, and due to this we must be sensible with how we use it. The price recently hit a massive £550 a ton but, with a few more options starting to become available, the prices are starting to move in the right direction. We can obtain coal, so supply is not so much of an issue, but the cost does mean we need to be smart and sensible with our usage.

At the time of writing we are about to accept a delivery of Wildfire, a manufactured blend of coal, coke and anthracite, bonded with resin. This has been developed specially for use in the heritage sector, so we are hopeful that it will prove to be a suitable product. Watch this space for developments.

Rags

To keep our locomotives spick and span we use a large amount of cleaning rags. At times we have had to buy in rags, which of course is an expense we could well do without. If you happen to be clearing out your wardrobe, any old cotton-based rags you can spare us would be very much appreciated.

Finally

We would like to thank all the volunteers who have ensured that our services run while providing a high-quality and personal service to our customers, despite the increased cost of living and fuel. Even with our challenges we have not had to cancel any running, unlike some other railways which have unfortunately been forced to. If you would like to join the Operating Department as a volunteer, please see the K&ESR volunteering web page www.kesr.org.uk/volunteering or pop in and say hello.

Signalling Department – Tony Ramsey

Once again it has been a busy summer, and the Signalling Department has worked hard. I estimate that, during the four months covered by this report, we have undertaken some 350 signal box turns and 150 level crossing turns. This, of course, is without any assistance from paid staff, and is in addition to learning turns by trainees, supervisory visits by Inspectors, the turns covered by those of our members who are qualified in other roles, as well as all the background tasks of training, rostering and assessing.

Some turns are straightforward, while others involve 'mini dramas' such as a last-minute change of timetable, an equipment failure or a lineside fire. If it is not too presumptuous – and to misquote a line from the BBC comedy programme *Yes Minister* – it seems the prevailing sentiment is "The Signaller will cope: he always does!" To all those Signallers and Crossing Keepers who have 'coped' this summer, we extend our grateful thanks.

We congratulate Richard Seabrook on qualifying as a Signaller by passing out at Tenterden Town box, and Lesley Lee on passing out at Wittersham Road (her third box). We are also pleased to record that Crossing Keepers John Frampton and John Spooner have passed out at Cranbrook Road and Northiam Gates respectively (in both cases, their second crossing). In addition, we congratulate Signaller Kenneth Yarham on his recent marriage to Kristine Joy Jago.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Infrastructure team for all



Swiftsure approaches Cranbrook Road
in the evening light. (Chris Stuchbury)

their recent assistance, especially in the provision of the toilet at Cranbrook Road and the painting of signal boxes and signal posts. This is much appreciated.

Finally, as we look ahead to the quieter winter months, we hope to resume the tradition of a post-Christmas departmental lunch. At the time of writing, this is still being explored.

Guards Report – Pete Spratling

On 27th March Angus Entwistle was assessed for the role of freight guard and was successful – well done! Angus is already a passenger guard; having looked through the records he is one of the youngest to hold both qualifications.

Another assessment took place on 1st May. Jake Lewis was assessed as a passenger guard, and I'm pleased to say that he was successful. Again, congratulations and happy guarding.

We have reopened the books to take on trainees, and it is intended to run another guards course later in the year. The dates for these will be published when known.

I would like to say thank you to everyone who has helped cover turns during July and August, given the extreme heat we have experienced. Many have covered more turns than they would have liked, but "Thank you" – all turns were covered.

On a sad note, I must sadly report that Martin Macfarlan, who was a long-standing volunteer guard, sadly passed away earlier this year. Martin passed out as a guard in 1999 and retired at the end of 2021, and during this time he gave a lot of time to the department. He was a guards assessor for many years and helped many trainees. Thank you those who attended his funeral. RIP Martin.

On a more positive note, I would like to congratulate Paul Hutchinson who successfully passed out as a passenger guard at the end of July, well done! At the time of writing this report another guard has an assessment for October, so hopefully we will have another resource. We are also getting an encouraging number of new trainee guards, and another training course is going ahead early 2023. I would like to thank the volunteer committee for their hard work in recruiting new volunteers.

At the time of writing this report, a date is being set for the next guards meeting in March 2023.

Station Masters – Geoff Colvin

This is being written at the end of September, and with services reducing for October there is time for a little reflection on the past months.

The season was always likely to be a challenge. The natural turnover in our ranks, apparently being accelerated a bit by the events of the past couple of years – with a reduction in the flow of new recruits at the same time – resulted in a rather depleted workforce.

I gather August is traditionally something of a concern for the roster clerks, and so it proved to be. A look back shows that while at Tenterden we always managed to field a Station Master there have been times when both Bodiam and more frequently Northiam have not been staffed. This is particularly an issue as at both stations the team includes a Crossing Keeper as well; when unfilled the role devolves to the Guard, with potential to cause undesirable stopping, starting and sometimes late running of trains. My thanks go to Malcolm Jones and Dave Blackman for their herculean efforts in getting as many turns covered as they were able.

Consequently a considerable emphasis has been placed on turning the steady flow of recruits into working members of the team. It is only by building numbers that we can hope to have the resilience needed to enable us to face the challenges that are going to face us in the future.

So far this year we have trained 15 individuals as platform assistants; the presence of each of them is warmly welcomed and helps the K&ESR maintain its image as a friendly place to visit. Some of these new colleagues have expanded their roles as either Travelling Ticket Inspectors or Station Masters, and in some cases both. Starting on the platform gives a great opportunity



Sunday 18th September saw new recruits on duty: (l-r) David Collins, Geoff Colvin, Roy Cooper, Phil Sell, Murray Motley and David Stamp. (via Geoff Colvin)

to find out what volunteering on the railway is really like.

The shortfall in Station Master numbers has been addressed in part by ten people completing their training at various stations. They include a mix of newcomers to the role and experienced members adding additional stations to their portfolio. This has eased the pressure significantly in some places, although there is more to do, particularly in building numbers at Northiam. I very much appreciate the efforts of all my colleagues who have willingly thrown themselves into sharing their knowledge and experience to help with this.

I hope that next year I will be able to report that all turns at all stations have been covered. This will need our existing team members to continue to show their flexibility, together with a continued emphasis on training and development of newcomers. But first there is Christmas...

WAY AND WORKS

Permanent Way – Paul Jessett

The summer months are busy for the P.Way department due to the higher number of trains we run during the period. Track patrols are completed every 30 running days, so they creep up on us very quickly. With the addition of very high temperatures during the period, extra inspections were necessary; but the track held up very well during this extraordinary weather

event. Some regular travellers will know that there are a few areas that will need some attention – this is due to the embankments drying out, due to lack of rainfall.

During the early 'white' Fridays in the timetable we were able to get out to Cranbrook Road level crossing and deliver large quantities of hardcore for the base of the toilet facilities adjacent to the crossing keepers office. This was levelled off and



*The milling machine on arrival at Wittersham Road.
(Paul Jessett)*

the Wednesday Group's handiwork installed. The opportunity was taken during this period to finish off the walkways on Rother Bridge. Our good friends at Playfoot Engineering had prefabricated a scheme that was designed by our resident Independent Engineer, so as not to put any addition stresses on the structure. Once the walkways were in place, the new lateral track support system was test fitted; this proved successful and was left in situ, but only as a temporary fix. This will form part of the final design to be installed as part of the joint Permanent Way Institution (PWI) and K&ESR project to be undertaken later in the year – more on this in the next Terrier.

During this period LUL's Schwebbau tube-gauge rail milling machine visited the railway as part of a training exercise. The chance was taken to use this versatile machine to reprofile some sections of bullhead rail below Cranbrook Road crossing down towards the Rolvenden home signal. Sadly its visit was a flying one, as it was only here for a



*Clearing the culvert.
(Paul Jessett)*

week. It was seen the following week being craned into a major re-lay with LUL at Epping station.

With the low water levels we have done some culvert inspections and clearance, and carried out repairs to the ones that needed work. For example, the culvert that runs under the railway adjacent to Bodiam foot crossing had suffered some erosion to the upper ring of the cross pipe. On closer inspection this was down to the diverted path the water was taking due to the culvert in the adjacent field being totally silted up.

This area had been severely affected by fallen trees in the storms earlier in the year, and the farmer was unable to gain access to this area, so we ran the trusty Kubota 360 out on the 'Frimtrol' and off-loaded it directly into the field. Frim was able to clear the entire length of the culvert, while the rest of the team rebuilt the culvert head from the track side. We could not have picked a worse day to carry out this work, as the heavens opened all day. The following week a joint operation with the Forestry team saw us travel along the section with the DMMU. The F&C guys were clearing the vegetation, and we were able to follow along, lifting and replacing covers, and inspecting the culverts, as we went.

As mentioned above, the railway is to take part in the annual PWI challenge for 2022. This gives railway industry professionals an opportunity to be involved in live site tasks, but without the pressures of a time-critical possession on the main line. Prior to this the P.Way team were involved in the huge task of clearing the ground beyond Northiam signal box. This will form part of the work site for the challenge. Furthermore we have assisted with a complete survey of the site, as much of the challenge work will be carried out on the formation in the area.

Forestry & Conservation – Steve McMurdo

The team continues working out on the line every Friday, with numbers attending typically varying between as few as four and as many as ten. We have recently welcomed two new members, thanks to the efforts of the volunteer recruitment committee. During the summer months we have been active at numerous locations along the whole length of the line.

The extremely dry weather and consequent risk



Northiam brings a dining train towards Rolvenden.
(Phil Edwards)

of fire spreading from passing steam locomotives required preventative lineside strimming in key areas in an effort to at least contain the potential damage.

We spent a day in July with Permanent Way, sharing a works train from Rolvenden down to Bodiam, and assisted them with clearance around various drainage culverts. We also took the opportunity to deal with smaller but important issues on our outstanding works list, such as cutting back branches and strimming undergrowth in the more remote and hard-to-reach parts of the system.

We cleared the overgrown areas on both sides of the line at the Bodiam end of Northiam station, as requested by P.Way in connection with their forthcoming winter project. The concrete sleepers previously hidden in the thick brambles behind the siding can now be removed for further use.

A number of working days were spent at our ongoing major projects near the location of the long-gone Dexter Halt and on the stretch just outside Wittersham Road, in the Rolvenden direction. Removal of dangerous branches, or in some cases complete trees, is required along significant stretches of line to maintain safety. With the permission of the adjacent landowner or occupier, we prefer to use road vehicles to cross farm land to reach the work sites, and are endeavouring to complete as much work as possible at these remote spots before the onset of wet winter weather means driving becomes challenging. Once that happens, the only access is by works train.

Several large trees located within the railway-owned land between the residential road known as Rogersmead and the line itself, just below

Tenterden level crossing, were judged to be in an unsafe condition and thus required urgent attention. We were able to remove as many dangerous branches as possible using a vehicle-mounted cherry picker, positioned on the highway, and enlisted our tree climbing specialist contractor to deal with the remainder.

Wednesday Working Group

– John Holland

As I write these words, the shorter and colder days mean that autumn is really upon us, and that K&ESR's services are running down to allow everyone some respite after what has been a challenging year. The summer period for the group has been exceptional, although our numbers were depleted on many occasions as members volunteered to fill in roles to assist with the running of the trains.

Our major job was to attack Wittersham Road station as often as possible so that we could give some TLC to this oft-forgotten little gem. The gates and long platform fence painting were the most arduous of the jobs there, and very time consuming; that was followed by a complete repaint of the ticket office and signal box, the ticket office roof and all the white fencing. We also started on signal posts, which have proved to be a major job and we have gone as far as we can at this time. Wittersham Road has certainly had some time and effort put into it.



Fresh paint being applied at Wittersham Road.

(John Holland)

We were concerned about the crossing keeper's hut and various platform elements at Rolvenden, owing to the area being visible to passing traffic. We eventually came back and, after some glass fibre repair, managed to paint the hut, get all the black fencing stained, the canopy washed down and several platform items repainted. The walkway for the signalman was renewed and anti-slip mats fitted.



*The Northiam Up Main Starter looking much better.
(John Holland)*

Coming back to base was a bit of a shock, as the area behind the office had become a serious rubbish dump. We attacked this and all manner of smaller jobs to try to keep up a reasonable appearance for our guests. We helped our Gardening Group by fitting a new water line and water butt for their use. It is surprising how quickly things go downhill when you're away for

a few weeks, so we've been very busy catching up, but we've also built up a portable container ready for the Christmas period storage. I know that some of you read the weekly reports that go out, so it's best not to dwell on this too much. We would like to thank you for your responses to these.

What about an insight into future work for the group? A lot of this is of course weather dependent, but the WWG will go on. Cranbrook Road needs the crossing gates painted and the keepers hut painted so it matches the new toilet there. We will then think about Rolvenden again, and would like to finish the crossing gates and refit the broken gutters on the platform, as well as white lining the platform edge. At Northiam, we have started the signal box preparation and would like that finished before the rains stop us. Signal posts are a must-do job and it is our intention to spend time on Northiam signals and finish Wittersham Road signals.

A big problem is the logistics of these jobs, which will require some careful planning. Back at Tenterden, the car park is in need of some work and we have some of the materials to make a start on this. We also will be making a proper hard standing for the rubbish skips to ease everybody's jobs in disposal. We will, of course, get involved with Santas, which take up a lot of our time. As you can see the WWG, along with our other small volunteer groups, is trying to make a Big Difference to the look of the K&ESR.

VOLUNTEERING

Saturday 10th September saw the launch of a new way of presenting our long service awards. In previous years these have been awarded at the Annual General meeting; however, the work of the Volunteering Committee has taken the previous awards scheme and given it a revamp.

This year six volunteers received their awards for 25 years' service to the K&ESR – some of them were due these awards many years ago. These awards are very well deserved, and as ever we are grateful for everyone's service. The recipients travelled on an awards train, which also saw the inaugural run of the family saloon. The six were invited to bring a 'plus one' for a round trip to Bodiam, with a cream tea.

This year's recipients were Paul Beale (Steam Driver), David Bott (Signalman), Graham

Hopker (Tuesday Group), Chris Davis (Carriage & Wagon and Pullman), Nikki Sime (Pullman and Events) and John Emmott (Shops).



*Volunteers with their 25 Year Awards:
(from left) Paul Beale, John Emmott, David Bott,
Graham Hopker, Chris Davis and Nicola Sime.
(Robin Coombes)*

GROUPS AND ASSOCIATES

Museum Notes – *Brian Janes*

Visitor numbers this season were down to about 70% of recent pre-pandemic years, reflecting perhaps the railway's limited services at some periods. Final year figures will be slightly over 11,000. Donations are also down, though donations per visitor have risen by 20%.

Our sales have had the best year ever with spend in excess of £1 per visitor. Much of our high level of sales came from having good quality railway models and accessories available through donations in kind – so, if you have any old modelling items left in dusty corners, please think of donating them to us to help keep the Museum going in these difficult times. Our £1 book sale also worked well; so, if you cannot resist a bargain, do look out for it next year.

Our touch card donation and sales machines certainly helped sales, for people's cash carrying has crashed. The long-delayed upgrade of the Museum IT connections has complicated operation of these machines and handicaps behind-the-scenes computer use. The QR codes giving access to short histories of most Stephens lines has been favourably commented on; these can be accessed at <https://kesr.org.uk/museum>

An e-mail from Mark Hosking (who by coincidence works in the Maritime Museum in faraway Tasmania) brought an unexpected bonus of a model of the Selsey Tramway's Chichester station with rolling stock. The model had been made by his late father for Chichester Museum in the 1990s, but now resided in his garage in the town. On a lightning visit to the UK Mark and his granddaughter delivered the layout and a carload of models, both built and part-built. With some judicious pruning, and a lot of fettling by Laurie Cooksey to overcome the ravages of the years, it will go on display for the new season.

We are also planning a major refresh of the RVR/K&ESR/BR exhibits which need attention, but as always manpower will be limited, so additional help would be welcome. As always, there is work to do in the archives in sorting, scanning and recording. This sort of work aids our educational function in dealing with not infrequent outside queries. If you feel you are able to learn to use our collection management software we would really welcome some help.



Gazelle on display in the museum.

(Robin Coombes)

We also need help with sorting out our IT and upgrading our Museum screens through the adoption and programming of 'Raspberry Pi' minis or similar. None of this work necessarily requires frequent or regular attendance, and working inside can be a nice change in the winter – it might well be suitable for homework. If you feel able to assist with this or any other aspect of running the museum please get in touch, which is easiest via curator@kesr.org.uk

We are a happy team and front-of-house volunteers are the key to our success, both in customer satisfaction and in sales, so we always need more to join as time goes by. On this point we say farewell at season's end to Peter Stanier, a volunteer since opening and before. We shall really miss the tales of his travels and travails with his various buses and road and farm locomotives. Many thanks, Peter.

The Cavell Van has finally returned to Bodiam and the volunteers there continue to care for it in a way that befits its national importance. It will be a venue for pupils from Staplecross School on Armistice Day and will then go into store at Rolvenden to minimise the ravages of wind, rain and sun.

Gardening Group – Veronica Hopker

Tenterden: The gardens have survived the extremely hot weather. Brian Richards, with his Wednesday team, managed to organise a tap on the outside of the offices for the gardeners to use to fill their watering cans, which made life easier for us and meant we kept out of the way of passengers. Previously we had to draw water from the side of the shop. I think we all developed large arm muscles from carrying watering cans, but it was well worth the effort as the gardens survived to give a great deal of pleasure to our passengers, who have kindly voiced their appreciation. Now autumn is setting in; the leaves are falling and the gardens are slowly dying back.

At Tenterden we have welcomed two new gardeners to the team, Carol Holden and Terri Loader. Carol has kindly agreed to take on my role of organising the team and planning the work needed around the station yard at Tenterden. I am moving to Northiam to concentrate on the Memorial Garden and to give Liz Brown a hand as required.

As summer has now come to an end, the hanging baskets have become very tired-looking; they have been taken down and put away until next year.

Rolvenden: The tubs on the station have really struggled this year in spite of being connected to the watering system. It seems that large clumps of weeds made their unwelcome appearance amongst the flowers. The use of small shrubs may be the answer to the station's appearance in the future.

Northiam: The picnic garden, the garden along the platform and the tubs, looked after by Liz Brown, have given an excellent display despite the extremely hot weather. The tubs have relied on station staff, the Tuesday Group and Liz to keep them well watered. A big thank you to everyone who actually made the effort to water for us.

The Memorial Garden is in the process of a small change. We would like to create a wild flower garden, but an appropriate site has yet to be chosen. The grass area with the seat is not appropriate as that area has to be free for people to come and visit the wall, sit down for a while and leave their floral tributes. Hopefully we will be able to decide where this can be sited in the next week or two, as it is important that we start work on this.

Tuesday Group – Graham Hopker

It brings it home to you how quickly time passes – just after I wrote my last *Terrier* report we put up bunting and flags at Northiam for the Queen's 70th Anniversary Celebrations. The continuous maintenance has carried on – hedge cutting, seat repairs, check and repair of platform lights; the summer advertising boards were put up adjacent to the road; the road clearances of the level crossing gate were reset with a very large spanner! The weeds in the car park were removed and the drain on the right-hand side of the entrance road was cleaned out.

We had our annual Tuesday Group summer lunch in Beckley, courtesy of both our Steves, Carter and Bunn – a splendid lunch!

More fence painting was undertaken at Northiam, and concrete repair spurs were put in around the Memorial Garden. The ground frame and electrical box were rubbed down, undercoated and top coated.

An unusual occurrence during July was the cancellation of one of our Tuesdays due to the general warning of extreme heat; and my, it was hot!

The public address speaker wire along Northiam Platform 1 was replaced, and is now in perfect working order.

Work has just started on repainting all of Northiam's platform lamp-posts in new colours of white with black bases. The 'cherry picker' was



The yard crane under repair at Tenterden.

(John Rose)

used to make access to the tops easier and was most useful. This task is continuing as I write. Infrastructure Manager Brian Richards agreed that we could add a battery-operated strimmer and hedge trimmer to our tool store.

Recently I was invited to collect an award for my 25 years of service to K&ESR as a volunteer. It was an enjoyable evening, with a trip to Bodiam in the newly outshopped Family Saloon and cream tea together with other recipients of the award.

While on the subject, I would like to thank all Tuesday Group members – past and present – for their efforts and support during those 25. Work undertaken by the Group has included erecting the fencing and lamp-posts on Bodiam platform and helping with track-laying on the extension (these were just some of the works carried out prior to the opening in 2000); building the Pullman Dock; preparing the site for the Information Office, including digging out the site with the assistance of Matt Stubbs; installing railway sleepers to keep the gardens under control; laying concrete blocks prior to the construction of the building at Tenterden; installing trackside mileposts from Bodiam to Tenterden (many of which are now hidden by undergrowth); repositioning and stabilising the station canopy at Rolvenden which, at that time (September/October 2008), was only held in place by a self-seeded elder tree at the rear; erecting the yard crane outside the Carriage & Wagon Workshop; and renovating both pump trolleys – one of which was used for fundraising events at Northiam and on the main line at Tenterden. These were just some of the many projects Tuesday Group has been involved with over the years. Happy days!

Bodiam – Malcolm Burgess

The extreme heat and dryness this summer has meant that the gardens at Bodiam have not thrived as usual – though the grass hasn't needed cutting so frequently! With the celebration of the hop-picking season being spread over a month this year, the Bodiam team was tasked with decorating the station and preparing as much interpretative material as possible. Frank Wenham, Chris Wady, Bruce Sharp and Graham Holden harvested several bines from the station hop garden and used them to drape the station building to good effect.

Paul Randall and I located and positioned the hop trough between the rows of hops in the



Chris, Graham and Bruce freshening up the shabby PMV (Paul Jessett)

garden and strung a washing line for the hoppers' hut, while Pat and Colin King refreshed the interior of the hut and wrestled with the audio visual set-up in the waiting room/hopping museum. During the first weekend Vic Grigg gave talks beside the hut to interested passengers. Pat also supplied bunting, which Adrian Freeman and I strung along the platform. These measures gave the whole station a celebratory atmosphere.

The large gate protecting the sidings from the main running line was built by a former Bodiam team member several years ago. Despite several repaints the weather has got into it so that a refurbishment and repair job is necessary. Adrian and Jim Barnes have taken on this task and, weather permitting, it will be secure and spruced up before the winter sets in. The tatty PMV deposited at the station about five years ago was beginning to detract from Bodiam's pleasant atmosphere, so Chris, Graham and Bruce, on top of other demands, freshened up the paintwork.

The land at the Robertsbridge end of the site and beyond the picnic area, planted a few years ago with trees as a memorial to the late Robin Dyce, suffered considerably during the culvert rebuilding project and the installation of the camping coach. It became very uneven, overgrown and unattractive for visitors. The new General Manager, Robin Coombes, has given the go-ahead to reprofile the spoil mound, level the central area, reinstate the boundary fence and replant the spaces between the trees with wildflowers. A mown path will allow visitors to walk safely through the area to enjoy the wildlife which we hope will colonise this area. Ideally the necessary machine work will be completed before Christmas, so that seeding can take place early next year and an attractive, contemplative space will be available for next summer.

K&ESR 2022 Volunteer Survey

In April this year the volunteering committee conducted a survey amongst the Kent & East Sussex Railway's volunteers to help build a better picture of volunteering at the railway, and we are very pleased to report that close to 200 volunteers completed the survey. We should therefore start by thanking those individuals for taking part in this exercise.

It is becoming increasingly important in modern times to understand the profile of the railway's volunteer workforce if we are to maintain our rates of volunteer recruitment and retention. The committee put together a series of questions to try and establish some facts around volunteering, such as:

- Why do we volunteer for our roles?
- How long have we volunteered for?
- How often does a volunteer give up their time?
- Would you recommend volunteering to your friends?
- Do you have additional skills or expertise you could offer?

Why are these questions useful? The volunteering committee has a wide and varied brief, so let us start at the beginning. The railway always needs to recruit new volunteers to allow it to operate safely and achieve its objectives, but the method of recruiting volunteers has not always been straightforward.

Why do we volunteer?

To help promote the vacancies, we thought it was important to establish some of the driving reasons behind the desire to volunteer. The first myth to dispel is the requirement to be a train spotter! An interest in heritage railways may

be at the forefront for many, but there remains a significant proportion of our volunteers with other good reasons for wanting to volunteer. (See chart below.)

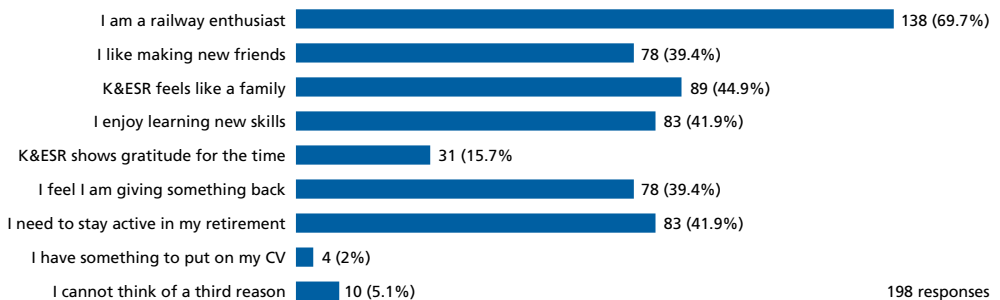
Given the knowledge and evidence of what's important to a volunteer, we should be in a better position to guide and advise on the railway's volunteer recruitment activities.

We also wanted to try and understand the time commitment the railway's volunteers were making, as that is often a question from potential volunteers. From the survey's responses we have learnt that 58% of respondents volunteer at least once a week and just under half of these are doing so more than once a week. Another quarter of respondents said they volunteer on two or three occasions each month – a valuable insight to the commitment the railway's volunteer workforce is making.

In addition to the multiple-choice type questions there was also room for free-format responses, and a generous number of points were raised by volunteers. Given the potential for a variety of subjects for discussion, the volunteering committee set about trying to group the responses into a range of themes. This could then allow the responses to be shared in the team and individual members could analyse their allocated theme and summarise any recommendations that should form a basis for remedial action. By completing this exercise the volunteering committee has put itself in a good position to make recommendations to the railway's management and Board of Trustees. Rather than go into detail on every matter in this article, it's probably more appropriate to explain

What aspects of volunteering at the K&ESR are most important to you?

Please choose three options from the list below.



the headings for the themes that were identified – and a summary of the feedback.

Opportunities

Several volunteers shared a view that they might be able to do more if they knew what opportunities were available in other parts of the railway, or perhaps whether they could find a better fit for their skills. There is a strong desire amongst many volunteers to have a better understanding of what happens in other departments, and the railway needs to consider this feedback.

Recognition and welfare

This can be an emotive subject for some, and recognition can exist in a wide range of formats. The principal feedback in this section is the variation in recognition awarded to volunteers across the different departments at the railway. The volunteering committee has already been engaged to overhaul the railway's programme of long service awards, but the feedback suggests the railway should consider recognition for volunteers' efforts in multiple and varied ways. The welfare of volunteers was also brought up by many, giving examples where there is room for improving staff and volunteer facilities around the railway.

Systems issues

Feedback was offered on the reliability and effectiveness of many systems around the railway. References to systems included volunteer recruitment, rostering, communication, competency, training and mentoring, amongst others.

Leadership

Observations were made about the railway's leadership structure, with a theme around the



Workshop skills.

(Robin Coombes)

varying levels of engagement that volunteers feel they get from their leaders. Responses included suggestions where improvement might be needed as well providing compliments to leadership in some areas.

Communication and information sharing

Several communication matters were mentioned in the survey. These ranged across a broad spectrum, from a need to improve how changes to a train service 'on the day' might be better communicated, through to a repeated desire for volunteers to receive clearer updates on the railway's longer-term strategy and objectives.

As explained above, the multitude of responses are being assembled for sharing with the railway's leadership team, allowing the opportunity for improvement where it is practical to do so. The volunteering committee will endeavour to monitor progress on how matters are being addressed.

Would you recommend volunteering at the K&ESR?

We asked in the survey how likely existing volunteers would be to recommend volunteering to their friends. The result was extremely positive with just over 81% of volunteers saying that they were either likely or very likely to make such recommendations. We can all be proud of that.

Finally, the volunteering committee remains committed to listening to volunteers and will endeavour to represent the railway's volunteers by working with the leadership teams. The committee is formed from volunteers across the railway, and we welcome your feedback at any time. We're not just here for problems; we want your ideas as well, so please feel free to contact us via Stagart@kesr.org.uk if you have anything to share.

Philip Wiles

On behalf of the K&ESR Volunteering Committee

October 2022



Getting ready for the road.

(Robin Coombes)

Tenterden Terrier Online

Members of the Kent & East Sussex Railway can receive the *Tenterden Terrier* in electronic (PDF) format. Help save money and volunteer time by registering at <http://kesr.org.uk/tenterden-terrier-online>

You can, if you wish, still receive a printed copy; but the more people requesting PDF copies only the greater the saving in both printing and postage.

KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB PRIZE WINNERS

May 2022

1st	R & S Jacques-Bartlett	No. 772	£100
2nd	Mr Alan Tanner	No. 994	£80
3rd	Mr Roger Chaplin	No. 566	£75
4th	Mr Bryan Atkins	No. 736	£65
5th	David W Lindsell	No. 808	£55
6th	Paul Halden	No. 383	£50
7th	Richard Crumpling	No. 868	£45
8th	Claire Jones	No. 554	£40
9th	Malcolm Heyward	No. 455	£35
10th	Mark Taylor	No. 629	£25
11th	Jan M Golding	No. 782	£20
12th	Bryan Atkins	No. 345	£15
13th	Martin Skinner	No. 793	£10

June 2022

1st	Lionel Marchant	No. 1030	£100
2nd	Chris M Wood	No. 719	£90
3rd	Michael Wood	No. 260	£85
4th	Caroline Warne	No. 1304	£80
5th	Keith Clifton	No. 707	£75
6th	Pat Greenwood	No. 469	£70
7th	Mr & Mrs J Fry	No. 649	£65
8th	Rodger Diamond	No. 121	£55
9th	Peter Jefferies	No. 188	£50
10th	Hazel Green	No. 132	£45
11th	Carol Read	No. 060	£40
12th	Kent Evenden	No. 129	£35
13th	Lawrence Rideal	No. 778	£30
14th	Alan P Smith	No. 947	£25
15th	Pat Greenwood	No. 1161	£20
16th	Susan Green	No. 152	£15
17th	Rosemary Geary	No. 229	£10

July 2022

1st	Richard Stannard	No. 041	£100
2nd	Terry Hannocks	No. 562	£80
3rd	Peter Bainbridge	No. 1228	£75
4th	David Hilder	No. 1138	£65
5th	Mrs L A Jones	No. 1273	£55
6th	Mark Jenner	No. 1211	£50
7th	Patrick Favell	No. 1250	£45
8th	Michelle Leek	No. 1326	£40
9th	Colum McLaughlin	No. 068	£35
10th	Mr B A Rees	No. 072	£25
11th	Lionel Marchant	No. 1041	£20
12th	David Merrick	No. 732	£15
13th	P J Parascandolo	No. 290	£10

August 2022

1st	Peter Hubbard	No. 254	£100
2nd	John E Brice	No. 163	£80
3rd	Colin Miller	No. 1131	£75
4th	Chris McNaughton	No. 324	£65
5th	Mr S Foster	No. 354	£55
6th	John Ascher	No. 574	£50
7th	Rosemary Geary	No. 229	£45
8th	Lionel Marchant	No. 518	£40
9th	Barry Roberts	No. 601	£35
10th	Heather Drewry	No. 545	£25
11th	Neil Harrison	No. 243	£20
12th	Tony Hutchins	No. 507	£15
13th	Mr M J Cheney	No. 048	£10

To join the 300 Club or for more information contact Chris Garman or Colin Avey by e-mail: kesr.300club@yahoo.com



Next stop Salisbury? 33202 Dennis G Robinson recalls the Cromptons' glory days on the South Western services at Tenterden Town Station on 21st August. (Phil Edwards)

With parched fields visible on either side, Boris Perkins drives the DMMU over Orpins Crossing on 21st August. (Phil Edwards)



*An evocative view from Tenterden level crossing at 7.13pm
on 9th September. (Robin Coombes)*





At the height of the extreme heat, Class 14 D9526 passes Wittersham Road on 17th August. (Alan Crotty)

Exchanging tokens at Northiam on 14th August. (Alan Crotty)



ROBIN COOMBES

Our New General Manager

The questions on everyone's lips when anyone new comes along are: Who are they? Where are they from? What are they like? What are they going to do? What are they going to change? How is it going to affect me? New General Manager Robin Coombes gives us his answers.

It's an old cliché that in times gone by all small boys wanted to be engine drivers. Well, in my case my childhood ambition was that one day I would become a railway 'General Manager'. Becoming the GM of the K&ESR is a dream come true – and it's my firm intention that it won't turn into a nightmare for me or for anyone else!

You can guess from what I have just said that railways have been a lifelong interest – from watching gleaming Castles and grime-layered tank engines from the platform end at Cardiff General; becoming a professional BR manager during the heady days of the launch of Network SouthEast; enjoying the drama of lineside photography of Black 5s crossing windswept Scottish moors; the pleasure of volunteering, even with all the politics; to finally undertaking a PhD on the sustainability of heritage railways.

My working life, however, has not only involved railways. I started as a brickie's mate inside the furnaces at the local steelworks, and became a Royal Navy reservist. I've worked on construction sites and eventually ran a large commercial architects' practice, advising government departments on regional development.

Now the real challenge begins. To paraphrase Sir Issac Newton, I stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before, from Holman Stephens and William Austen to the founders of the heritage era and all those who have had stewardship of this railway over the past 61 years. It is a privilege, a great responsibility, and a legacy I will be taking very seriously. The K&ESR, as the first standard gauge light railway, holds a very special place in both railway and preservation history. We especially owe a tremendous debt to those pioneers who had the vision of saving and operating the railway when it was faced with closure. Today, members, volunteers, employees and visitors (from enthusiasts to families) can all take pleasure from their labour and foresight in reopening the line as well as the benefits it now brings in tourism and education to the wider community.



Chairman Simon Marsh (left) greets new General Manager Robin Coombes on the morning of 15th August. (Alan Crotty)

A General Manager has three principal jobs. The first is to operate a financially sustainable, safe railway that takes care of its visitors and highly values its members, managers, staff and volunteers; the second is to implement the Board's strategy for the long-term development of the railway; and the third is to provide sufficient information to the Board to enable it to fulfil its duty of oversight to ensure everything is being done and run properly. To achieve this, a GM relies on the management and the wider team of volunteers and paid staff to deliver. It goes without saying that it only works if we are all one team, going in one direction, looking after each other.

I totally support the recently introduced 'values'

for the K&ESR, and I also believe that the Board's current strategy is a sound foundation to move forward from. Nobody who has read the news can be in any doubt that we are in a period of uncertainty – and some jeopardy. Continuing Covid, a cost-of-living crisis, a European war and a warming planet are just some of the big challenges we face. These are issues beyond our control, but they will affect us in very real ways. Will our passengers come again in 2023? They may want to, but will they be able to afford to? All of us are going to be watching the pennies, with soaring energy and food bills, and everything the railway buys is going to cost more. Can we find and afford coal? Can we maintain all our assets? Can we build on the excellent work done to continue to attract the next generation of volunteers? These are issues, along with many, many others, that I am expecting to find already sitting in my inbox.

My commitment to you is to be honest, and not hide things. Sometimes therefore we will have to face some brutal realities together, but I promise to explain and give reasons for any decisions made and actions taken. We are a charity – with a clear purpose, and a strong belief, and passion, for what we do and why we do it – so we can be proud of our achievements and successes.

The K&ESR, like many heritage railways, has proved itself remarkably resilient, but there can be no resting on our past achievements. In taking this job and accepting these challenges I have faith that with the right leadership, teamwork and spirit we can succeed and get ourselves to the other side of the current storm before preparing for the next. I also believe that the K&ESR has untapped potential – it has for far too long been in the shadow of some other heritage railways. We may not be the longest, or have the most visitors, but we can be the best run, and the most welcoming – the benchmark against which others are measured. It is time for the K&ESR to step out into the light.

What am I doing? What will change? Before I started work on 15th August I presented the Board with a list of one hundred tasks that I intend to do in one hundred days. These are well under way, allowing me to fully understand the K&ESR and get to know everything and everyone. I am meeting as many people as I can, and asking lots of questions. I have no preconceived ideas; I know every heritage railway is unique. Those who know me will know

I work only on the evidence in front of me, so the questions I ask are to really find out. At present everything will carry on until we can all sit down and then collectively review what we need to learn. I am hitting 'pause', and only then the reset button, if necessary. Everything and everyone starts with a clean sheet. Those things that work well we don't touch and do more of; anything broken we stop doing and fix, and anything unknown is a 'red' risk and so we dig a bit deeper to find out more.

My watchwords are, first: safety trumps everything. No compromise, no margin, no blind eyes and, critically, no blame. Everyone must feel safe and know that everyone is looking out for everyone else. We will treat any near miss or close call as seriously as if it had actually happened. Second: respect. We are running a safety-critical regulated railway to give our visitors a truly memorable and enjoyable heritage experience, to safeguard the legacy of our founders and make everyone feel their efforts and contribution are valued. We must demonstrate respect and be professional in all we do and say, to maximise everyone's enjoyment. Third: data. If we don't know, or just guess, we are effectively flying blind; we do not expect a signalman to guess if a train is in section. Good decision-making needs to be based on good information.

I know that if I were to say that I was taking Colonel Stephens as a role model it would conjure up all the wrong images for some of you. We are of course living in a different age, where there is a different relationship between employer and employee (including volunteers) and indeed between people in general. But in the years when the K&ESR was a model of a well-run light railway Stephens was innovative, he believed in audits and taut management, but he was widely respected and admired. I am sure he would have embraced every modern management technique if it meant a better, more efficient and effective railway. He was not afraid of change, but not for change's sake, and totally believed in the value of the light railway to help rural prosperity. The 21st century successor of his original light railway can have the same beneficial impact on the wellbeing of its people and the communities it serves.

And finally, for everyone who works to help make the K&ESR run: we should have some fun while doing all the other very serious and necessary tasks... 🚂

Completing the Railcar – In Memory of Andrew Webb

Great Western Railcar No.20 has been an established, if sometimes overlooked, feature of the Kent & East Sussex Railway for the best part of 60 years. The Editor outlines the story of its decades in preservation – and announces a new fund in memory of one of its most committed advocates.

Great Western Diesel Railcar No.20 entered service with the Great Western Railway in June 1940, its mechanical parts having been built by AEC at Southall and the austerity bodywork at Swindon. It was powered by two 6-cylinder AEC 105 BHP 9.6 litre engines, similar to those used in London Transport's 'Pre-War' RT Class double decker buses. Exceptionally No.20 was one of only two built with the drive being via dual-range gearboxes to enable it to run on either branch or main line services; it is now the only survivor of this type. Initially allocated to Newport (Ebbw Junction), it was withdrawn in October 1962 from Worcester, having worked on various GWR/Western Region routes. It had been loaned to the Eastern Region for trials during 1952.



No.20 at Tenterden Town in the mid-1970s.

Brian Stephenson/CSRM

Some 18 months prior to No.20 being laid aside at Worcester, the inaugural meeting of the Kent & East Sussex Railway Preservation Society (K&ESRPS) had been held in the Rother Valley Hotel at Northiam. Among the possibly useful rolling stock suggested for the line was a GWR railcar. This might have seemed an outlandish idea in terms of railway preservation in 1961, but the fledgling forebear of today's Company had ambitious – if ultimately unfulfilled – ideas of a diesel-operated commuter service. (The unsuccessful Westerham Branch scheme had the same idea.) It was perhaps not such a strange notion if it is remembered that the K&ESR was known for the Ford and Shefflex railbuses of the 1920s and 30s.

The K&ESRPS approached British Railways about a possible purchase when the GWR railcars were still in service, but were quoted a price of £600 (about £9500 in 2022), which was beyond the Society's meagre means. Following the withdrawal of the last examples, including what was by then No.W20W, K&ESRPS members visited Swindon and Worcester to look for a suitable vehicle.

Among those joining these expeditions was a young volunteer named Andrew Webb, who was destined to play a prominent role later in this story. BR disposed of the railcars via a tendering process and,

thanks to the generosity of member Ralph Brockman, the K&ESRPS successfully bid £415 (around £6000 today) for W20W.

Delivery by rail to Robertsbridge was part of the deal, but this led to one of the most legendary episodes in the 13-year saga of saving the K&ESR: someone on BR had overlooked that a vehicle designed for the generous GWR loading gauge would have difficulty passing through the notoriously restricted tunnels of the Hastings main line! A two-year stand-off followed, during which BR offered alternative delivery to Tonbridge and then threatened to cancel the contract. In those days moving anything larger than a moderately sized tank loco by road was much more difficult than it is in this age of access charges and professional heavy haulage companies.

After a rather cheeky K&ESR suggestion that a fairly new 4-wheel railbus be substituted had been rejected, it was discovered that if the railcar was canted over and weighted down with brake blocks, a slow speed Tonbridge–Robertsbridge journey could be achieved. This duly took place



In Rolvenden yard on 1st July 1966.

A. G. Wells/CSRM

behind a Class 73 on 3rd April 1966, the occasion also being marked by the electro-diesel for some reason running up the K&ESR as far as Northbridge Street – the first but by no means the last time one of these fascinating machines would be seen on our railway.

On 23rd April, Terrier No.3 hauled the railcar and other vehicles up to Rolvenden, although near Bodiam a body panel fell off what was now No.20 (to maintain historical continuity) in the K&ESR stock list. Once at Rolvenden, external and interior refurbishment commenced with Andrew Webb very much involved. He was certainly taking a leading role during a working week commencing on 5th September 1966, which included stripping varnish from the railcar's interior fittings. This was memorable for introducing this writer to the finger-stinging qualities of the original (now banned) Nitromors!

One year later, the first application for a Light Railway Transfer and Amendment order for the K&ESR was refused and eventually No.20, like all the other rolling stock, became marooned in Rolvenden yard where it was sometimes used for Committee meetings before that body morphed into the Company Board. Work nevertheless continued, including the 'blood and custard' livery being replaced by chocolate and cream and attention being given to the mechanical components. As a result, No.20 was in sufficiently

good condition for what is arguably its most historic achievement to date – working the first passenger train on reopening day, 3rd February 1974, between Tenterden Town and the then limit of operation near Pope's Cottage P.Way hut, although the return trip 'up the hill' from Rolvenden was behind Terrier No.10 Sutton.

The railcar was subsequently used on Saturday morning and November services, but was unfortunately noted for a rolling ride which allegedly made some passengers feel queasy. Despite this, one long-standing volunteer recalls his impeccable younger self using the Saturday morning service because the fare was reduced. I also recall that doyen of K&ESR enthusiasts, the late Gordon Young, reminiscing in the Carriage & Wagon mess room about the days when he was rostered as the railcar's guard. Various mechanical problems recurred and No.20 was used as hauled stock for a while in the manner of some of the weirder combinations once found on Colonel Stephens railways. Clive Lowe sorted out the mechanical side in 1978, after which the railcar is reported to have performed well, but bodywork deterioration led to it being withdrawn from traffic in 1979. At some point during these years another railway offered to exchange a Barry wreck for No.20, an idea which allegedly led to some ill-feeling and which the K&ESR rejected.

Some work was undertaken in 1980, and there

was the first of several fundraising attempts (a draw) during 1985. Further efforts were however suspended until at least 1988 when No.20 was moved from Wittersham Road to No.3 siding at the rear of the C&W shed at Tenterden. Andrew Webb had in the meanwhile been fully involved in the overhaul of the BTH 'Ford' diesel loco and, as a Director of the Company, the detailed planning for the Northiam extension. Once those tasks were completed Andrew was able to set about establishing a new team to restore the railcar; it would need all of his leadership abilities and well-known determination.

Working conditions were difficult. The C&W shed was then only half its present size and its resources were needed for the maintenance and restoration of the loco-hauled running fleet. The railcar was allowed shed time on occasions, and Andrew's team could use C&W's tools and equipment, but much of the work had to be done in the open. The vehicle was protected by a tarpaulin, but every time work commenced the tarpaulin had to be removed and then replaced at the end of the day. As the team soon found, due to poor maintenance going back to BR days, a very thorough bodywork rebuild was required. Most of the timber framework and all of the exterior steel cladding needed to be replaced, and the electrical wiring was found to be in very poor condition. Thanks in part to the efforts

made during the 1970s, the mechanical side was in better shape; however the engines, gearboxes, and control and braking systems would need reconditioning.

Andrew put considerable personal time and effort into sourcing parts and material, as well as, where necessary, finding suitable specialist outside contractors. He also went to York, spending time searching through reference material, identifying and copying the original 1939 GWR drawings held in the NRM archives. It was from these drawings that various new parts have been manufactured and they have enabled the renewal of the wiring. Work proceeded steadily but slowly and doggedly through the 1990s and into the early part of the present century, often hampered by both the work site and, despite generous donations, lack of adequate finance; the demands of these sometimes difficult years did not allow the Company to make suitable budget provision.

This author recalls an occasion, from when he was Company Secretary, when he had to defend the railcar project from a frankly aggressive approach by a GWR-oriented group (which shall remain nameless) who wrote more or less demanding that they take No.20 over! I cannot now remember how much of this, if any, I explained to Andrew. The full facts would have deeply offended him. By way of contrast, liaison



By May 1968 the railcar had been repainted in chocolate & cream.

Peter Chatman/Terrier Archive



Inside the Carriage Storage Shed on 5th May 2021.

Neil Edwards

with the GWR Society at Didcot was more than helpful and consistent with the good relations the K&ESR enjoys with that group.

Working conditions improved considerably after the C&W shed was extended in 2010, and No.20 was allocated space on the covered portion of No.3 road. Overhaul of the bogies revealed the cause of the infamous rolling – the springing had been adjusted for the delivery journey in 1966 and it had not been realised that it needed to be corrected! In addition a broken spring had to be replaced, new springs being manufactured from the original GWR drawings sourced from the NRM. Chris Davis, a member of the team since its formation, summed up the then position in the Spring 2017 *Tenterden Terrier*.

“The wooden framework has been subject of a considerable amount of renewals, with the driving cab at the Headcorn end of the vehicle presently being the only area needing completion. The underframe has been cleaned by needle-gunning and painted, with only a short length, under the Headcorn driving cab, still needing attention. At the time of writing, a new base plate is being prepared for riveting to the under frame at this end; the Robertsbridge end cab plate having been replaced earlier on during the rebuild. Thanks in part to the generosity of a supporter, all bar a handful of the steel body panels are

in stock, ready to be fitted when required.

“With respect to mechanical and electrical work, much has been achieved here as well. The bogies, gearboxes, vacuum brake cylinders, and one of the two AEC engines have been overhauled, while the majority of the air-pipe for the electro-pneumatic control system, around 500 metres in length, has been replaced. Both of the control desks, located in the Robertsbridge and Headcorn driving cabs, have also been reconditioned. However, much remains to be done to complete the rebuild, and this work will require further financial and material resources to achieve this objective. At present the most expensive and most urgent priority for funding is the overhaul of the second engine, at a cost of £6000. Also needed is money for items such as glass, upholstery and batteries, plus specialist work to be carried out on the transmissions.”

By the spring of the following year trial-fitting of the side-panels was under way, this task involving the need to drill and counter-sink hundreds of fixing screw holes. Coats of green undercoat were also being applied to the external surfaces, although the final livery still remained to be decided. By winter 2018 the second engine had returned from overhaul (both have since been test run), Headcorn-end framework was in place and by the spring of 2019 work was under way on

the interior. Workshop space issues then necessitated the railcar being moved to the Carriage Storage Shed at Rolvenden in October 2019; but events were about to take the saddest of turns. Two years previously Andrew Webb had become seriously ill; and although he initially appeared to be making a good recovery, he suffered a relapse and died on 25th November.

There was a determination to complete what Andrew had striven to achieve for so long. Neil Edwards had deputised for Andrew throughout his illness, and he formally took over leadership of the team in 2020. Covid 19 then intervened and it was spring 2021 before work was again possible. In the early weeks of 2022, and as explained in issue 147 of the *Terrier*, the railcar project team were in discussions with the Board's Fundraising Group. The outcome of the meeting was a Board decision to make the railcar a 'Priority Project' for completion in 2024/25, committing the necessary resources to enable this to happen. Although there is the possibility of raising the necessary funds by way of grants or corporate sponsorship, it has been decided that there will also be an appeal (detailed below) which will not only bring one of our most historic items of rolling stock back into service but will also commemorate one of the outstanding figures from the heritage era on the Kent & East

Sussex Railway. Accordingly the appeal will be under the title '20 for 20: The GWR Diesel Railcar Restoration and Conservation Appeal – In Memory of Andrew Webb'. A leaflet giving the necessary details is enclosed with this edition of the house journal.

A brief explanation of the appeal's title is called for. An overall sum of £60,000 is required to complete the restoration work, including a modest fund for supporting subsequent conservation and maintenance works. Of this sum, a most generous grant of £20,000 has been awarded by the Association for Industrial Archaeology in recognition of the historic significance of No.20. In addition, the K&ESR Board has committed £20,000 from company funds, leaving the balance to be raised from the appeal. This will be made initially to members, but then opened up to a wider audience. Any monies collected in excess of that required for the immediate restoration will be ring-fenced for use in support of the ongoing conservation of this historically important railcar on the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

So, if one thousand members each give £20, we can finish the job. 🚂

With thanks to Neil Edwards, Chris Mileman and Norman Brice for their help in writing this item.

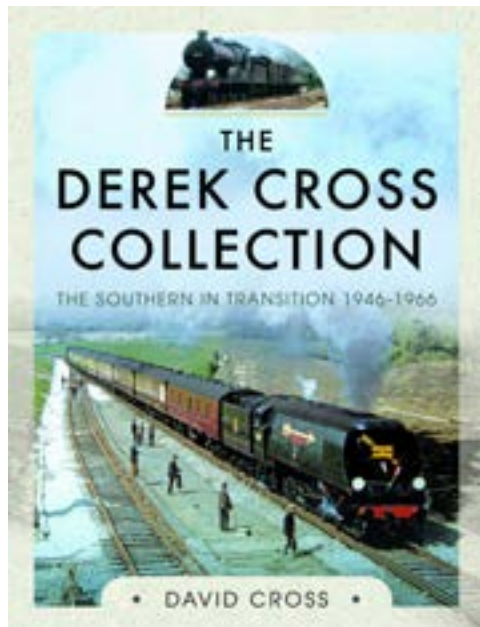


*Outside Rolvenden Shed on 24th May 2021, in preparation for an assessment of work already carried out.
Neil Edwards*

The Derek Cross Collection The Southern in Transition 1946–1966

David Cross

144 pages, hard cover. Over 200 monochrome photographs, with an introduction and extended captions. Published by Pen & Sword Transport. ISBN 978 1 52675 490 1. £25.



For those of us who became enthusiasts during the 1950s and 60s, certain names are indelibly associated with the railway photography of the era. The late Derek Cross was among that notable group, and we are fortunate that his son David has care of his late father's collected work.

Derek Cross was noted for his 'trains in the landscape' photos which were taken in many regions of the UK. He was nonetheless a southerner, a Man of Kent in fact, with great affection for the Southern Railway/Region. The South of England has many glorious landscapes which well suited his style, and David has now produced a selection to illustrate the years from post-war austerity to the last days of Southern steam.

The reproduction quality is somewhat variable,

but David Cross points out that some of the photos were taken at a time when decent cameras were rare and film not of the quality which later became available. This is always acceptable when a photograph is of historic interest. The range of locomotives is wide and includes such unusual types as the Southern's brief allocation of WD 2-8-0s and the ex-SE&CR J Class 0-6-4Ts.

The book, or rather photo album, is logically arranged in a section for each of the Southern's three divisions, with a sketch map at the beginning of each. There is in the introduction a passage written by Derek Cross explaining his affection for Southern England and its railways. It reflects my own feelings, and it is almost worth getting to see the book for that eloquent extract alone.

I can understand David Cross wishing to celebrate his father's achievements by means of this and other publications, but I have some concern as to whether there is enough of a market to sustain sales. Although the selected photos fully reflect the late Mr Cross's artistry, much of the subject matter of this volume was also photographed by his equally talented contemporaries, and can today be found in albums which unfortunately clutter the second-hand market.

NP

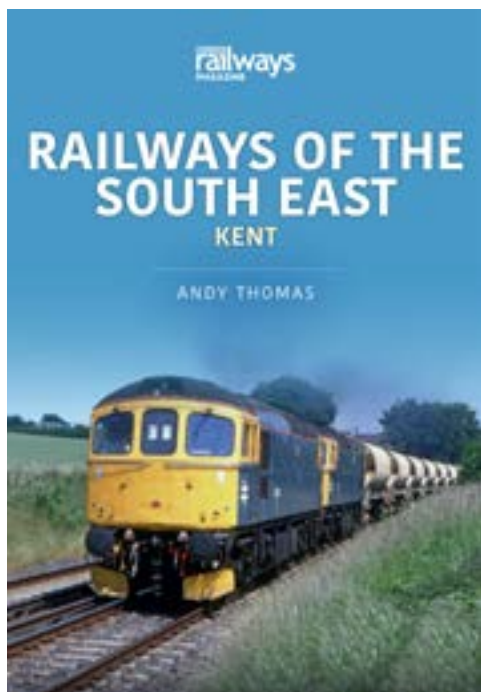
Railways of the South East Kent

Andy Thomas

96 pages, paperback. Approx. 180 colour photographs. Published by Key Books, an imprint of Key Publishing Ltd. ISBN 978 1 913 870 812. £12.79.

This is one of a series of small-format collections of images taken from the early 1980s to the mid-1990s. The title is somewhat misleading as the book consists solely of illustrations of freight motive power in the South East during this period.

At the beginning of each chapter there is a brief description of each of the lines in Kent. Inclusion of a map would have helped the reader identify the places illustrated. The photos are of a fascinating variety of freight workings, even at



this date. Long after the elimination of steam there is a huge variety of motive power and workings. As one would anticipate, some 40 years later, most of these engine types are no longer on the main line.

Sadly nearly all these workings have also ceased, and most of the railways of the South East are a freight desert. The remaining freight consists of aggregates, Channel Tunnel traffic and the occasional nuclear flask, with little else. Vast amounts of railway infrastructure have also disappeared.

This is a fascinating book illustrating a period which many of us will remember. Since the pictures were taken much has changed on the railways of the South East, but very little for the better.

MSW

Land Rover Series One

John Carroll

96 pages, paperback. Illustrated with colour photographs. Published by Key Books, an imprint of Key Publishing Ltd. ISBN 978 1 913295 64 6. £14.99..

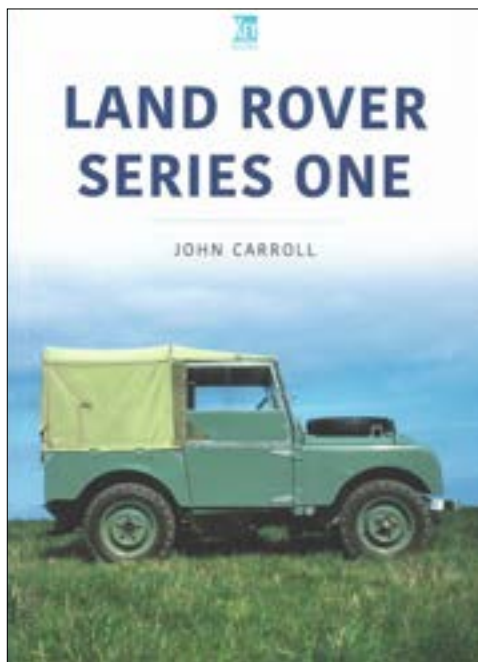
This may seem an inappropriate book to review

in the *Tenterden Terrier* but, as regular volunteers will be aware, Land Rovers have a keen following among the K&ESR's younger members of staff. In addition, and unlike much other four-wheeled personal transport, these classic British vehicles seem to have the same aura as the steam locomotive, the traction engine and the half-cab bus. John Carroll presents the subject in an introduction followed by chapters covering the 80ins model, its 86 and 88ins development, the long wheelbase variants and working (including military) Land Rovers. A fifth chapter covers the activities of Land Rover clubs.

The introduction explains that the Willys Jeep-inspired early Land Rovers, incorporating existing Rover car components, were only meant to be in production for two years; but in the event the concept lasted until 2016. Each chapter begins with a concise description of the design's evolution and then illustrates the many variations with colour photographs. There is frequent mention of the restoration of individual vehicles. Key Books are publishing companion volumes continuing the story through the Series Two and Three models.

So, next time you pass Rolvenden, look out for Land Rovers!

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THE NEXT GENERATION: Edward McNaughton

Even though it was a Thomas event, Ed cannot remember his first-ever visit to the K&ESR – because he was only a baby! “The K&ESR has always been a part of my life; I was brought up around it,” he explains. He has always enjoyed trains and as a child loved coming to the Santa Specials, where he looked forward to the time when he himself would be old enough to volunteer. At the age of 16 he signed up as a Cleaner, although the pandemic meant he was unable to go on the footplate until the following year. “It was still fantastic,” he enthuses; “I had waited all my life for that moment.” With the subsequent easing of restrictions he was soon able to make progress, qualifying as a Steam Raiser in March 2022 and as a Fireman in July.

He has now begun training as a Driver, although a passing-out turn will have to wait until he is 21. In the past he has also helped in the workshop, and he would be willing to consider other roles in the future. “But for now, I’m perfectly happy with the footplate.”

Ed lives in Northiam with his parents and two younger sisters. After completing GCSEs at Norton Knatchbull School, he studied Level 3 Mechanical Engineering at Ashford College. From there he gained an apprenticeship with a vacuum company in Hastings. “We make chambers for scientific instruments,” he clarifies. “I do machining and fitting, and will soon go on to learn TIG welding. I had originally planned to get a job somewhere on a railway, but this way I



Better than a 'poser' number plate!

(via Ed McNaughton)



On the footplate at Wittersham Road.

(via Ed McNaughton)

can do something I enjoy without spoiling my hobby!” Simultaneously he is studying for an HNC at Hastings College, also in Mechanical Engineering.

I ask Ed what he most enjoys about his role here. “Everything,” he laughs. “It’s really hands-on and is a real learning journey. There is always more to learn, so I am always keen to come back. The social side is fantastic: all my closest friends are here.” He insists there is nothing he dislikes, and claims to have had no negative experiences “although I expect one day when I am firing we will run out of steam half-way up Tenterden bank!”

As usual, I also enquire about any amusing or embarrassing anecdotes. “Most of them could definitely not be printed in the *Terrier!*” he confides. “But I can mention my first Santa Special. As we approached Northiam, I had the fire nicely built up ready for the stretch to Bodiam, completely forgetting that we terminated at Northiam and were booked to wait there for nearly an hour!

“I could also tell you about the usual episodes of soaking people at the water column – completely accidentally, of course!” And he recalls an

occasion when he helped to hang Angus’s bike from the shed roof. “I have no idea how he got it down; perhaps it’s still there!”

Next, I ask Ed about any other hobbies. They mostly seem to include steam, but exclude sport. “I have a traction engine at home, and love to trundle around on it.” (Unlike certain other people we could mention, he sticks to local lanes so as not to delay the traffic on the main roads.) “I can take my friends on it, so it is very social. I also love to help at the local steam rallies; they are my favourite time of year.” He describes his girlfriend, Jenn, as “not a railway nut, but someone who is definitely happy to travel on a steam train or traction engine”. Just as well, really! He also enjoys canoeing or paddle-boarding along the river – “It makes an excellent evening out with friends.”

Finally, I forgot to ask Ed for a pithy sentence to sum up his experience of volunteering at the K&ESR, so I will offer one of my own instead. I came away from this interview once again feeling encouraged by his commitment and inspired by the enthusiasm of ‘The Next Generation’.

Tony Ramsey

Glamping at Bodiam Station

With the Glamping Coach project at last completed and now permanently stabled at the rear of Bodiam Station, Bryan Atkins reflects on what this project was all about.

The tradition of Camping Coaches on UK railways dates from the 1930s when they were first offered as holiday accommodation. These coaches, old passenger vehicles no longer suitable for use in trains, were converted to provide sleeping and living spaces at static locations. They were designed to encourage groups of people to travel by train to the stations where they were situated and make use of the railway to travel around the area during their holiday. Such coaches were an enterprising source of additional revenue.

By today's standards the early Camping Coaches were very basic in facilities, but were considered adequate for the happy holidaymakers of the

time. Some were not necessarily static and the first few could be taken to a location chosen by the customer. At one time the LNER even offered a 'touring coach' which was coupled to a scheduled train at York and, with holidaymakers inside, was dropped off at a predetermined location, where it was shunted into a station siding for the week. If required even the food could be ordered in advance from a railway hotel.

Camping Coaches were introduced on the Southern Railway by 1935. The first batch of 12 were based at eight sites, but unsurprisingly none were on the then still independent line between Robertsbridge and Headcorn. The SR charged £2 10s 0d per week (£2.50, or at least



The Glamping Coach in its rural railway setting.

(Dave Hazeldine)



A cosy and comfortable interior.

(via Bryan Atkins)

£125 at 2022 values) during April to June and £3 10s 0d per week (£3.50 or £175) for July to September. It was also necessary for campers to purchase at least four monthly return tickets to the coaches, and the SR deliberately selected sites that would provide additional income from these ticket fares.

By the early 1960s a fleet of Pullman cars became available as the Kent coast lines were electrified. Between 1960 and 1964 a total of 57 cars were converted to Camping Coaches, which raised the internal standards of the accommodation on offer. However the Beeching cuts brought an end to the service, as a lot of the smaller lines with idyllic sites – where the coaches were often located – were closed, and the vehicles were scrapped. The last Camping Coaches available for public use were withdrawn at the end of the 1971 season.

Now there are just a few Camping Coaches in existence, in the hands of private individuals or

enterprising heritage railways. However, they are now growing in number along with their popularity. With improvements in consumer standards and expectations, the term ‘camping’ has been upgraded to ‘glamping’ – a very different experience to that faced by the 1930s holidaymakers.

Recognising that our railway has always to be prudent with its finances, the capital for the Glamping Coach project was raised by forming a private company (KESR Adventures Ltd.) consisting of a small number of shareholders, including the railway itself. This way our railway shares the risk of the venture with the other investors. The railway will take its share of the profit, plus earn a substantial fee for the marketing and operation of the coach. Gradually as the business becomes successful, it is envisaged that the railway will exercise the right to buy out the other shareholders, eventually owning an entire profitable subsidiary on which

it may wish to build in the future, thus creating a revenue stream not dependent on running trains and underpinning the K&ESR business model.

The Bodiam Glamping Coach is a BR Mk1 BCK (Brake Composite Corridor) which could no longer be used for revenue service. Converted into holiday accommodation, it is now available for a commercial rent. Outshopped from Derby in 1964, BCK No.21275 is thought by the Vintage Carriages Trust to be 'possibly the newest surviving fully constructed (body and underframe) Mk1 in preservation'. Converted for Balfour Beatty into a mess coach and used as part of a weed-killing train in the late 1990s, it has been found to be in good condition for its age but no longer suitable for service due to the many modifications made to the body.

Purchased by KESR Adventures from a private owner on the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway in July 2017, the coach was brought to Wittersham Road yard where conversion work began. As is usual with Mk1 stock, the corners of the body and doors had suffered badly from rot caused by neglect. In addition large ventilator flues for gas heating stoves had been fabricated in various places on the coach sides, requiring considerable patching and welding. The vehicle was riddled with redundant pipework and electric cables from its weed-killing days, and all the compartment walls were heavily clad in carefully fixed sheet steel, which provided a real challenge to strip out. Some of the steel walls have been retained, to provide additional fire safety barriers between rooms.

By 2018 the coach had gradually disappeared under a scaffold-and-canvas tent prior to grit blasting and painting. The windows were taken out for cleaning or replacing and the doors were removed for rebuilding. One of the problems with a BSK is that there are far too many doors at one end – two pairs of opposing guard's doors and two pairs of opposing parcel doors, all within ten feet. The inward opening guard's doors were beyond economic repair, so the gap was filled by doors from Mk1 'slam door' electric stock. These were bolted into place to form a solid wall on the inside, although retain the shape of a door on the outside. One pair of parcel doors was removed completely and replaced with a sympathetically shaped picture window, designed to give commanding views of the Bodiam countryside as well as more natural light.

With the interior stripped out it was possible

to build a new layout. At one end there is now a lounge, breakfast bar and kitchen, while the original corridor leads to a twin bedroom, a separate bathroom and a master bedroom with en-suite bathroom at the other end. There is also a bed-settee in the lounge which allows the coach to comfortably sleep up to six persons. Despite the fact that Mk1 coaches are an all-steel construction specially built on a jig, the fitting out proved challenging as nothing inside the coach proved to be straight; this presented extreme difficulties when lining the internal walls.

By June 2021 the coach was positioned in its final location at Bodiam. At that point the productivity of the workforce dipped dramatically, as afternoon snoozes on the decking in the summer sun were found to be more enticing than tiling the kitchen or finishing off the bathrooms. Bodiam, we quickly discovered, is an ideal setting for a holiday in the coach. It is difficult not to relax by watching the trains and countryside. On the garden side of the coach a massive decking area has been constructed, courtesy of Dave Stubbs, providing a wonderful place to sit privately and enjoy the rural views. The north side of the coach affords exciting views of activities at the station as well as of the steam trains, vineyards and castle.

Our infrastructure team has done a great job to soften the appearance with hedging and netting. Car parking mat has been laid to prevent the grass being churned up in wet weather. The railway has also invested in landscaping with top soil and grass seed, to hide the scars left behind by the installation of a new sewage system on the site. The upgraded sewage system had nothing to do with the arrival of the Glamping Coach, but it has nevertheless benefited from the improved surroundings.

The Coach can probably be viewed as a 'Marmite' project. You either like it or hate it! To make that judgment you should at least visit Bodiam and take a tour of the vehicle's interior to find out what it is like, as pictures don't really do it justice. If you still find yourself ill-disposed to the idea, ask yourself what would Colonel Stephens have made of it? He approved of any asset that he felt could generate revenue, and would no doubt have approved of a Glamping Coach – in fact he would probably have installed at least two more of them! Anybody out there want to build a second coach? Please be my guest, one was enough for me; however no doubt our General Manager would love to hear from you! 🚂

OBITUARY

John Thorold Liddell 1927–2022

Sadly July 10th saw the passing of John Liddell, at the grand age of 95. One of our most respected and loyal members, John's more than 50 years involvement with the K&ESR was outstanding. In the early days of operating he bought and restored a Mk1 carriage when things were financially difficult. He was a leading light in the former Maidstone Area Group, which he chaired for many years, entertaining meetings with film shows and, importantly, suggesting that area groups should organise teams to man the Wealden Pullman once a

month to help save expenses. John didn't only work on the Pullman; he organised sales stands at events, for which he restored a pump trolley and transported it to many locations.

John was instrumental in the acquisition of the old Maidstone Bus Station, its removal, storage and re-erection as our Refreshment Rooms at Tenterden. He was a member of the Locomotive Trust and a part-owner of No.25 *Northiam*. John was a Board member for several years and regularly hosted meetings at his Bearsted home, where his late wife Nancy provided food and refreshments. He spent much time assisting in the Carriage & Wagon Dept and for a period was Loco Dept Director. John also was a committee member and active participant with the huge Steam and Country Fairs that were a feature of the 70s and 80s, and later in the 90s he was very involved with the setting up and construction of the Colonel Stephens Museum. He was also a key member of the team, set up by the late John Miller, to restore Bodiam station prior to our successful bid to re-open beyond Northiam.

Following his early career in motor sales and sports, John had a successful motor accessory business. His interest later turned to railways, which he shared with his father and brother, and became a K&ESR member. This led John to



(via Liddell family)

travel extensively, particularly to South Africa where steam was still active, and also to Australia and South America where he followed another of his father's interests, that of taking many miles(!) of 16mm cine film. Many will recall the wonderful film shows John put on covering his travels. He latterly used video, and through that medium recorded much activity on the K&ESR. He was known for having every new 'gadget' for video and sound recording, and we are blessed with a vast record of his whole lifestyle both on and off the railway. Indeed, John had no less than 337 of his photographs published in the *Tenterden Terrier*, an achievement in its own right. He was never without his hair Brylcreemed to perfection, and was rarely seen without a tie even in the hottest of weather!

Our thoughts are with his two daughters, Christine and Julia, who were both very involved with our Pullman and catering departments, and his son Nick. Nick gave an extended eulogy at his exceptionally well-attended funeral at Charing Crematorium on August 16th, where many of his family, colleagues and K&ESR members paid their respects. The world, and particularly the K&ESR, will be the poorer for the loss of John – a gentleman to the end who was always willing to assist in whatever capacity if he could.

DL

Rolvenden – An Independent Railway Centre

Brian Janes reflects on the rise and decline of the beating heart of the old K&ESR.

When the Rother Valley Railway finally reached its first terminus it was, even by the standards of light railways, a pretty basic affair and one quite remote from the town centre of its name – Tenterden. In many ways this was not too surprising as plans were already hatched to replace it, for its site was to be slightly short of a triangular junction with already-authorized lines to Cranbrook and Ashford.

At opening the track layout consisted of a run-round loop commencing well before the west side of the platform road. Sidings went off from the loop to a simple two-road wooden locomotive shed. This structure had a rounded corrugated roof of undoubted farm building origins, following a precedent on the Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramway. Ventilation was inadequately provided by simple slatted vents under the curve of the roof, which no doubt contributed to the roof's very short life. No workshop seems to have been provided at this stage, though there may have been some basic facilities in a small lean-to building between the shed and the public road. By 1908 a substantial brick-built fitters shop was in place on the west side of the shed, which now had a pitched roof with the slatted front supplemented by roof vents.

The platform was basic, very low, timber fronted and ash filled. A raised portion was soon added at the northern end to facilitate the loading of wagons and vans, which proved useful to the end. The station building was of the recently introduced – though soon to be familiar – Stephens-style corrugated iron, with a triangular braced canopy, slightly larger than the contemporary structures at Northiam and Bodiam.

There were two goods sidings, emanating from the platform road, on the town side of the platform.

When the line was extended to Tenterden Town in 1903 the station was renamed to become the now familiar Rolvenden, two miles away to the west. The change was deliberately inaccurate in order to sweep in more business than something more appropriate, such as 'West Tenterden', would have produced. Public use of the station and sidings nevertheless plummeted in the face of the more convenient facilities at Tenterden Town, but the site remained the operating centre for the railway and more than doubled in size.

The goods sidings were now mostly used to stable the railway cranes and serviceable



Rolvenden, then styled Tenterden, prior to opening in 1900.

(CSRM)



The yard circa 1933.

(CSRM)

internal-user wagons, and for carriage stabling. A fan of sidings to stable and maintain rolling stock developed over the next few years on railway-owned land on the west side between the main line and the stream which looped round the station. These sidings commenced on the run-round loop, which was moved south-westward beyond the station platform. The old loop was truncated, becoming a coaling and stabling spur. A shed spanned one of the first of these new sidings and was used as a paint shop. Subsequently a lean-to, originally with doors and windows, was added on the adjacent siding. This was later much used as a shelter for railmotors when they arrived in the early 1920s, with an external, lightly built, hoist to facilitate their repairs. Beyond these buildings grew a scatter of small structures: a small carpenters' shop, two stores huts (one a large one built of corrugated iron) and an oil store.

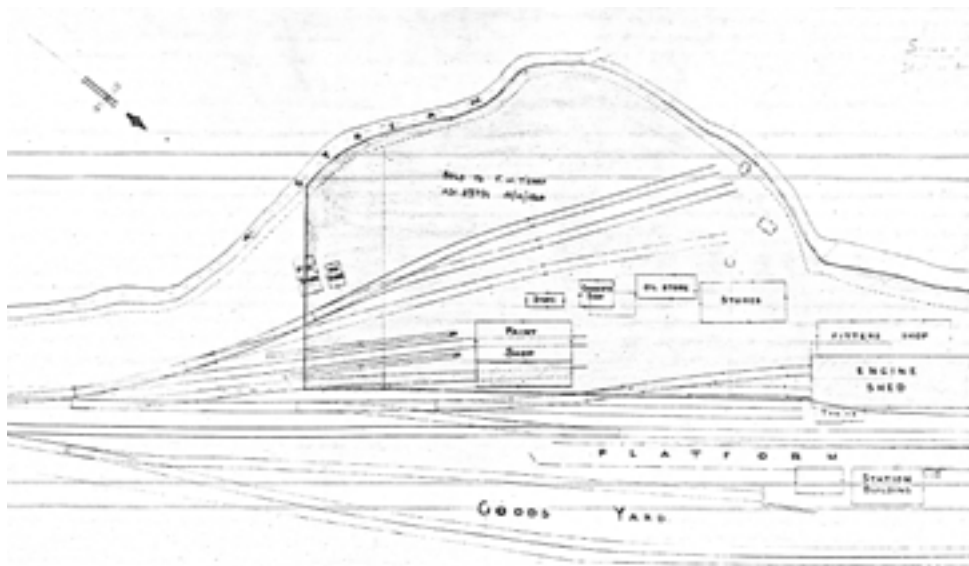
Around 1910 three more lightly built sidings were added behind these buildings, probably to store surplus carriages after steam-heated stock had been introduced. This now redundant stock was initially retained for the still-proposed, and hoped-for, extensions to Maidstone, Rye and Cranbrook, but was soon largely dispersed to other Stephens' lines. The furthest of these sidings was regularly used and served a couple of small Permanent Way stores as well as haystacks erected to protect the lineside harvesting that successfully supplemented company income.

Tucked at the ends of these sidings was an 'essential needs' hut overhanging the stream, which hopefully took away its deposits.

It was on these sidings that for a period of about eight years prior to World War 2 further surplus stock accumulated as the railway lost traffic. During the mid 1930s it normally held the remains of Terrier *Rolvenden*, stripped for spares; the two Ilfracombe Goods, *Rother* and *Juno*, optimistically awaiting boiler repairs; two carriages and about six occasionally used, but still essential, P.Way wagons, as well as the steam railmotor. Most of these went in a year or two, but some hung on until 1940. Enthusiasts observed this area, as visits to deepest Kent became more common, giving Rolvenden a somewhat unjustified reputation as a long-term dump. (*No pun intended! –Ed.*) In truth there was never a long-term accumulation of individual pieces, but enthusiasts liked to build a picturesque legend round the problem of practical storage.

Probably in 1912 the station's importance as an operational centre was further enhanced by the siting, a quarter of a mile or so up the hill towards Rolvenden village, of 20 or so staff bungalows, known locally as 'Tin Town', which Stephens personally built and owned.

Locomotive water provision, it is believed, came direct from the adjacent stream, probably by steam pump or water ram, to tanks whose



British Railways official plan of Rolvenden, originally drawn up in 1948.

(CSRM)

position varied somewhat. Initially there was one tank on wooden supports by the locomotive shed. This tank was slightly repositioned when the loop

was moved to be more convenient to the main line, and doubled in size in due course. A very short-lived second watering point with a tank on



The site being cleared by British Railways in July 1955.

(CSRM)



Destruction complete.

(CSRM)

a somewhat rickety brick tower was provided at the Robertsbridge platform end, but this was demolished in 1935. Finally the whole water system was rationalised in 1943 as the still-extant single large tank adjacent to the platform. Coal was provided directly from wagons, but a small brick stage was erected by the shed side water tanks to provide facilities for engines standing on the running line. This lasted until the end.

The platform face was replaced with brick, probably around the time of the Great War. On the platform itself a single pitched-roof corrugated hut was erected about the time of the railway extension. It was probably purpose-built as a printers' shop which evolved to produce much of the printed material for the various Stephens' railways. The first station agent, Mr Taylor, is known to have also been a printer and its use was consolidated with the arrival of Jimmy Norton, a qualified printer, after Taylor left in 1915. Printing probably finished in the mid-1930s but the building survived until the late 1940s. Further down the platform a much smaller single pitch hut, purpose unknown, appeared at some time by the 1920s but disappeared during WW2. These two buildings were replaced by a GWR

style corrugated oil store in the late 1940s, which survived at Rolvenden until 2022.

With the ending of passenger services and transfer of loco stabling to St Leonards, British Railways moved in to do their destructive best. Carriage facilities went first with the paint shop dismantled, its lean-to reputedly coming down after a test firing of the army rail guns in 1940, although actually surviving for a few years thereafter. Then, in July 1955, all remaining K&ESR buildings including the station building, engine shed and workshops were swept aside.

All that remained was a grassy bank, formerly the platform, with 1943 water tower, the 1940s tin hut and, for a short while only, one of the yard huts. The main yard land was sold off in October 1964 and what little remained became the Tenterden Railway Company's inheritance when the purchase of the remaining land was finally completed in November 1973.

With the arrival of the Preservation Society the first engineering base was Tenterden Town, but that soon migrated to the remains of Rolvenden – the revival of which is another, hopefully never ending, story.



Early preservation years: Rolvenden Yard in 1968 with (L to R) No.3 Bodiam, No.10 Sutton and No.15 Hastings. (Lynn Owen/Terrier Archive)

The author has always longed to get the station building rebuilt and put to use, amongst other

things, as workshop offices – and lives in hope that it will happen sometime. 🚂



Revival – the south-west view from Rolvenden’s observation gallery on 4th May 2013. No.19 Norwegian is on the left, with No.10 Gervase on the right.

(Nick Pallant)

Notes for contributors

Our printers are set up to receive largely digital text, and this is an advantage to us as it keeps the cost down. This is increasingly important, so please try to follow the guidelines set out below.

Content

The *Tenterden Terrier* majors on K&ESR news, features on the railway past and present, and historical articles on other railways, particularly in the South East.

There is only one criterion here: any written or photographic contribution must be interesting to the reader, not just to the writer. It should only exceed 2,500 words if you trust the Editor to do his worst to shorten it – or put in a special plea for a two-parter.

Text

Copy should be sent in electronic form in word-processor format (Word is best). No need to worry about the typeface or size, but please keep it simple and do not include page numbers. Sending by e-mail attachment is the simplest method, but you can send by CD, if carefully packed.

Typewritten copy can be scanned to extract the words for printing, so can be accepted; but the Editor's task will be easier if you ask a friend to turn it into digital form. Please do not embed photos within text – submit photos separately.

Photos

Prints, negatives and transparencies can always be accepted, but generally speaking negatives and transparencies need to be of particular interest or quality to justify the necessary work.

For news and current events digital is preferred, especially if the picture is as least as good as more traditional formats. Unless used to accompany an article, a low-resolution jpeg copy of the original is initially requested. Typically the longest dimension should be no greater than 900 pixels, or resized as a copy for the web. We will request a full-size image if for possible future use, but please bear in mind that the image/file needs to be typically suitable for cropping to a minimum of 1,800 pixels (longest dimension) for A6/half a page or 2,700 pixels for A5/full page.

We can also accept pictures saved to DVD, CD or USB memory stick.

Our request for a full-sized image does not guarantee inclusion in the next or any future edition of the *Tenterden Terrier*.

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Registered Office:

Tenterden Town Station, Tenterden, Kent TN30 6HE

Telephone: 01580 765155 E-mail: enquiries@kesr.org.uk

Website: www.kesr.org.uk

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Christopher Awdry

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