



JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

# Tenterden Terrier

Winter 2023

Number 152



**Light Pacific Lands at Light Railway  
Caption Competition**

**Colonel Stephens' Locos – New Book Reviewed  
Rapido 4mm Model of K&ESR Brake Van  
K&ESR 'Saddleback' No.4**

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**FRONT COVER**

*With a 300mm zoom lens  
exaggerating the gradient, the  
Wealden Pullman approaches  
the foot of Wittersham Bank.*  
(Phil Edwards)

**BACK COVER**

*75008 Swiftsure plus Fireman  
Geoff Plane and Signalmen  
Col McLaughlin and Lesley  
Lee at Rolvenden ready to work  
the Sunday Lunch Pullman on  
6th August.*  
(Ian Scarlett)

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



*Summer on the Rother Levels.*

*(Robin Coombes)*

# Tenterden Terrier

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# Editorial

## More Memorable Occasions

Reading through the General Manager's column in Lineside News, we noticed that the Transport and Works Order for the extension from Bodiam to Robertsbridge received its ministerial sign off on 9th May this year. This brought to mind another similar occasion almost exactly half a century ago; it was on Monday 19th November 1973 that the Kent & East Sussex Railway (Transfer and Amendment) Order came into force and Tenterden Railway Company, as it then was, acquired the right to operate the K&ESR.

Our first public trains ran between Tenterden Town and a point just past Rolvenden on 3rd February 1974 and there was an official opening on 2nd June. These events will be duly celebrated over the next 12 months. In the words of the song, 'It's been a long road getting from there to here' – but at least the last mile, or rather three miles, is in sight. Here's to a really upbeat and successful 2024.

*Nick Pallant*

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It has been brought to our attention that the obituary for volunteer Jim Williams in the Summer issue of the *Tenterden Terrier* was incorrectly attributed. It was in fact the work of, and submitted by, Richard Potter.



*Sapper on Hexden Bridge with the Pullman set.*

*(Phil Edwards)*

## FROM THE CHAIR

I was musing the other day on the importance of relationships. Individuals and organisations flourish best when they reach out to others, and work and share with them, rather than trying to do everything alone.

This applies very much to the Kent & East Sussex Railway. There have been times in our history when we have rather cut ourselves off from the outside world and focused just on ourselves and the railway enthusiast fraternity. Our neighbours in Tenterden, if they noticed us at all, regarded us as a rather odd bunch of people at the far end of Station Road.

That hasn't been the case for some years now, and at present we are making a renewed effort to develop friendships and contacts – not just for their own sake and for the goodwill, but also to be able to join forces with others and secure mutual benefits. These are tough times, and we are all stronger together. It's time the heritage railway movement came into the sun.

I'll quote just two examples from September, in

both of which I had the pleasure of being personally involved.

First, we hosted a visit by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Heritage Railways, along with Huw Merriman, one of our very supportive local MPs who also happens to be the current Rail Minister. We showcased what we have to offer, demonstrated what a significant operation we are, and talked a lot about the importance to the UK of heritage railways, and the K&ESR in particular. No instant pay-back, perhaps, but an investment for the future.

The second example is our hosting of Tenterden's first business networking session. This brought together more than 40 people from local firms and other organisations including the Town Council, and it marked a significant stage in our positioning ourselves closer to the centre of local life. We were able to promote the benefits we bring to the area (and make a pitch for the Heritage Buildings Appeal!) but just as importantly we provided an impressive venue for others to network and discuss matters of mutual interest.



*The All-Party Parliamentary Group, with Huw Merriman and K&ESR members.*

*(Robin Coombes)*

We are seeking to replicate this kind of activity at the other end of the line, and also to develop more and deeper partnerships with bodies ranging from wildlife charities, manufacturers of Kent and Sussex produce, accommodation providers and other tourist attractions. You've seen some of this already, and it will continue.

Naturally all this takes time and energy. If any reader has any thoughts about further partnerships and relationships to develop, or would be willing to help, do please get in touch with me or with the office.

Relationships within an organisation are important, too. It's not always easy when we are spread along ten miles of line, and involved in so many very different activities, but as individuals and as a railway we are far happier and more effective when we can work together in pursuit of our common aim. We all bring something to the party, we are all doing our best for the railway, and it belongs to all of us. It is bigger than any one of us. When we disagree we must do so well, and remember our common values.

Since the last edition of the Terrier several of our stalwarts have, sadly, died. One I must mention here, and whom many will remember, is David Stratton, who was our Chairman from 1985 to 1995 and Managing Director just over 20 years ago. A full obituary appears elsewhere in this



David Stratton. *(via the Stratton family)*

issue. His larger-than-life manner and can-do approach played a huge part in saving us from potential bankruptcy. He was a great believer in flair, which some years after he retired he thought the railway had lost. He may have been right then, but I think we're getting it back now. Our best tribute to him will be to continue to do so, and to accelerate the pace. And we can.

*Simon Marsh  
Chairman*

## FROM THE OFFICE

We are rapidly approaching the 2023 AGM, and I will be presenting my second report. I am more convinced than ever that we are a great little railway – not just any railway but a truly remarkable one. Last year was undeniably a great year for us: Geoff Colvin received the well-deserved honour of being voted the Visit England Tourism Superstar by the public; the K&ESR proudly took its place at the top table during the National Tourism Awards, standing out as the only heritage railway in the spotlight; and we also recently had the honour of hosting the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Heritage Rail, with the added privilege of the Rail Minister's presence, marking it as their best-ever visit.

Our 40's event echoed with a heartfelt quote: "Daddy, I want to stay here forever." It's a sentiment that perfectly encapsulates the magic we create. Extreme weather, be it sun, rain, or snow, hasn't deterred us. We introduced new

events like Steampunk, and 'We are Wild about Wildlife', and breathed new life into the Hoppers Weekend. Familiar favourites such as the Bus Rally and fish & chip trains continued to delight, and we ventured into new concepts like breakfast and lunch trains. Expect even more in 2024. However my two favourite events, without a doubt, are the Junior Engineer and Evacuation Day, where we have the chance to showcase ourselves to the next generation.

We've proven the armchair engineers wrong; a Bulleid Pacific didn't cause our track to spread or our bridges to collapse. Instead we've turned challenges into opportunities, seizing the spotlight and igniting media interest. Yes, we've danced close to the wind on occasion; but, as André would say, "That was another we got away with."

Liam and his team have worked miracles at Rolvenden, and Frim and his team delivered a new crossing at Northiam. Catering deserves



*You wait ages for a bus, and then...*

*(Robin Coombes)*

applause for delivering hundreds of cream teas to Fox and Edwards' customers, one of our many success stories. Financially, we've managed to turn around the loss we incurred in 2021/22, and we have cash in the bank. We've welcomed over 150 new volunteers, and our service delivery/cancellation rates have far exceeded the performance of any mainline train operating company. Our gala was a resounding success, offering a glimpse of future journeys to Robertsbridge with our trips to Junction Road. The full application for extension was formally approved, receiving the green light from the Secretary of State on 9th May.

So here we stand, at the dawn of our 50th anniversary year, having not just weathered storms but thrived in the face of adversity. The preserved K&ESR has been successfully operating for 50 years, longer than the original K&ESR. Colonel Stephens may have established the railway, but you, the members and volunteers, have kept it going. We can all acknowledge that the task has been Herculean.

In 1961 the original railway was declared dead, officially closed, the end of an era. But no, it was not. Three Maidstone schoolboys had a vision. I recently spoke to one of those schoolboys, and he shared tales of those early days – tough but exciting, frustrating yet filled with fun. It's a spirit we must never lose sight of; a spirit that drove us to overcome bureaucracy, leading to the grand opening in February 1974. We then embarked on the journey along the original trackbed, from Tenterden down the hill to Rolvenden, on to Wittersham Road, and finally to Northiam, with the invaluable assistance of 'Anneka'. But the railway's journey won't stop there. As I mentioned, this year the Secretary of State has

given us the green light to extend from Bodiam to Robertsbridge. The K&ESR and its original vision will then be complete, with continuous steel rails stretching from Tenterden to Charing Cross.

Now, there's a point to all this. It's not just about our ability to make this incredible journey from Tenterden to faraway places; it's about enabling others to embark on their journeys in the opposite direction. By postcode, more than half of our visitors live closer to Robertsbridge than to Tenterden. Logically they would commence their journeys at Robertsbridge, a trend that is only set to increase. The implication is that our railway's dynamic is shifting, with Tenterden becoming the destination rather than the starting point. This presents us with a fantastic opportunity to collaborate with the town of Tenterden in promoting it as an inland destination akin to Whitstable – quirky, raw and trendy – while staying true to our roots as a railway that carries people with a purpose, inviting them to experience our Light Railway heritage. This is an endeavour I believe Colonel Stephens would wholeheartedly approve of.

Change is an ever-present companion in our lives, and we must learn to embrace it. Change is not our adversary; it's our dance partner on this journey. The climate crisis, evolving technology and shifting landscapes are the new companions of our time. Embracing change is not a choice; it's a necessity.

Of course, amidst these grand plans, many of you are eager to know when No.65 will be back in service, when *Poplar* will be repaired, and why your rostered turn in August was cancelled. You're also curious about the release of a year-ahead working timetable and details of our upcoming events.

I understand that these are the tangible matters that often cause frustration. Please understand that I don't sit at my desk plotting to create chaos and annoyance. On the contrary, I'm committed to minimising disruption. However, as former Prime Minister Harold Macmillan once wisely said when asked about the greatest challenge for a statesman: "Events, dear boy, events." The same holds true for most leaders and organisations. Events happen, and when they do, many things hang in the balance: lives, emotions, finances, time, reputation. So, knowing how to respond to these events is a crucial survival skill for those of us entrusted with managing the railway, especially on a day-to-day, hour-by-hour





*The Steampunk event attracted all sorts!*  
(Robin Coombes)

basis. In my own career I've learned many essential lessons, including how to manage events – the hard way, through making mistakes. As President Kennedy aptly noted, "Good judgment is usually the result of experience, and experience is frequently the result of bad judgment."

Rest assured, No.65 will return to service in 2024, and *Poplar* will undergo necessary repairs. The cancellation of your rostered turn in August was due to a last-minute change in locomotive availability. Planning for 2024 commenced in June 2023. The timetable is currently in the process of being finalised, and a draft event calendar for 2024 has already been published. Our primary focus will be on a gala to celebrate our 50th anniversary. I can't promise that there won't be changes, but it's important to remember that every piece of equipment we use, and many of us operating it, are more than 60 years old.

Over the past year we've faced our fair share of challenges. We've danced with uncertainty,

navigated the twists and turns of change, and encountered our own versions of uphill battles. However, what truly defines us is not how we weathered the storm but how we harnessed its energy to propel our progress.

The heroic efforts of many among us have not gone unnoticed. To you all, I say thank you. Thank you for your unwavering commitment, for sometimes teetering on the edge of exhaustion as you've striven to achieve the impossible with the limited resources available. Your dedication forms the very backbone of this railway, and the armchair members owe you a debt of gratitude that words can't fully express.

My main message today is that, as we approach our 50th year, we must set a trajectory towards developing a sustainable business and operational model, first to 2030 and then beyond to 2040, 2074, or even 2124. This is how we secure the legacy of the K&ESR, ensuring that future generations can enjoy, experience, and be educated by it.

In simple terms, we must not merely survive but also hand over a well-maintained railway to the next generation, so they can continue this legacy. We must celebrate our 50th anniversary to the fullest, with joy and enjoyment as our guiding principles. It's a time to look back with pride and nostalgia and, simultaneously, to look forward to the future with energy, confidence, and the expectation of success.

In closing, I leave you with a theme to carry forward: "Unite and Ignite." Let us unite in our commitment to this remarkable little railway, igniting the spark of passion in the next generation. Together, we will illuminate the tracks that lead to a brilliant future.

*Robin Coombes*  
*General Manager*

## MOTIVE POWER

### Rolvenden MPD

Sadly we have to report that Liam Head has stood down from his position as Running Foreman at Rolvenden, returning to his previous role as a Fitter. Many thanks are due to Liam for all his efforts in keeping us running, and we hope that he will continue in his new... old... role for a long time to come.

This summer has, once again, been a story of

relying on hired motive power to run the service. Indeed, without *Sapper* and *Swiftsure*, it is possible that we might not have been able to run a service at all. On the diesel side, class 33 **33202** has been used on passenger services as well.

As far as the home fleet is concerned, very little has changed from the report in the last *Terrier*. With regard to the two Terrier locos, we understand that negotiations are ongoing with the



*The main steam pipes refitted to Maunsell.  
(Robin Coombes)*

insurers in respect of *Bodiam/Poplar*. (Anyone who has ever had to make an ‘unusual’ claim to an insurance company will know how long these things can take when it doesn’t fit neatly into one of their tick-boxes.) We hope to be able to report more positive news in the next *Terrier*. Regrettably *Knowle* will be out of service for some considerable time, given the nature of the repairs needed.

The *P class* remains in store, in pieces, at Rolvenden.

Sadly we have been advised that the Beckett family have given notice to the railway to end the running agreement regarding *Marcia* in 2024. It appears likely that she will be offered for sale next year.

*Charwelton*, or rather parts of it, left the railway in August, bound for JM Steam Engineering at Quainton Road. JM were recently involved in the repairs to *Hastings*, after its initial failure on test. They will be producing an overhauled rolling chassis, and may also refit the boiler. (The boiler was seen heading south from Yorkshire on a lorry, a few days after the rest of *Charwelton* arrived at Quainton.)

*Norwegian* and *6619* are still in store at Rolvenden.

Some progress has been made on the overhaul of *Maunsell*, but this loco will not be ready in time to assist with the Santa services this year.

*Wainwright* remains in store at Rolvenden. Although *Wainwright* was stopped due to the thickness of its inner firebox, and we have the plate in store to make up a new box, the loco requires significant work to its bottom end. It will not be a quick or easy overhaul when it happens.



*D9504 looking superb in the morning sun.*

*(Robin Coombes)*



Of our home fleet Austerities, the news is mixed. No.23 *Holman F Stephens* remains in store at Rolvenden, although its overhaul is due to start as soon as *Maunsell's* is completed. However No.25 *Northiam* has emerged from Rolvenden works, after considerable effort from both volunteers and paid staff, and was undertaking some gentle running-in and testing turns in September.

On the diesel front, the *Ruston* continues to perform the shunting duties at Rolvenden. *D2023*, the 03, has been used as Tenterden yard pilot, but really needs to be stopped for an overhaul similar in nature to that just completed on *D9504*, the class 14. Mike Grimwood and his team have been carrying out re-commissioning work on this loco, and it was hoped that it would be complete before *33202* returns in October.

### 4253 Locomotive Company – Kelvin Williams

We have been concentrating on getting the side rods ready for installation while we await the return of the boiler from HBSS in Liverpool. This has been a time-consuming task, with spherical ball couplings either being difficult to fit, or even 'challenging'. On Sunday 17th September it took all day just to get one inserted and operating correctly, but we did it! All eight rods have been put up, and final fitting of the ball couplings will hopefully be completed by the time this edition of the *Terrier* is published.

We are again assisting the Locomotive Shed staff with the overhaul of *Charwelton*. At the moment we are concentrating on the water tank, with the repositioning of the filler hole to comply with working at height requirements. The filler hole has had a blank welded on and a new hole cut in the front end of the tank top. The tank has received a rub down, and both filler and first



4253's driver's side rods. (Charles Masterson)

undercoat applied. Looking forward the new filler lid will be fitted, and the tank will receive a topcoat finish.

Our volunteers are also refurbishing the sheet rollers; currently they are getting a rub down and will eventually receive a repaint. In the near future our electrician will look at the old operating system to see how it can be improved to modern standards.

### GWR Railcar W20W – Chris Mileman/ Neil Edwards

It was great to be able to welcome so many visitors at the end of May 'Steam-up' weekend and show off our progress on the Railcar. Since then work has continued apace.

#### Internally

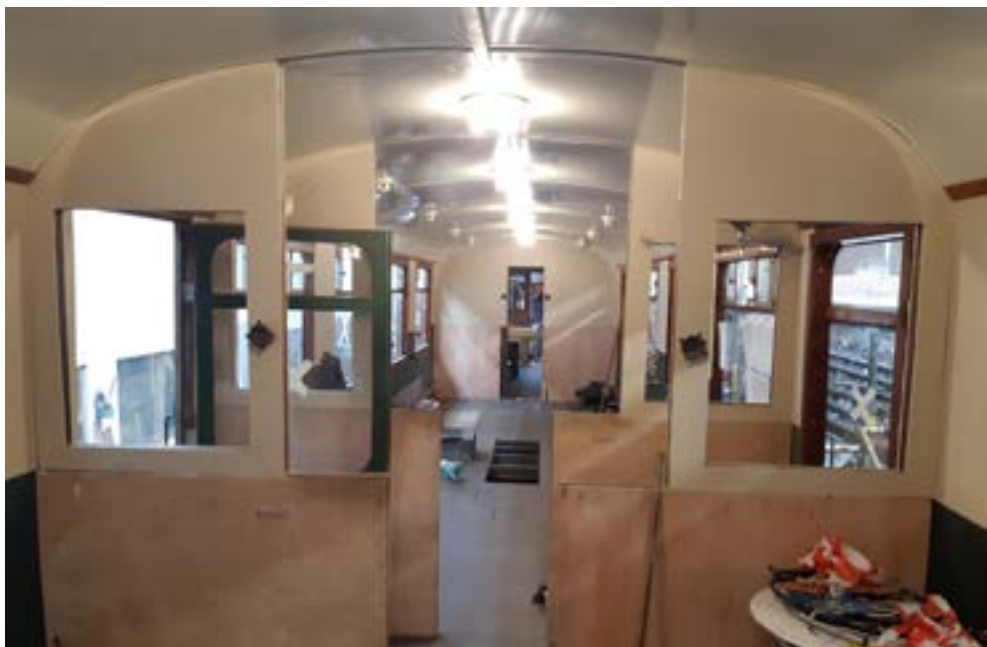
The base-layer flooring installation (Buffalo Board) has been completed throughout the entire vehicle. Fire-proof sound-insulating board has been laid over this in the luggage van and small saloon, and covered by a temporary protective layer. More material will be ordered for the large saloon once all the under-floor work has been completed.

A vapour-shield lining was applied to the inside of the interior walls prior to the ply panelling being refitted, with new ply sections being cut and fitted for the vestibule and saloon cab-backs. Leathercloth (Rexine) has been glued to the panelling, with green being used below the window line and cream above, which provides an accurate match to the original GWR description and looks very smart. We are currently trying to source an appropriate floor covering; Marmoleum appears to be an ideal material... we just need to find the right shade of green.

Capping for the internal lighting trunking which runs along the centre of the ceiling has been machined, varnished and fitted, finishing off this area nicely.

The recently produced original GWR moquette was delivered to Tenterden and has now been collected, along with the seating, by our contractor for refurbishing and re-upholstering. We are now searching for appropriately patterned curtain material, to provide the finishing touch to the saloons.

The restoration of the driver's seats has commenced. This proved to be much more time consuming than expected, as the elevating



*Excellent progress on fitting out the Railcar.*

*(Chris Mileman)*

mechanisms were totally seized and proved a devil to free up! All are now working.

The luggage compartment internal decoration was originally scumble painted. If anyone can come along to show the team how to 'scumble' – or even do it! – please let me know (contact [chris\\_mileman@hotmail.com](mailto:chris_mileman@hotmail.com)) This is needed in the luggage van now.

### **Externally**

The north side of the railcar has received another coat of green undercoat, much improving its appearance and providing a sound base for future paint. More sanding and smoothing of the panel screw-head filler has been undertaken to get these as invisible as possible. The roof has received two more coats of undercoat and two final coats of top coat.

More sheets of zintec-coated steel have been ordered so that the final cab ends and domes can be produced. A second-hand box and pan folding machine has been purchased which will make the formation of these complex panels somewhat easier. This machine will be a useful asset for C&W in the future too. Steady progress is being made with fabricating and fitting these panels. In addition, some of the wooden framing around the cab has had to be altered and adjusted to

allow the glazing to be fitted flat, ensuring the glazing isn't stressed and therefore liable to crack. Thanks must go to Alan Brice and other skilled C&W personnel for assisting in this work.

### **Electricals**

More work has been undertaken on wiring the junction boxes within the vehicle's frames and cabs.

The Headcorn-end jumpers have been wired up (the Bodiam end was done several years ago). These jumpers are being reinstated mainly for authenticity but may be very useful if W20W ever gets to meet W22W... assuming they do their jumper-wiring too! Rail-compliant heavy duty wiring for the starter motors and battery charging was finally located and has been installed in appropriate flexible stainless steel conduit. The heavy-duty cable runs are now 80% complete, with terminations and bus-bars manufactured and installed.

90% of the control and general wiring is now in place. Wiring containment has been installed in the Headcorn-end cab for the running and tail lights. The guard/driver bell-code wiring has also been installed.

The first of the two dynamos has been tested and

re-installed; the second is proving troublesome and needs further attention. It is believed that it needs to be 'woken up' after its very long slumber out of use. If there is anyone out there who could give us some advice or assistance, please get in touch, as above.

### Controls

The second driver's control unit has been fully refurbished following long-term storage damage. This has been installed in the Robertsbridge-end

cab, and looks wonderful. The two vacuum brake cylinders and their associated pipework have successfully passed a functional and hold-up test, which was carried out by Alan Brice. This hopefully means the complex and time-consuming job of removing the vacuum cylinders will not be necessary. The arduous and difficult job of making the control system air-pipe connections, mainly working under the vehicle, has progressed well, and it is hoped to perform pressure and leak-down testing very soon.

## ROLLING STOCK

### Carriage & Wagon – David Brailsford

C&W has been getting on with the multitude of tasks that keep our fleet of coaches and wagons available for use. We are pleased to report that our accessible coach *Petros* is now in service once again, and is an absolute credit to all those who have worked hard on the overhaul.

**Kitchen Car *Diana*** has received an 18-month exam which required the refurbishment of both vacuum cylinders. In the closed period after the Santa trains it is planned to replace two emergency doors, carry out a certain amount of repairs to the bodywork and windows in the kitchen area, and upgrade the vehicle's insulation. One side of this coach will be repainted if time allows.

**Pullman Car *Barbara*:** As a result of the 18-month exam carried out on this coach we have had to withdraw it from traffic due to very weak bolster springs. New ones are on order and it is very much hoped that the coach will be back in traffic by December. This vehicle has received

four new external doors, as the old ones were almost life expired. It is planned to carry out some remedial work on this vehicle during the closed period, and some body repairs and painting will be carried out.

**Pullman Car *Theodora*** has received four new external doors.

Recently we have spent a great deal of time changing wheelsets. Four pairs of wheels have been reprofiled by South Eastern at Ashford, and these have replaced the worn-out set that until recently sat under Mk1 TSO 85. The almost brand-new wheelsets that were bought from the East Kent Railway have been removed from their bogies and are currently being refurbished and having their axles tested.

**Mk1 TSO 85:** This vehicle is keeping everybody busy at the moment, as it is required for the Santa season. Metal around some of the windows has had to be cut out and replaced because of corrosion. Many of the window frames have been re-sealed and much of the internal wood has been replaced and re-varnished. Some panels under the windows have been re-made, as have some of the upholstered seat panels. Small areas of roof lining have been replaced in both vestibules, and one of the toilet tanks has been repaired. Three splits were found in an inaccessible place, so the tank had to be dropped out of the roof before the repairs could be carried out. A rotten floor cross-member has been replaced, and there have been repairs to both ends of the coach and also the roof at the Headcorn end where the metal moth has been at work. The second toilet compartment is now a cupboard. The coach has been repainted in BR carriage green.



*Theodora resting in the sun at Bodiam.*

(Col McLaughlin)

**RMB 59** will be used during the Santa period,



and will run on borrowed bogies from BCK 21245. The department's jacks will once again be needed to help with the bogie swap. The miniature kitchen area will be locked out of use as it needs a lot of work to bring it up to standard.

Maunsell **CK 56** has undergone an 18-month exam.

Maunsell **NBO 54** has undergone its last 18-month exam before withdrawal. Both vacuum cylinders received some attention as they were not working correctly.

In the woodworking shop Richard Giles has been busy producing new Mk1 door frames and

drop lights for the Great Eastern six-wheeler.

**SR Ling:** It is hoped that this vehicle will be finished by Christmas if space in the shed allows us to complete the outstanding tasks. Our congratulations go to all those who have laboured away on this wagon – it is looking good.

Once again, a big thank-you is due to all staff who have worked so hard on the various projects that have been undertaken this year. 2024 will see many more challenges to overcome with, hopefully, more fun and enjoyment to be had.

Congratulations go to Paul Tomlinson who has recently passed out as a C&W two-month examiner.

## OPERATING

### Signalling – Tony Ramsey

As another busy summer draws to a close, the Signalling Department seems to have been a hive of activity. In addition to covering all the box and crossing turns required to maintain a full service, and completing all the necessary competency tests, we have welcomed Bernie Bone as our new Signalling Inspector and Lesley Lee as our new Roster Clerk; we wish them both well as they settle in to their roles. Moreover, we can congratulate two of our trainees on qualifying as Signalmen: Tim Coutts (by passing out in Wittersham Road box) and Caleb Eagles (by passing out in Tenterden Town box).

However, the congratulations do not stop there! We are also pleased to record that Luke Arnold, Neil Horrocks and Matt Lloyd have passed out

at Cranbrook Road crossing, Caleb Eagles and Mike Winiberg have passed out at Rolvenden crossing and Richard de Coverly has passed out at Northiam crossing, while Paul Vidler has passed out in Wittersham Road box and Bernie Bone has passed out in Northiam box.

Meanwhile our intrepid Training Officer, Joel Pearson, has continued to juggle the demands of work, family, moving house and training in order to continue delivering the weekly Zoom sessions (at one point he was having to run the 2022 and 2023 courses concurrently!). We are delighted that the number of new trainees has increased markedly since the pandemic, with six candidates on the 2023 course and (at the time of writing) a further seven having expressed an interest in the 2024 course.

Finally, we are sorry to lose the services of Norman Brice and Ray Hollman, both of whom have felt it is the right time to retire as Cranbrook Road Crossing Keepers; and we shall shortly lose Signalman Mick Leech who is emigrating to Australia. We thank all three of them for their devoted service to the department over many years.

### Guards Department – Pete Spratling

Firstly I would like to say thank-you to everyone who has helped cover turns since the start of the season. Many of you have covered turns with trainees. Thank you for this.

Training Officer Mick Leech announced last year that he is retiring from the role as he is moving away to Australia; he has now stood



*Keeping it in another family – Chris (left) and Ed McNaughton watering Swifts at Northiam.  
(Kieran Wildman)*

down from the railway in preparation for moving.

We have now introduced the role of DMMU only guard (which will also include the GWR Railcar), and I must congratulate Paul Davies and George Glass who have passed out for this grade.

I would like to welcome the following trainees to the department: Simon Clark, Steven Holloway, Daniel Knott and Ben Goodsell. I would also like to thank the volunteer committee for their hard work in recruiting new volunteers. With more trainees starting, we have a second training course taking place this October and November. We also have a few trainees who are progressing well and should be passed out soon.

### **Station Masters – Geoff Colvin**

The end of September brings a range of emotions – partly relief that a pretty frantic season has reached its quieter spell with just weekend trains to come in October; partly disappointment that there will be fewer opportunities to meet up with friends and colleagues, to do something useful, in the coming months. Of course, Santa is only just over the horizon and starting to induce the sense of nervousness which sharpens the focus on planning for it.

2023 has been a year of huge variety, which has underlined how our railway has recognised the need to appeal to a broad range of people, and to play its part as an influential member of the community that is Tenterden and its environs. It has also shown how very flexible our team of Station Masters and Platform Assistants is in delivering a very diverse programme of events.

There have been some familiar favourites – the 40s weekend, the beer festival and hoppers events, some more novel like Steam Up with trains terminating at Northiam from both directions, or the Steampunk day with some elaborately attired staff blending perfectly with the attendees and showing the rest of us up a bit! Keith Laing, whose appearance rivalled that of our General Manager, is deserving of special mention here. Untangling the party of 100 or so who had booked for a separate cream tea experience on the same day required a certain amount of the creative thinking, tact and diplomacy that is a day-to-day requirement on the platform.

It should be no surprise that we also had weather; very hot at times, very wet at others and



*Bernie Dobson and friend at the Teddy Bear event.  
(via Bernie Dobson)*

sometimes just dull when we hoped for better. The wettest day probably coincided with the launch event of Plastic Free Tenterden, the sort of day when most people might choose to stay at home still saw exceedingly good sales of platform tickets and no doubt a corresponding boost to sales in the buffet and shop. It was a clear demonstration of why links to the community are so valuable.

Writing this time last year I reflected on our inability to field Station Masters at all stations on all operating days in 2022, and stated my hope that in 2023 I would be able report that “all turns at all stations have been covered”. Sadly we didn’t quite get there, but I can count the occasions when there wasn’t an SM on the fingers of one hand, which is a significant improvement.

My thanks go to all those whose flexibility and willingness to sometimes put the railway first, when they might have chosen otherwise, has made this possible. Next year hopefully...



*Meg Gooch checks in with company 'morale officer' Kate, while owner Jonny Marsh looks on.*

*(André Freeman)*

## **Travelling Ticket Inspectors** – *Murray Motley*

Summer has been very busy for the TTI cohort. We've welcomed Derek Strand and Richard Bysouth to our group, and congratulate them on completing their training and assessment.

Less usual was our very own Mark Wignall being asked to help a customer who wanted to propose to his girlfriend 'in front of a steam engine'. The K&ESR excelled, enabling our happy passenger to propose to the love of his life on the footplate at Northiam. Well done Mark, and thank-you to the footplate crew for making this possible. The happy couple – she said yes – had a wonderful day with us, and it reminds us of how we can have so much fun giving our customers a great day out.

A challenging task this summer has been placating disappointed passengers who came for a ride behind a steam engine. Despite the Herculean efforts of the amazing folk at Rolvenden, there have been days when Dennis the Crompton has appeared instead of Sapper or Swiftsure. On the train we have a variety of ways to explain this to passengers depending on their

age and likely technical knowledge. "The steam engine got a bit hot (this was August) so it's had to go off for a very long drink and a lie down." Sometimes, as we go past Rolvenden, an 0-6-0 will be helpfully up on jacks with an orange army around it (or under it). This gives us: "Look, the steam engine isn't very well so it's had to see the doctor in the depot." Then we have, "Well, it is a vintage diesel, it's even older than me and it makes a really cool crackling sound." If all else fails, we can try, "The engine's brick arch has fallen down."

With a bit of luck, the person you're telling won't know about steam engines and will be stunned into a respectful silence by your amazing technical knowledge. Of course, we also have passengers who are genuinely interested in the reasons for travails with steam traction, and plenty of sympathy and understanding is often forthcoming.

One final snippet. The badger sett near Northiam is a great conversation piece, especially in the DMU where you can easily see what the brocks are up to. Obviously we tell the passengers that we have to go slowly so as not to wake them up...



## Booking Office – Peter Morgan

Railway booking offices have been much in the news recently. It is now so easy to purchase railway tickets via the Internet, and increasingly you don't even have to turn these purchases into actual tickets – a bar code on an app on your mobile phone is sufficient. (You just have to hope that your pocket technology does not fail in the course of your journey!) It is therefore not surprising that the railway companies are keen to cut costs, by shutting down staffed booking offices in favour of digital machinery. But it is also known that Britain has some of the most complicated ticket pricing in the world, and many of those travelling on the rails around Britain have paid far more than they might have done for their journey.

What is true for the national rail network is also true for the Kent & East Sussex Railway. A very high proportion of our customers now purchase their tickets online, in advance, enjoying a significant reduction on their journey price by so doing. These pre-bookings enable us to gather all sorts of information about our customer base and to adjust the service accordingly – it is one reason why they get a discount. Our railway still requires their pre-booking to be turned into actual card tickets. This is achieved by giving us a five-digit number supplied to them at the time of booking, which, when entered into the ticketing computer, produces their tickets, purchase receipts etc. If we were to swing the computer touch screen around in the booking office window to face the customers, they could (after one or two minor adjustments, especially concerning proof of identity) obtain their tickets without our intervention. A very small, and declining, proportion of our walk-up passengers pay by cash – therefore the imagined ticket machines could only accept card payment.

I can feel that you are getting uncomfortable reading this! So much would be lost if we pursued this course of action on our railway, or



*A brace of Austerities. Northiam (left) and Sapper at Bodiam.*  
(Caroline Warne)

nationally. Journey options, even on 11 miles of railway, very often have to be explained. For some, this is their first time travelling on a railway and, in certain cases, they are unable to read a bus or train timetable. We are able to do calculations for them to find the cheapest combination of tickets – whether a family ticket is their best option, for example. We can inform them of catering and other station facilities, of special events taking place, the ticketholders' discount at Bodiam Castle and much more. Above all, we welcome them and give them (hopefully) a smile. Also – think of the queue out the door of the booking office (as you now often find at the main-line station) if we left passengers to process their own tickets!

If you have started your journey at Northiam or Bodiam recently, you may have found the booking office at one of these stations closed. For example, at Northiam station the booking office was closed for nine successive running days in September. This is not some secret plot on my part to put into practice the ideas that I have outlined above, but the undesirable result of a shortage of volunteers – particularly due to the retirement of several long-serving regulars. I would be pleased to hear from any of you who would like to help take their place. It does not take long to learn, is indoors, can be done sitting down and is not 'safety critical'.

## WAY AND WORKS

### Permanent Way – Paul Jessett

As is usual during the summer months, and with a full train service, the department spends most of its time fettling and patrolling. With the hot weather several sites were lifted and packed when rough riding was reported. The tamper

was kept busy, going to sites where issues were raised. We are so lucky to have these machines; to carry out large sections of work would otherwise involve weeks of effort, with numerous temporary speed restrictions.

Some spot re-timbering was undertaken outside



*33202 approaches Wittersham Road with a freight train. (Paul Jessett)*

Tenterden signal box, where several point timbers were found to be life-expired.

Several lorry-loads of materials were delivered during the summer, for upcoming and future works. Several hundred concrete sleepers have been stored at Rolvenden for future use. Remarks were made locally about this being the railways biggest 'bug bank' – but the frequenting critters should not make themselves too comfortable. Embankment netting has been acquired, which will future-proof the extension from burrowing animals that have caused us issues in other locations.

We have been busy moving home from our base at Wittersham Road to an area at the rear of the Carriage Storage Shed at Rolvenden. We have moved our two 20ft storage containers as well as a 40ft container that was kindly donated to us by the Rand family. The infrastructure department is moving to Wittersham Road, but were held up in the chain.

During this period a quantity of scrap materials were 'weighed in' to help with the railway's coffers. It was surprising what some of the materials that having been lying around for a number of years are worth.

## **Forestry & Conservation** – Steve McMurdo

Forestry & Conservation is one of the railway's non-public-facing groups, so our activities can consequently be a little bit of a mystery to our visitors – and possibly some readers of this journal too. In our case the majority of our work is carried out away from stations, meaning we're rarely sighted in action, and the results of our

many hours of labour can only be seen briefly from a passing train.

The current structure and management of F&C has been in place since early 2021 following the appointment of the ubiquitous Paul Davies as manager. Apart from during exceptional weather conditions, we meet weekly every Friday all year round for a full day out on the line. The day was selected on safety grounds as the railway is normally devoid of public trains on the majority of Fridays.

Our weekly sessions are typically supported by between eight and ten of our loyal and enthusiastic team of volunteers, the majority of whom have been involved with the group for many years. We must be doing something right! The work is undeniably hard and consequently tiring, but the opportunity to work in unspoilt isolated countryside and be part of a friendly group pulling together as a team cannot be underestimated.



*Felling a rotten willow at Dexter Wood.*

*(Sioux Thorn)*

The skills, knowledge and experience within the group enable us to cope with the many challenges of maintaining around ten miles of lineside trees, hedges and other vegetation. The main exception, for which we need to enlist outside help, is work at height; for this we employ professional tree climbers on the rare occasions that this is required.

Safety is of the greatest importance to us. As we work on or near the line, all team members must have an up-to-date Basic Railway Safety qualification. External training is required for those of us who use chain saws, pole saws and wood chippers. Use of other power tools such as strimmers and hedge cutters is permitted following in-house training and satisfactory assessment.

The following summarises some of our activities since the last *Terrier* report, and offers a good cross section of what we do.

The sycamores opposite Rolvenden platform were taken down to enable BT to run a new fibre

optic cable from the main road towards the signal box. Several large unstable trees were removed from the embankment just down from Tenterden level crossing, and we continued our project at Dexter Wood (between Northiam and Bodiam) dealing with a long line of dead or decaying willows.

Routine lineside works are essential from a safety aspect, and the required periodic regular strimming, pruning and cutting was carried out at numerous locations to maintain visibility for footplate crews, control the spread of undergrowth and ensure train services are not compromised by potentially dangerous trees or branches. Clearance was also done under ground level signal cables to enable easier pulling from the relevant box.

We continued liaison with and support the railway's Environment & Sustainability Group, joining them and KCC's Kent Tree Strategy Senior Officer on a site visit to various locations along the line and formal discussion regarding several potential planting schemes.

## GROUPS AND ASSOCIATES

### **Bodiam – Malcolm Burgess**

Taking advantage of periods of dry weather the group has continued to maintain the gardens and flower displays to the usual high standard. The paint on the platform lamp posts has been refreshed and new poster cases installed to publicise future events. Decaying sleepers on top of the cattle dock wall have also been replaced. The cisterns in the ladies' toilets have been giving problems; Brian Richards, with help from a plumbing expert from the Wednesday Group, put in place temporary solutions. More permanent replacements will be needed during the closed season.

The main event was, of course, the Hoppers weekend, and several members of the group worked hard on the Friday to prepare the site as well as dressing the station. Attractions this year included swing boats and a coconut shy as well as food and a new bar in the green PMV. Several former hop pickers attended on the Saturday and were able to share their experiences. Volunteers also talked to visitors about hops and hopping. Hop garlands were available for sale and these proved very popular. Sadly the weather on the Sunday took a turn for the worse, and this limited

the success of some of the activities, although the Morris dancers managed to perform briefly.

Following an accident at another railway we were instructed to remove the white lines on the edge of the platform ramps. This is to ensure that, on those rare occasions when a carriage overhangs the ramp, passengers do not feel that they can get out of the train at this point. The platform edge at Bodiam is surfaced with attractive blue engineering bricks so, rather than simply paint over the white lines, we used paint stripper and a pressure washer to remove the paint and reveal the bricks.

For the future we will need to repaint the walls of the station building, as weather allows, and hopefully a bid to repair/replace sash windows will be successful. Funds allowing, the refinement of the new sewage system to bypass the old septic tank will eliminate the smells that currently haunt the station and will allow the new system to work effectively. If S&T agree we will repair/replace the backing boards to the STOP signs beside the track, and a more permanent solution to the ladies' toilet problems will need to be put in place. The hop poles in the hop garden will also need replacing during the winter. We are





*Ian Scarlett (left), Vivienne Harradence and Kieran Wildman take a break from Pullman duties at Northiam. (Ian Scarlett)*

looking for a source of new/second hand poles at a reasonable price so that we can maintain one of the station's outstanding features which reflects its unique identity.

Following the good news about the Transport & Works Order we look forward to learning what will be in store for Bodiam Station when the through service to Robertsbridge is in place.

### **Tuesday Group – Graham Hopker**

With some good weather the majority of our time has been spent on repairing and repainting the station building at Northiam. We have tried using a different make of paint to improve the length of time that the gloss finish actually stays on the wood but, even after a short time, this different approach does not seem to be working as we had hoped. Unfortunately the basic problem seems to be the red/maroon colour itself. The cream on the corrugated iron takes without any problem.

Due to a hydraulic problem with the K&ESR 'cherry picker', one had to be hired for a day to enable us to start repairing the very rotten A frame and finial on the Tenterden aspect of the

roof. Hopefully this job will be completed before the weather changes, now that our own very useful piece of kit has been repaired!

The usual general maintenance has been going on to keep the site looking its best, such as grass cutting, hedge trimming and fencing repairs where the dreaded rot has been found. We have also continued to work on the Memorial Garden, which has looked good this year as it matures.

Unfortunately, due to various circumstances, our numbers have fallen and some skills have been lost in recent years. However we are pleased to welcome Andy Limpkin to our ranks – he seems to be fitting in well with the requirements of work, fun, cake-eating and tea-drinking!

### **Gardening Group 1 – Carol Usher**

It has been a very busy and productive year at Tenterden. Firstly, a sad farewell to Jan Lelean, who decided to retire at the beginning of the year just before she turned 80. Happy retirement Jan, and thank you for all your hard work over the years! Also a thank-you to Terri Loader, who has stepped down to take on granny duties. You are both missed.

We started back in mid-February and worked when the weather allowed us to. We completely blitzed the gardens, weeding, cutting everything back and generally keeping tidy.

At the beginning of March we received two large compost bins, thanks to the 300 Club. The area we had for compost was hard to manage so we had enquired about new bins, and when they arrived the Wednesday Group cleared the area, saving the compost and installing the new bins, putting the saved compost back in them. We have produced so much compost this year, which the gardens have benefited from. Later, after discussion amongst the group, we asked if we could have a shed and a wheelbarrow. To our delight, the 300 Club said yes, and again the Wednesday Group installed the shed for us. A huge thank-you to the 300 Club and the Wednesday Group for all your help.

In May I had a conversation with Pinegrove Nurseries on the Appledore Road about supplying us with bedding plants and any other plants we might need at a small discount, and we reached an agreement. We had a great time planting up the hanging baskets and several pots all around the station, and I have to say they were absolutely beautiful and still flowering in



*Tenterden in bloom as 33202 departs with a service train.*

*(Pete Salmon)*

mid-October. It helped that Brian sorted out the watering system around the station, so they were watered daily without us having to worry about them.

We also had some plants donated by Phil Horscroft. They were very good, strong specimens and have all grown and flowered in abundance. Thank you Phil! We welcome donated plants, and will always find a home for them.

We will finish gardening at the end of October, as we give our time to help with the Christmas events during November. If there is anyone who likes to garden, and has a couple of hours to spare on a Tuesday morning, do come and see us next year. Thank you to Liz, Louise and Ba for all your help this year.

## **Gardening Group 2 – Veronica Hopker**

**Rolvenden:** The pots managed to last quite well despite the lack of attention, but they now require a much-needed tidy. The shrubs will be trimmed, if necessary, and further compost will be added to the pots, plus a feed.

Rolvenden is another station which could host a wild flower garden, so perhaps that's another project for us to think about!

**Northiam:** I am pleased to report that the trial bed created at Northiam with wild flowers has proved to be a success – see photograph of the small lineside area where I scattered the seeds. The seed was obtained from a local source that I found online – [www.sowwild.co.uk](http://www.sowwild.co.uk)



*The start of the new wild flower garden at Northiam.*  
*(via Graham Hopker)*

As a result – having discussed things with the Tuesday Group and Liz Brown, who looks after the Picnic Garden and platform pots – I have decided to enlarge the wild flower area. A patch of grass in front of the Memorial Wall in the Memorial Garden will be converted into a wild flower garden, to join the existing area of garden, which is a mixture of cultivated and wild flowers.

It is hoped that by this time next year Northiam will be more wildlife-friendly as far as bees and butterflies are concerned. We already have regular visits to the gardens from rabbits, badgers and small mammals who manage to wriggle through the wire mesh fencing surrounding the garden.

The area between the Memorial Garden and main road has been left for the time being, as through the winter months the area was partially under water, and some little visitors created a maze of small channels throughout the area. This created a problem for mowing the grass, so the area has been left. It has been decided to trim the area occasionally to keep it tidy.

Liz has worked hard clearing weeds and tidying the Picnic Garden, both lineside and along the platform under the hedge. She also looks after the flowerpots on the platform, and has managed to keep them looking fresh despite the variable weather.



*The original Northiam station lamp on display.*  
(Brian Janes)

## Museum Notes – Brian Janes

Generally on the visitor and ‘business’ front we are managing well after a difficult period, though changes in visitor patterns including early-arriving coach parties and the changes to this year’s timetable have not helped. Nobody knows yet what surprises next year will bring. Footfall in the museum reflects reductions in passenger numbers, but is nevertheless inching towards pre-COVID levels and we should reach some 13,000 happy visitors by season’s end. Despite continuing Internet connection problems, and consequent lack of a contactless payment machine, donations per head are rising slightly – though, as ever, yields are well below running costs.

Sales of donated items are comfortably up on last year’s record, helped by exceptional model railway donations. To provide additional outlets the museum now holds limited stocks of the Curator’s latest two commercial publications, *Tenterden’s Railway* and *Colonel Stephens Light Railway Locomotives*. We are now virtually out of our in-house publication *Colonel Stephens, the Man and his Railways*. If you want copies of the Wild Swan two-volume Selsey Tram book or their K&ESR history these are available at trade prices. All profits from sales of these books go towards running the museum.

We are presently experiencing a very strong, and most welcome, surge in acquisitions and donations of artefacts and records. To add to the locomotive worksplates mentioned in our last report we have, after lengthy negotiations with a private seller, now added four larger exhibits in the form of lamps from three Stephens’ lines and the signal box board from Cranbrook. All the lamps are rare, but the scarcest is the oil lamp from Brambledown Halt on the Sheppey Light, one of two that had disappeared from site before its 1950 closure. The K&ESR is represented by an original Northiam station lamp; this may have been originally acetylene but was latterly oil. The last of the three is one of the Hawkhurst station lamps, unfortunately without its lovely barley-sugar twist post or the rather specialist form of SE&CR burner, but a lovely genuine item. The first two are on display, but the Hawkhurst lamp currently presents a display challenge, which we will hopefully overcome this winter. The Cranbrook signal box board is a beautiful and well-preserved enamel dating from the BR era which was also designed to serve as a supplementary station board; it is now in place in the museum.



Interesting papers continue to arrive for the archive and we have been fortunate to receive three large donations, on which cataloguing and filing is well under way. Of importance were papers retained by Arthur Iggulden (Stephens' Accounting Officer) which had been in the care of Michael Davies. These include documents relating both to Stephens and his family, and most of his railway lines, particularly the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire and the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead. We have also received papers relating to the locomotives of the latter line from Allan Baker. David Felton secured from trustees of the estate of Martin Pascoe (late owner of Stephens' HQ office in Tonbridge) numerous legal documents regarding that property, which he has passed on to the museum. The placing in the museum's care of these documents reminds us strongly of the need to safeguard such privately held collections when *anno domini* calls. Ongoing Archive work remains a very important part of the team's year-round work, and we are grateful for the additional assistance we have received this year.

Physical winter work in the exhibition area is

planned to enlarge two exhibit cases, to improve or replace carpeting (held over from last winter) and to enhance video presentations. Outside we hope to improve the approach surfaces and are looking to work towards the rebuilding of the deteriorating, sole surviving, K&ESR pump trolley.

The Cavell Van has had a full season of visitors and was much admired by our September VIP group visitors including peers, our local MP and other notables. Before the van was placed into winter storage Brian Richards pressure washed the roof to restore its sparking white, though the inside still requires a refresh.

So, the season in the museum has been satisfactory, against continuing weak passenger numbers, but we try to think in the long term to safeguard the exhibits and present them. Who can say how things will turn out in these difficult times – not least as we still struggle for volunteers. If you think you can provide some of the extra help we desperately need please e-mail us at [museum@kesr.org.uk](mailto:museum@kesr.org.uk). Nevertheless, as always, we remain optimistic that our work can continue successfully.



*Our congratulations go to long-standing volunteer and former Operating Manager Simon Long on his marriage to the lovely Anna. They were married in North Yorkshire, with a special train on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway for the reception. The happy couple is seen here in the company of Lambton Tank No.29, itself a visitor to the KESR in the past. We wish Simon and Anna every happiness.*

*(via Simon Long)*





*Veterans together: Poplar and Hastings in Rolvenden Yard.*

*(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.



*The Family Saloon, looking glorious in its new Maunsell era Southern Railway livery. (Robin Coombes)*

*Swiftsure suffered a spring failure on 26th August. Liam Head makes a start on replacing the failed item. The engine returned to service the same day. (Ian Scarlett)*











*The Vintage Train from an unusual angle. Judging by the onlooker's hat it was a very warm day!*

*(Robin Coombes)*

*Something for all tastes! A Crompton, the Vintage Train and Hastings.*

*(Phil Edwards)*





# Caption Competition



Have you ever noticed how creepy the replica office in the Colonel Stephens Museum can feel?

It's almost as if 'our founder' still maintains a discreet presence on the premises, watching over how we are caring for his favourite railway. Some years ago we published a light-hearted ghost story about the Colonel's mannequin coming to life and chatting with one of the Museum staff. Well, it seems that following the appointment of Robin Coombes to the post of General Manager (he's on the left in the photo in case you are wondering) he's made a return visit and summoned the GM to his presence.

We are now asking you to write a caption, maximum two sentences, telling us what the Colonel is saying to Robin, or indeed vice versa. Malicious, defamatory or obscene entries will not be considered.

Entries should be sent to the Editor at Tenterden Town Station, envelope marked 'Caption Competition', or by e-mail to [terrier@kesr.org.uk](mailto:terrier@kesr.org.uk). Your suggestions must be received by 30th January 2024.

The prize for the best entry will be a table for two on a Sunday Pullman. 🚂



*Goodbye 257 Squadron, thanks for the memories. See you again?*

*(Robin Coombes)*

# Light Pacific Lands at Light Railway



*Bulleid power for Tenterden Bank: 257 Squadron on Orpins Curve ready for the climb. (Phil Edwards)*

British Railways No.34072 *257 Squadron* was built at Brighton Works in April 1948 as a member of the 110-strong 'Light Pacific' class of engines designed by Oliver Bulleid. It remained in its original condition throughout its life. The engine was first allocated to Dover MPD where its duties included continental boat trains such as the named 'Night Ferry' service. 34072 would have worked through Headcorn many times, passing the former junction with the K&ESR. Few if any could have imagined that it would one day work over part of this rural backwater to Tenterden.

The engine moved to Exmouth Junction before being withdrawn from Eastleigh in October 1964 and sent to Woodham Brothers at Barry, from where it was rescued in 1984. Now owned by Southern Locomotives Ltd, the engine has been based at the Spa Valley Railway in Tunbridge Wells since 2022.

Reaction to the news that K&ESR was to host

the engine from April until early June 2023 was varied. Opinions in messrooms and message boards were mixed; there was enthusiasm from many quarters but also suggestions that it was going to be hugely expensive, an operating and maintenance nightmare, or just far too large for the railway – all possibly metaphors for the visit of such a locomotive being outside of normal comfort zones. One thing seemed certain though, the visit was not going to go unnoticed.

Perhaps we'd forgotten that back in 2017 the railway successfully hosted GWR No.7822 *Foxcote Manor*, an engine also long enough to cause operational headaches. As with 7822, the operation of 34072 required the positioning of additional stop marks at stations and at Rolvenden water column, alterations to timetables and arrangements for running round, with these and other topics being covered by an Operating Notice. Visiting engines are accompanied by operating notes, and 'minders'

are often provided to ensure that crews understand their finer details. With 34072 working a limited and specific set of days it was decided that the railway's locomotive inspectors would be trained intensively and that the 'regular' steam drivers would drive it only under their supervision.

But first 34072 needed to be assessed and passed as fit to run. The engineering team at Rolvenden, led by Liam Head, carried out a full mechanical inspection including details such as tyre profiles and weight. The oil in the enclosed oil bath needed to be changed, leading to a dash to 34072's base at Tunbridge Wells to collect a 44 gallon drum of the correct oil. Repairs needed to be made to the sanding system, a necessity on a type of engine known to be light on its feet.

34072 entered service on Good Friday, 7th April, to large crowds and a fanfare of publicity. The engine ran successfully on Saturdays and Sundays until the end of the month, when it was diagnosed with a failed spring on the leading driving axle. Changing a spring on a Hunslet is one thing, but the Bulleid posed some extra challenges for Liam's team to overcome including a lengthy trip to the Swanage Railway to collect a replacement. The spring was changed and only one running day was lost.

My rostered driving turn was set for Saturday 20th May. Having studied the briefing and operating notes I joined Locomotive Inspector Richard Stannard and fireman Matt Webb at Rolvenden to prepare the engine. Most of K&ESR's home fleet engines are typical British designs with their cylinders and valve gear along with all the rods and eccentrics fitted between the frames. 'Oiling round' these requires the driver to lean in from above, or climb up from underneath to access the numerous oiling points.

The Bulleid Pacifics are three-cylinder engines, but the middle big end and the whole of the chain-driven valve gear are enclosed within the (in)famous Bulleid oil bath. This does require the driver to go underneath to check the oil level during preparation, but the remainder of oiling round is fairly straightforward – helping to fulfil Oliver Bulleid's aim of making his crews' jobs easier.

Meanwhile Matt had been completing the fireman's prep. The grate on a Light Pacific is more than twice the area of a Hunslet Austerity, and is much wider. The boiler backhead also

slopes outward towards the cab floor meaning the fireman needs to turn the shovel sideways and backwards to reach the back corners of the firebox. The spacious cab is laid out for ease of operation, which is something that was appreciated by their crews in BR days.

From the driver's side possibly the biggest difference between 34072 and the home fleet engines is the Bulleid steam-operated reversing gear. Of course K&ESR's own P Class has a steam reverser, but 34072's is of course different and the operating notes devote an entire side of A4 to its correct operation. Great care is required, even when the engine is stationary. The reverser was notorious for 'creep' back in the day, but it did not seem to be a problem on 34072.

Care is also required with the regulator. The steam circuit through the superheater and into the steam chest is long and it is easy to trap a lot of steam in it if used injudiciously. It requires very careful handling in yards or when moving onto coaching stock, doubly so when the engine is cold since the steam brake needs to be warmed through before becoming fully effective. It goes without saying that the engine's extremities are a long way from the driver's seat, so judging distance requires practice. Patience is very much the watchword when operating 34072! On the other hand there are some familiar cab controls – the blower valve and injector water valve handles are the same as on a USA, and the handbrake looks as though it belongs on a P.

With engine and crew fully prepared, it was time to make the light engine trip to Tenterden. Arriving there we found there was a lot of interest in the engine, with plenty of passengers admiring it and posing for photos before taking their seats for the trip to Bodiam. Once safely coupled up, and having received 'ready to start' from guard John Holland, it was time to depart.

The first mile or so is downhill of course, giving me time to get the feel of the vacuum brake, which was very positive, and to looking out along the side of the tender which was less so; when on curves you have to rely on your 'mate' on the other side of the cab a lot more than when on a Hunslet for example. Once settled in 'on the road' the engine is not difficult to handle. Rather it just wants to run – these engines were regularly timed in the region of 90mph, so keeping it within our 25mph limit requires some care.



This is particularly evident on the climb to Tenterden; with its 6ft 2in driving wheels the engine is long-legged but once that big superheater warms up it really wants to get a move on.

Being used to (mostly) right-hand drive engines means that stopping in the right place at a platform or water column when the engine obscures your usual view requires extra concentration, but that's what the aforementioned extra stop marks are for. The view along that air-smoothed (never streamlined) boiler casing when travelling on the way back from Bodiam is undeniably magnificent, something you have to consciously take a few seconds to appreciate. 34072 is a quiet and comfortable engine, at least at heritage railway speeds.

The exhaust is particularly quiet, although largely drowned out by the sound of the vacuum brake ejector. Until you give the engine some work to do climbing Tenterden Bank that is!

It can take a trip or two to get used to a 'new' engine but I soon got into the way that 34072 worked. Matt was clearly in control of his side of the footplate and Richard was happy, but all too soon our three round trips were complete and it was time to return to Rolvenden yard to dispose of the engine. I am grateful to all concerned to have had such memorable day on this superb locomotive, and to be honest I didn't really want to go home.

To bring me back down to earth I drove No.75008 *Swiftsure* on the following Wednesday and then No.12 *Marcia* on Saturday 27th – including 'hauling' 34072 into Tenterden as the 'little and large' pairing on the first day of the Bank Holiday



*Left to right: John Holland (guard); Richard Stannard (Loco Inspector); Ian Scarlett (driver); Matt Webb (fireman). (via Ian Scarlett)*

Steam Up. The takeaway for me was that *Marcia* and *Swiftsure* embody all that a steam locomotive needs to be. 34072 shows just what a highly developed steam locomotive *can* be.

In the bigger picture the owner's reps were happy with the way that 34072 was handled and looked after on the K&ESR. This must surely be encouraging. Who knows what possibilities there might be for other 'big' engine visits, especially when the extension to Robertsbridge Junction is complete.

Some of you may know that I run a YouTube channel called Sixpenny Films; its aim is to show the sights and sounds of the K&ESR from the footplate. The opportunity to film a Light Pacific on the K&ESR had to be taken. A cab ride up the hill from Rolvenden to Tenterden is thus recorded for posterity – I hope you enjoy it!

*Ian Scarlett*

# SE&CR 6-Wheel Brake Van From Rapido

*The Editor reviews a recent release by a local ready-to-run model railway manufacturer.*

The *Terrier* has previously published details of a number of railway models based on heritage era Kent & East Sussex Railway prototypes, and the latest in 4mm scale comes from Rapido Trains UK which is based in nearby Staplehurst. K&ESR No.102 was originally South Eastern Railway No.2010. This brake van entered service in July 1898 as one of a batch of 10 that was similar to a Midland Railway design with a veranda at one end and a platform at the other. These 17ft 6ins long 20 ton vehicles were a great advance over their 10 ton predecessors, the steeply graded SER routes having previously necessitated the provision of two brake vans on heavier unfitted goods trains.

The South Eastern and Chatham Railway built a further 35 examples between 1900 and 1909, prior to the design being modified with a veranda at each end in 1910. Fifty more vans were built to the modified design and 25 of the

single-ended type, including No.2010, were subsequently rebuilt with a second veranda. All 90 vans passed to the Southern Railway, which gave them drawing diagram number 1558, and 86 survived to become British Railways property. These were withdrawn between 1949 and 1960.

Meanwhile No.2010, Southern Railway No.55371, had been sold in 1946 to the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough for use on the RAE's internal railway. That line closed in 1965 and No.2010 was purchased for the K&ESR. This was arranged by the Brake Van Fund, a volunteer group run by Derek Dunlavy and the late Dave Sinclair; this was one of the origins of the Kent & East Sussex Locomotive Trust, the present owners of the van. No.2010 is today the sole surviving example of the type. One of the verandas was incorrectly rebuilt during an overhaul in the 1990s; the framing should be on the outside of the boards, not the



*The range of liveries in which the brake van is available.*

*(Rapido UK)*



*The interior details.*

*(Rapido UK)*

inside. Through vacuum piping is now fitted together with a guard's brake handle to enable the van to work with fitted stock.

Rapido have produced their model in a variety of liveries: SE&CR grey, Southern Railway pre- and post-1936, early BR grey and BR departmental black. All except the last-mentioned are available with alternative running numbers but we have, unfortunately, identified a problem with the early BR version that purports to be the K&ESR example (55371). It has a post-nationalisation 'S' prefix – obviously incorrect if the 1946 date of sale to the RAE is accurate.

The example we purchased (55371 of course) is to a very high standard and runs very freely with the short goods trains on the editorial micro layout. The detailing – number query excepted – is superb and well up to current ready-to-run standards. One thing we feel perplexed about is the interior detail. What little we can see through the glazing suggests that it is as illustrated in the accompanying photo (kindly supplied by the manufacturers) but what is the point if it's not readily visible? The roof looks as if it might be unclipped to allow the various items to be admired, but only at the risk of damaging something.

Tension lock couplings are fitted but not by way of NEM pockets. This seems a pity as replacement by something like Kadee couplers might be appropriate for a vehicle likely to be involved in much shunting. It may be that this omission was necessary to keep costs down, and one surmises that the buffers are unsprung for the same reason.

No ready-to-run model seems to come these days without a plastic bag of bits which you have the option of fitting yourself. In the case of this brake van it's wagon label clips. There are instructions for fitting the clips included in a brief but comprehensive leaflet also covering history, preservation and 'The recipe for making a Rapido Model' – i.e. Rapido's corporate philosophy.

The assistance of the K&ESR in producing the model is duly acknowledged and Rapido's website indicates that a single veranda version has also been produced for Rails of Sheffield.

Overall, and despite the Grumpy Old Man comments above, this is a worthwhile purchase for a Recommended Retail Price of £39.95; as we have said before, in railway modelling you only get what you pay for. 🚂

# On Satire, And An Encounter by Sequitur

Some while ago the Editor, his assistant, the Membership Secretaries and representatives of the Board were involved in a sprawling e-mail discussion relating to this journal. Just as things were getting slightly irritating someone referred to 'The Appeal for the Restoration of Colonel Stephens' Lost Pencil Collection'. This brought forth the tongue-in-cheek reply from a Trustee that they would be only too keen to support such an important project; whereupon a long-standing volunteer suggested that, as newer members were participating in these exchanges, some explanation of the satire was needed. (More on that shortly.)

On hearing about this message thread, it occurred to Sequitur that satire has a long history on the Kent & East Sussex Railway, yet we don't seem to see as much of it as we once did. At least, unlike the Selsey Tramway, the K&ESR has never been the subject of a music hall ditty ('The Sidlesham Snail'). That said, when the 1922 equivalent of today's timetable leaflet was sent to distinguished actress and local resident Ellen Terry, she scribbled on it (possibly not entirely tongue in cheek) "Cannot support the local line – life too short". The leaflet may be seen in the Colonel Stephens Museum.

Next came the well-known poem by Hugh Bevan which appeared in *Punch* in June 1946. It was basically sympathetic, if sentimental. The accompanying cartoon by Rowland Emmett was however straight out of the 'Colonel Stephens-railways-were-cute-but-rubbish' play book.

Fast forward to earlier days of the heritage era and a publication for volunteers titled *The Smokebox*. Its humour was in the style of *Private Eye*. In essence its function was to allow working members to let off steam during the sometimes difficult years of the 1990s. This was also the era of the discovery, by Museum staff, of the Colonel's masonic apron and the mysterious disappearance of his vintage car. All this was mercilessly lampooned in items announcing, for example, that Colonel Stephens' long johns had been found in the loft at Northiam, this being credited to 'EJR

Oatgrinder', an affectionate parody of the first Museum Curator, the late and still fondly remembered John Miller. This was, of course, the sort of thing being alluded to in the aforementioned lost pencil collection. Inevitably some found this style of humour puerile but John Miller, a man of delightful character, was not among them.

*The Smokebox* also ran a series of articles about a shambling far-eastern dictatorship called the Republic of Tee-Ar-Cee (get it?) which featured thinly disguised characters from the volunteer workforce. Sequitur is reliably informed that the articles' author was... well... our lips are sealed. Suffice to say, he may be closer than you imagine. He was smartly covering his tracks by taking the rise out of himself. These articles were succeeded by 'St Holman's Parish News' whose supposed Editor, similarly thinly disguised, was closely connected with the *Terrier*.

Humour has changed since those days, but satire is still with us; but it's not found so much on the K&ESR. Why should this be? Maybe some of us have grown older and thought better of such things. Then again, like all heritage railways we have, quite rightly, been required to take the running of things more seriously. Has that unintentionally done something to our sense of fun? Though we remain the friendliest of places, it seems a pity that we can't, without malice, laugh at ourselves anymore. Ergo, does that mean, Heaven forfend, that we're no longer allowed to enjoy ourselves?

Sequitur often ponders on how welcoming and friendly the heritage railway family can be, especially to strangers from within its own ranks. This recently came to mind after he had been chatting with a very long-standing K&ESR member.

This particular chap, who we shall call 'Mr Oldtimer' (or 'Mr O') first became involved with heritage railways, or railway preservation as it was then called, when, in the very early 1960s he tried a few volunteering turns with the fledgling Bluebell Railway. At that time the





*Plus ça change?*

(CSRM)

‘other place’ had but one teenage girl volunteer. She was attractive and seemed quite self-assured; not someone (and this was probably most unfair to the young lady) who a nerdy type, recently graduated from train-spotting, might have dared even to say hello to. In fact she was the sort of girl who, in all the most positive ways, would be part of the enduring image of the decade that would follow.

Being most unusual for the pre-swinging London, pre-feminism era the publicity-minded Bluebell made something out of this and the young lady became notable, somewhat newsworthy, and indeed someone who would remain memorable.

‘Mr & Mrs O’ had meanwhile moved on to a new outfit that had started up across the Weald at Tenterden, and it was a good four or five years of rapidly moving social change before the K&ESR’s first teenage girl volunteer appeared.


Fast-forward to the 21st century. ‘Mr and Mrs O’ have a friend, a former neighbour, who has had a career in show business. Since her retirement this person has kept herself busy helping to run a showbiz charity and ‘Mrs O’

has accompanied her to a number of get-togethers, garden parties and the like. During the course of these she has made the acquaintance of another retired showbiz lady – someone who turned out to be a Bluebell member. Furthermore she had once taken a look at our Santa Special offering in order to make comparison with theirs. On being told about this, ‘Mr O’ had thought nothing of it as female volunteers organising Santa are hardly unusual in this day and age.

‘Mr O’s friend attained a ‘significant age’ during 2023 and one Saturday afternoon in July they attended her birthday garden party. A lady of mature years with a gently charismatic aura arrived and spoke to ‘Mrs O’, who then introduced the lady by name and explained that this was the Bluebell member she had previously spoken of. Six decades rolled away and ‘Mr O’ ventured to ask if this might be the person referred to above. He was spot on; ‘Ms Bluebell’ did not appear in the least displeased that he had deduced this and shortly afterwards struck up a conversation.

‘Mr O’ then spent an enjoyable if slightly surreal part of the afternoon, sitting between his wife and ‘Ms Bluebell’ having the sort of discussion he normally associates with mess rooms, e.g. the origins of the Bluebell’s first carriages, reminiscing about the early days (on both railways) and hopes for the Brighton Atlantic replica being in traffic during 2024. Part way through there was a musical interlude when the party-goers were entertained with songs from days of yore. These included Mary Hopkin’s ‘Those Were The Days’ and everyone sang along. The lyrics seemed highly appropriate. ‘Ms Bluebell’ agreed; if you don’t remember the words try Google or Spotify.

‘Mr O’ had the oddest feeling about this encounter on the way home. Firstly, that his wife had previously made the unsuspected acquaintance of a memorable lady from the early years of heritage railways and, secondly, if it hadn’t been for the traffic calming bumps in the road reminding him of reality he might later have wondered if he had dreamt it.

Why is Sequitur telling you about this? Simply because it illustrates the heritage railway community at its best, and also because it has a certain degree of feel-good about it. Goodness knows we could all do with a drop of that. 

# KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB

## PRIZE WINNERS

### May 2023

1st	Colin Avey	No. 981	£100
2nd	Mrs Kim Chaplin	No. 998	£90
3rd	Paul H Wilson	No. 042	£80
4th	P & B Tanton Brown	No. 1060	£70
5th	Christopher John	No. 361	£60
6th	Miss F E Morgan	No. 846	£50
7th	Lesley & Ken Lee	No. 1052	£40
8th	Alan P Smith	No. 948	£30
9th	Kent Evenden	No. 193	£20
10th	Chris M Wood	No. 717	£10

### July 2023

1st	Mr & Mrs J P Fry	No. 649	£100
2nd	R & S Jacques-Bartlett	No. 775	£90
3rd	Ian Pinder	No. 910	£80
4th	Mr D Cutts	No. 157	£70
5th	Bryan Atkins	No. 202	£60
6th	Richard Crumpling	No. 864	£50
7th	M J Everest	No. 1118	£40
8th	Matt Hyner	No. 814	£30
9th	Mr E Stockdale	No. 568	£20
10th	Michelle Leek	No. 1329	£10

### June 2023

1st	John L Gardner	No. 085	£160
2nd	M J Everest	No. 1121	£140
3rd	Tom Webb	No. 414	£120
4th	Brian R Baker	No. 1020	£100
5th	Robert E C Jones	No. 284	£90
6th	P & B Tanton Brown	No. 1065	£80
7th	Elizabeth Lambkin	No. 804	£70
8th	Bryan Atkins	No. 345	£60
9th	Colin Avey	No. 1081	£50
10th	Hazel Green	No. 132	£40
11th	Leslie Baker	No. 333	£30
12th	A J York	No. 185	£20
13th	Stuart Atkinson	No. 276	£10

### August 2023

1st	Christopher M Scarff	No. 1314	£100
2nd	Mike & Morven Gibson	No. 624	£90
3rd	Lionel Marchant	No. 1046	£80
4th	Mrs Christine Rigby	No. 1085	£70
5th	Kevin Bulled	No. 1009	£60
6th	Jeremy Nelson	No. 1012	£50
7th	Laurie Cooksey	No. 439	£40
8th	Caroline Warne	No. 1304	£30
9th	K W Harwood	No. 136	£20
10th	Alan Trickey	No. 1170	£10

To join the 300 Club or for more information contact Chris Garman and Colin Avey  
at [kesr.300club@yahoo.com](mailto:kesr.300club@yahoo.com)



*An English byway.*

*(Robin Coombes)*

# OBITUARIES

## David Stratton

20th June 1943 – 4th September 2023



*(via Paul Wilson)*

David Marshall Stratton, born in Dartford in 1943, was the only son of parents Reginald and Myrtle. Initially living in Woolwich he was sent to boarding school at an early age, then on to Cannock School in Eltham with the loving support of his aunt Laura.

At school he developed a keen interest in railways, ships, aeroplanes and cars. He produced many very detailed drawings and pored over any books that fed his interests.

His father died when David was in his mid teens, so he started work at 16 to support his mother. After work he toured the area looking for firewood, bringing it home on his bike. It was a hard time for him, and perhaps contributed to his strength of character in later life.

David married his beloved Margaret in 1967 and had two daughters, Rebecca and Clare, and grandchildren Noah and Elsie. He was

immensely proud of his daughters and their achievements, proffering advice regarding work input and stress based on his own experience. He gave them plenty of opportunities to criticise him in exchange!

His long and successful career in re-insurance saw him commute from their house in Sidcup for more than 40 years. His passion for railways was easily apparent with the house full of paintings of engines and family holidays that typically involved visiting a railway, and latterly he discovered (with perhaps a little technical help from son-in-law James) what could be found on YouTube. He developed a fascination for the railways of the USA, wowed by their colossal engineering.

His involvement with the K&ESR began through the Thameside Group in the early 1980s. He became a Director and Deputy Chairman in 1984, and following the resignation of John Miller in 1985 he became Chairman.



In this role he oversaw some of the most difficult times in K&ESR history but also the achievement of the Northiam extension. He stood down as Chairman in 1995 but continued as a Board member until 2001, having been Managing Director around the turn of the present century. Hands-on was very much his way – he could be seen out working with the P.Way or helping in the Locomotive Department at Rolvenden. What was not seen was the vast amount of time he put in behind the scenes, doing all the difficult and sensitive work that was also required. Someone has to do it, and he was not one to shy away.

He was probably one of the first on the K&ESR to possess a mobile telephone, although lugging about the handset clipped to the top of what looked like a small car battery was more a feat of strength than a convenience!

He was well aware that his manner and style was not for all, but if he could achieve around half the people agreeing with him at any one time that was enough, especially in the volatile and passion-driven environment of a heritage railway.

He also put his money into the K&ESR, including buying a one-third share in P class No.1556. The impressive 36 ton breakdown crane was also one of his purchases, saving the railway significant sums in crane hire. Perhaps his most important buy was the unique pannier tank No.1638. This was his favourite, and the enjoyment he got when given a footplate ride on it was clear from the broad smile that lit up his face. He was utterly devastated when he was forced to sell it when circumstances beyond his control saw his workplace pension all but vanish. True to the agreement he sold it to the K&ESR, despite having higher offers from other interested GWR parties. After the sale he still maintained a keen interest in it.

The pension issue was one that ran for years and even featured David on a TV programme highlighting the matter on Channel 4. His input to the legal fight was significant. Sadly legal success and compensation, resulting in another fight with HMRC, only happened recently. David was satisfied that although it had taken a long time the case had been just and won.

He greatly admired the skills and knowledge of Bob Forsythe who owned a Class 14 diesel locomotive based at the K&ESR. On his advice he purchased another of the same type and later

formed a company with Bob and Nick Pallant which made the locomotives available for hire. The construction of HS1 saw both Class 14s in use at Beechbrook Farm near Ashford, and one later working north of the Thames on phase 2 of the project. At times it almost seemed like the emerging HS1 was staffed mainly by K&ESR people operating K&ESR rolling stock.

With his business partner Cliff Parsons he set up SP Toiletries in a factory in Woodchurch over 20 years ago. Cliff and David retired in 2021, transferring the business to two brothers who now run it. Their website says “We provide our own courier service with our dedicated drivers who travel around the UK.” For many years that was David – in another of his roles as white van man. Once a week he would leave Sidcup at 4am, hurtle to Woodchurch to collect and drive the company Mercedes Sprinter van to Magor in South Wales, collect chemicals for use in the factory and drop off finished products at supermarket centres for onward sale. He always said the Sprinter went well but suffered from inadequate braking!

It was at the factory that his friends Paul Hatcher, Adrian Landi and Howard Wallace-Sims built and stored the superb 3 1/2 ton traction engine that they drove around the local area. David thoroughly enjoyed the sedate progression, often ending up at a local pub for watering purposes having covered his friends in the trailer with soot! Contrast that to his passion for fast cars, going through various BMW M series to his favourite Subaru Impreza WRX STi. In that he paced the Eurostars along the M20 towards Maidstone.

After one trip to Appledore for lunch it was clear from Margaret's expression that it had been a spirited one, and the drink proffered was a welcome tonic.

At his well-attended funeral service it became clear that David was the same for everyone he knew. He was the embodiment of *wysiwyg* (what you see is what you get). He had the same drive, passion and enthusiasm for everything he did, whoever it was with.

We shall miss him, but can rest assured that he will be remembered as one of the outstanding figures in the history of the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

*PHW*

# John Herbert Arlet

10th April 1934 – 14th March 2023

Our railway family has unfortunately lost yet another of its long-serving working supporters in John Arlet. We offer our sincere condolences to his wife Louise, daughter Christine, son David and their larger family, and must apologise for the time it has taken for the K&ESR to recognise John's contribution to the railway.

John became interested in locomotives thanks to his grandfather, who was a train driver based at one of the depots in London. His other lifelong passion was Arsenal Football Club, but even this had to play second fiddle to his wife Louise, whom he married in 1964. He carried out an engineering apprenticeship before being enlisted for National Service in 1955 where he served as a ground radar mechanic.

Having finished his military service John joined Morphy Richards and amongst other things played 1st team football and cricket. It was while working for this company that he met his future wife.

In 1971 the family moved to Whitstable, and once established John became a volunteer with the K&ESR at Rolvenden in 1975. He put his engineering and painting skills to great use. Louise joined him on many occasions, and they were often seen at weekends on the footplate of a service locomotive sharing rostered firing turns. Records show that John's first firing turn was on 28th May 1978, and continued until his last one on 2nd February 1986. Louise and John both became Life Members of the railway.

John, like many early volunteers, was not too concerned about getting very dirty in the pursuit of his passion and sometimes arrived home having had to sit on a towel in his car to avoid the seats getting filthy. With retirement came the possibility of midweek visits and John took great pleasure in the Wednesdays that he spent at the depot carrying out engineering tasks that had been saved specifically for his skills. He really enjoyed the camaraderie that made the journey so worthwhile. The route from Whitstable to Rolvenden was at times difficult, and in his later



© Evans + Hulf 2018

years John chose to avoid the winter months and days when the weather was not good. When the Covid pandemic hit he reluctantly decided to lay down his tools and retire after more than 40 enjoyable years at the K&ESR.

John's interest has been passed on to his family, and they have continued to support the K&ESR with granddaughter Claire working as a volunteer. John's great grandson Joshua is also an avid steam train enthusiast and has enjoyed Santa trains and Thomas events at the railway.

Thank you, John, for your contribution to our railway – it is very much appreciated.

*Christine George, Cathy Crotty  
and David Brailsford*

# THE NEXT GENERATION: Kian Jones & Lewis Cobb



*Kian Jones (left) and Lewis Cobb with visiting GWR Large Prairie Tank No 4144.*

*(via Kian Jones)*

I have commented before on the variety of routes by which people come to volunteer at the K&ESR; in the case of Kian Jones and Lewis Cobb it is their mothers we must thank. Kian's mum (Paula Oliver) persuaded him to volunteer as an elf for the Santa Specials when he was about eight years old, and he enjoyed it so much he returned every year until he was old enough to join the Footplate Department. Meanwhile, although Lewis had visited the railway many times as a child, he had not thought of volunteering until his mum, fed up with him sitting bored at home, suggested it. He surprised both her and himself by immediately doing so. He was highly amused on one of his first turns

when the Easter Bunny kept turning its head to peer at him. The Easter Bunny in fact turned out to be Kian joking, and the two soon became close friends.

When I ask them for their reaction to becoming Cleaners, their answers are interestingly different. Kian, with his existing experience of the railway – he has helped variously with Carriage & Wagon, wagon cleaning, catering, Forties Weekend re-enactments and the Teddy Bears' Picnic – found there were very few surprises in store, save that he did not expect to be given a Third Man turn so quickly. "Also, I didn't realise how hot it gets on the footplate.





*Kian Jones assumes a traditional footplateman's pose (via Lewis Cobb)*

But it's great fun. You forget the outside world as you all concentrate on working as a team." Lewis, on the other hand, with little idea of what to expect, found it full of (pleasant) surprises. "I didn't know anyone or anything, so I really didn't know quite what to expect. I didn't realise how many people were involved, or how far some of them travel, or that we could have locos on loan from other railways. And I, too, was amazed how quickly I was allowed a Third Man turn. I was expecting to have to wait until I was 18." They both hope to progress through the grades, ultimately becoming Drivers.

As usual, I ask about embarrassing moments. Kian at first denied remembering any but said, when pressed, "I once misjudged the water column at Northiam and soaked both the Driver's leg and my own, even though the Fireman had warned me about this!" Lewis recalls approaching the hand-points at Bodiam when they were still set for the Loop, and screaming out that the loco was going to derail. "Both the Driver and the Fireman just roared with laughter!"

Kian lives in Tenterden and attends Canterbury College, where he is undertaking a two-year course in carpentry which includes a work placement one day a week. "It's going well," he grins, "except for the day I rammed a chisel into my thumb!" (Is he accident-prone, I wonder? He

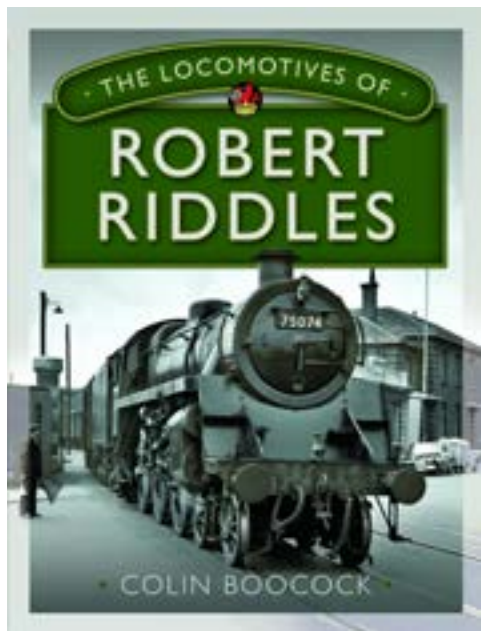
recently broke a rib by walking into a post while crossing the road.) He is keen on music and art (especially drawing steam engines, "although it can be hard work getting all the detail right") and enjoys watching Chelsea FC. He also volunteers occasionally at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway. Lewis has recently moved from Ramsgate to Broadstairs. After leaving school he tried his hand at painting and decorating. "I hated it," he groans. "It was so repetitive, and the guy training me was useless." He is currently working at Wetherspoons in Ramsgate but plans to join a college course or an apprenticeship next summer. He loves making models (some of which he has sold) and has made both a Pannier and an Austerity out of Lego, as well as building some scenarios.

I ask them both to sum up their experience of being volunteers at the K&ESR. Lewis almost bubbles over. "It's wonderful – a childhood dream come true. It's 100% positive, and such fun. It's a great escape from the stress of school or work, and you make lots of new friends. If you are interested, don't hold back or be embarrassed: it will answer all your unanswered questions, and you will learn so much." Kian is slightly more laconic but no less enthusiastic as he says "It's been a new chapter in my life." He then quotes from Kung Fu Panda. "Yesterday is history, tomorrow is mystery, but today is a gift. That is why it is called the present." He adds, simply, "Enjoy it. That's how I live my life."

*Tony Ramsey*



*Lewis Cobb exchanging tokens at Wittersham Road. (via Kian Jones)*



## The Locomotives of Robert Riddles

*Colin Boocock*

*208 pages, hard cover, comprehensively illustrated. Published by Pen & Sword Transport. ISBN 978 1399 09 9967. £30.*

As the title states, this book is about the locomotives of Robert (known as Robin) Riddles rather than about the man himself. His largely LMS-based career is nonetheless covered in an early chapter although author Colin Boocock comments that there is a lack of information regarding Riddles' personal life. The narrative is confused at one point in outlining the various organisational changes from the Railway Executive of 1947 (of which Riddles became the member for Mechanical & Electrical Engineering) to the BR Board of 1963, but this is nit-picking in what appears to be a generally well-researched account.

The bulk of the book sets about examining, one by one, the classes associated with Riddles and logically starts with the WD 2-8-0s and 2-10-0s; he was very much responsible for these as part of his wartime work for the Ministry of Supply. The 0-6-0 Austerity saddle tanks are then lumped in with the larger types, which poses the question of exactly what *is* a 'Riddles locomotive'.

In this instance the design and MoS adoption of the type was very much down to the initiative of the Hunslet company. The Stanier 2-8-0s used by the Army are also covered in this part of the book, although being related to the WD version their inclusion seems fair enough.

Later chapters describe the evolution of the BR Standard Classes and their subsequent history, with the bibliography giving due credit to earlier books and articles, particularly E.S. Cox's Ian Allan publication on the subject. Boocock describes the political, economic and operational influences on the construction of the short-lived Standard locomotives. He also explores why some types were built at all, for example the 4MT 4-6-0. The author persuasively argues that this might have been better as a straight 2-6-0 tender version of Ron Jarvis' and Brighton drawing office's particularly successful, mildly 'Southernised', reworking of an LMS 2-6-4T.

Incidentally your reviewer takes this opportunity to correct his assertion in a previous *Tenterden Terrier* that the above-mentioned 4-6-0 was derived from the 2-6-4T. Colin Boocock makes it quite clear that the tender locomotive was designed before the tank. Brighton also produced the design for that other classic, the 9F 2-10-0. It has become fairly commonplace (including in this book) to attribute these two designs to Jarvis and his team rather than to the more remote figure of Riddles.

The monochrome photographic coverage is extensive and the performance of the various classes is demonstrated by way of easily followed timing logs. This aspect is effectively co-authored by David Maidment, whose own works we have reviewed in previous issues of the *Terrier*.

The final types covered are the S160 2-8-0s and the USA 0-6-0Ts. Again it seems to stretch a point to regard these as 'Riddles' locomotives, which is perhaps why they appear in an appendix. Both were designed by, and to meet the requirements of, the US Army Transportation Corps.

Overall this is an informative and accessible read and worth buying if you like the BR Standards, a number of which continue to give good service on UK heritage railways along with various WDs, USAs, Hunslet Austeries and S160s.

*NP*

## Colonel Stephens Light Railway Locomotives

**Brian Janes**

*176 pages, hard cover, 259 monochrome illustrations plus locomotive index and bibliography. Published by Pen & Sword Transport. ISBN 978 1 3990 234 36. £25.*

Mention of 'Colonel Stephens' may be a turn-off for some people – even if they are passionate about the Kent & East Sussex Railway. We would however suggest that they read further into this review before rejecting the idea of reading the book.

Brian Janes is probably today's leading writer on the subject of Stephens and his railways, this new volume following the author's earlier works about the Colonel. Brian is of course Curator of the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum at Tenterden Town. In preparing this latest addition to his output he has been able to draw on the work of others whose publications have included the core facts. These are now much expanded on by his own efforts as well as those of his volunteer colleagues and noted researchers in this field Laurie Cooksey, Tom Burnham and Philip Shaw. As with Brian's recent *Tenterden's Railway* (Lightmore Press) there is much that is familiar and a great deal more that you may not have read about previously.

The major chapters cover New and Novel Locomotives (e.g. K&ESR Nos.1 & 2); Stroudley's Terriers; Ilfracombe Goods and Beattie Saddlebacks; Manning Wardles; ex-L&NWR Coal Engines of the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire; SE&CR O1s; Oddments and One Offs; Narrow Gauge (including the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways).

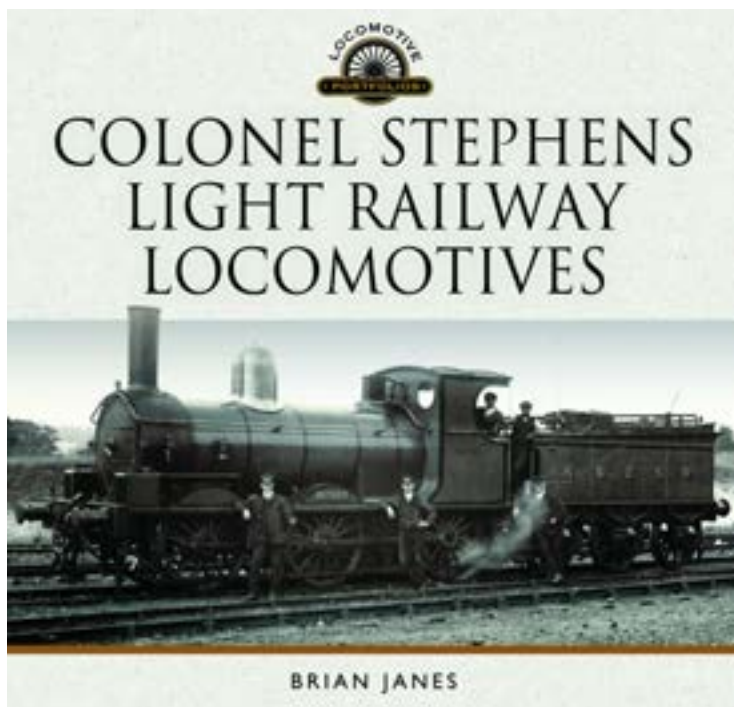
There is modest and necessary historical

background about the railways involved, and the overall text is in the author's usual accessible style; but the focus is on locomotives. This is not a romanticised view of 'twee little railways with funny little engines', but a balanced account with the negative aspects properly covered.

Stephens may have been an able civil engineer but he was no locomotive designer. When he tried his hand by laying down a broad specification for manufacturers to follow the results were sometimes less than successful. As with the railcars, Stephens and his successor W.H. Austen were also early to explore internal combustion locomotives and this aspect is given due attention.

This account of the extensive range of locos employed on the various railways will be to the liking of the general enthusiast, but should also appeal to those whose primary interest in heritage railways is the driving and maintenance of steam locomotives. There are hours of fascinating and quite diverting reading in this book and it is thoroughly recommended. Any royalties are to go to the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum.

NP





# Austen's Bargain: K&ESR's Second No.4

*Brian Janes takes look at a largely forgotten locomotive.*

In the early 1930s the K&ESR, having run out of money and useful locomotives, looked to the Southern Railway, which had put the line into receivership, for salvation. Not yet desperate enough to expensively hire locomotives, it arranged a loco swap. W.H. Austen negotiated a deal exchanging the lightly used 0-8-0T No.4 *Hecate*, which could only operate north of Rolvenden, for a more versatile locomotive.

The new acquisition took the number of the exchanged locomotive but not, as was Austen's practice, the name. It was a contemporary cousin of the Ilfracombe Goods, both of which K&ESR examples *Rother* and *Juno* were on the point of expiring. The locomotive was designed in the late 1860s, like the original Ilfracombes, and adopted for Swedish service. Such was their excellence that they were adopted elsewhere, including one British locomotive in industrial service which was gloriously labelled 'No.0'. The LSWR, at a time of partial locomotive crisis, bought six in 1876 (and eventually a further 14) for shunting. They became

known as Beattie Saddlebacks (officially class 330) in reference to the LSWR's ineffectual locomotive engineer William George Beattie, although he had no hand in their design except perhaps specifying a plain stovepipe chimney in place of the elegant Beyer Peacock standard.

Typical Beyer Peacock features included the sloping smokebox door, an elegant dome carrying Salter safety valves on the centre ring of the boilers, and a classic saddle tank design. Other notable design features included equalising beams for the coupled wheels and an open-sided cab, which enclosed the coal bunker, with round spectacle plates on the front and rectangular ones at the rear.

The locomotives were large for their period, and considerable larger than their contemporaries, the Stroudley Terriers, with 17 × 24in cylinders and 4ft 2in wheels in a length of 27ft 3½in, and an axle weight of more than 11 tons. The wrought iron boiler was 4ft diameter with a heating surface of 902 sq ft.



*No.4 ready for delivery at Eastleigh in 1932.*

*(CSRM)*



*No.4 waits at Tenterden with a rail motor replacement service in September 1934.*

*(MRC/J.G. Jarvis)*

Very successful, even when supplanted in the heaviest work by William Adams' larger G6 in the 1890s, the Saddlebacks continued in heavy use. However as the oldest standard LSWR shunters they were obsolete after the Great War and the Southern Railway began withdrawing them in 1924. Stephens acquired one for the East Kent Light Railway in 1926; this was trialled on the K&ESR on delivery but didn't stay long.

The locomotive that was to become the K&ESR's second No.4 (Beyer Peacock's 1596, LSWR 335) came from the initial batch of 1876. She was employed at Eastleigh as the Locomotive Works pilot by January 1932, but was finally laid aside there on 20th May 1932. The new acquisition was fully overhauled at Eastleigh Works before delivery to Rolvenden and she was painted in Austen's now favoured livery of dark green, with black lining edged in white. Carrying an original style boiler, her brass dome was brightly polished.

The new No.4 entered service on the K&ESR on 1st September 1932 working passenger/mixed

trains quite happily, even though only fitted with a hand brake, so controlling her passenger trains with a vacuum ejector and thus braking the coaches only. Although by now small by mainline standards, she became known on the K&ESR as the 'Big Engine', and with the resurrection of Terrier *Bodiam* at the very end of 1934 and the tireless rebuilt Manning Wardle *Hesperus*, was the backbone of the line. These three were only assisted in peacetime by hiring from the Southern Railway when repairs became necessary.

As its biggest locomotive K&ESR No.4 was relied upon for heavy work in hauling cattle wagons over the gradients between Biddenden and Headcorn on Biddenden Fair Day. Even at this relatively late date the railway had retained the longer distance transits, leaving shorter trips to the road lorries. There are records of it handling 90 wagons on that duty in one day in 1935. Indeed the late Monty Baker, that connoisseur and narrator of 1930s matters, recalled his adventures with trying to use the smaller No.8 (*Hesperus*) on the duty in 1936 which resulted in a runaway and broken ribs for

driver Nelson Wood, and indeed causing damage that contributed to the ultimate demise of that loco. Monty related how relieved they were when the temporary disability with leaking tubes of No.4 earlier that day was overcome and it was returned to use, causing him to be promoted temporary driver at age 17. The full story of that day can be found in the *Tenterden Terrier* (No.81, Spring 2000, pages 16–18).

In August 1937 No.4's boiler failed and she received a Drummond type replacement, acquired earlier from engine No.0332 as part of 'the deal'. This boiler had a small dome with typical Drummond top safety valves, but as the original taller dome cover was retained, the safety valves were invisible. Although she was fitted with a set of reconditioned cylinders, after returning to work at the end of August 1938 she had problems with those cylinders and did not work regularly till 10th November. Another of the class arrived on hire from Eastleigh in September to cover her duties.

Having been out of service for five years this locomotive, No.0334, was rapidly renumbered 3334 and freshly painted in dark grey, but was in poor condition. Indeed she is only officially recorded as working on two days in November and, although anecdotally she worked more to cover while No.4's cylinders were being rebored, there are no known photographs of her at work.

No.3334 finally departed on 3rd January 1939. Thereafter No.4 limped on with No.3 and a hired Terrier, SR No.2659, which shouldered the main burden. She probably received an overhaul in the early wartime period.

Heavily used, she fell out of service between April 1943 and August 1944, while the first hired O1's helped out; she then operated intermittently during 1945 to mid-1946 and then regularly until the turn of that year. After a further six months' lay-off, she operated regularly from June 1947 until the end of that year. Reportedly during this time No.4 was kept cleaner than the average main line loco, and looked well in her green livery with gold lettering and red coupling rods.

She may have looked good, possibly after a recent repaint, but could not last. She only operated for nine days in January 1948 and was then laid aside until a final steaming on 9th and 10th March. At formal Nationalisation on 3rd May 1948 she was immediately withdrawn and, with other redundant rolling stock, stored that summer at Headcorn. Later taken to Ashford, she was broken up there in August.

Although little acknowledged by the outside world or by enthusiasts, the second No.4 was a good bargain for the K&ESR. She was a mainstay of the line in the 1930s, and although worked to death in wartime lasted right to the bitter end. ~~444~~



*Awaiting her final call at Headcorn as Schools Class No.934 St Lawrence heads east.*

*(CSRM)*



## 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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