



JOURNAL OF THE
KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

Tenterden Terrier

Summer 2026

Number 160



Robertsbridge Report
Pullman Centenary
76017 Welcome or Controversial?
Happy Retirement Pete Salmon!

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FRONT COVER

*Hastings unit 1013 at the
Northbridge Street present limit
of operations*

(Phil Edwards)

BACK COVER

Ahead lies the future

(Phil Edwards)

JOURNAL OF THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY



*Hastings footplate. Driver Paul Beale (right) and fireman Nick James
who appears to be on breakfast prep duties
(John Wickham)*

Tenterden Terrier

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Editorial

In the Long Term

As I write the Railway's summer season is fast approaching. This is of course, and together with the Santa Season, a more than busy time of the year made possible by the collective efforts of all departments. Some of these efforts are short term and others carried out over months or years.

The greatest long term project, the preservation of the Kent & East Sussex Railway, is now 65 years old. The originators of the heritage era intended that the entire line from Tenterden to Robertsbridge would be saved and that K&ESR trains would connect with those of what was then the Southern Region of British Railways. As is well known, that intention proved to be over optimistic. It is therefore more than pleasing to present another issue of the *Tenterden Terrier* in which the Robertsbridge extension is a prominent feature. In addition to the completed section to Northbridge Street, the 'trace' of the restored line now extends from Salehurst to Junction Road. We are pleased to feature a progress report from our friends and partners at the Rother Valley Railway and it is intended that further reports will appear in future issues of this journal.

Our Railway has proved to be the work of a lifetime. It is now approaching its once dreamed of fulfillment.

Nick Pallant



Newly laid track on the Robertsbridge extension

(Mike Hart)

CHAIRMAN’S SPRING REPORT

“Good Start to the Season but Challenging Times Ahead”

The most successful Santa Season on record:

Following my winter report, I am pleased to confirm that our incredible team of volunteers and paid staff have delivered the most successful Santa season on record. The revenue was up 8% on the previous year generating revenue of £539,000 which represents a sizeable part of our trading income budget for 2025/2026.

2025: A financially successful year:

I am pleased to be able to inform you that our financial plans set out in our revised 2025 budget have, by and large, been successful. We therefore did not draw down all the grant money generously offered to us by the Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust. The improved financial situation has meant that for the first time in several years we have recorded a financial surplus rather than a loss in 2025.

Although I am pleased that this is a good result, the Trustees remain mindful that good housekeeping alone has not delivered this result, as we have received several large legacies during the year which have contributed to the improved situation.

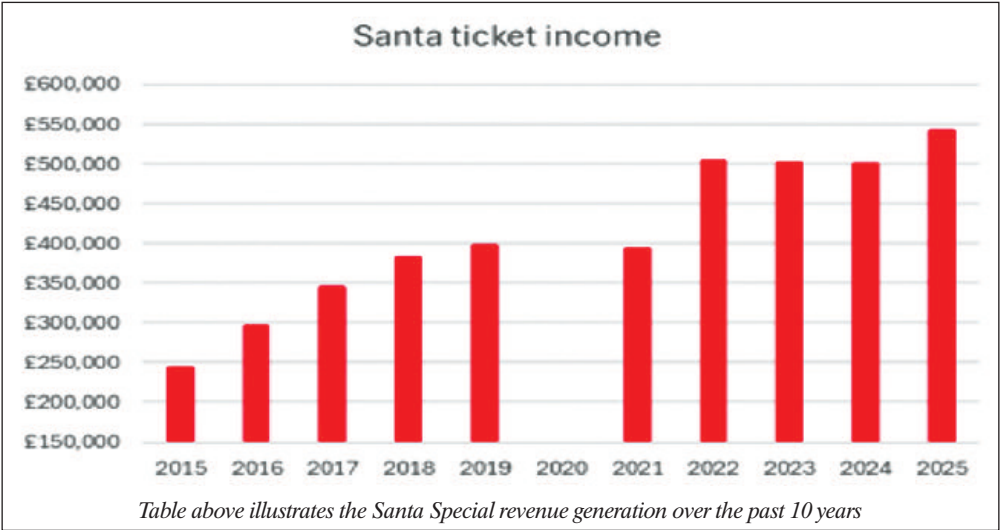
Financial planning is essential and no room for complacency:

As a matter of good stewardship, we have not included legacy money in our 2026 budget. Should legacies be received during the year they will be set aside to improve our cash-at-bank position in the short term so they can be used to increase spending on capital projects going forward.

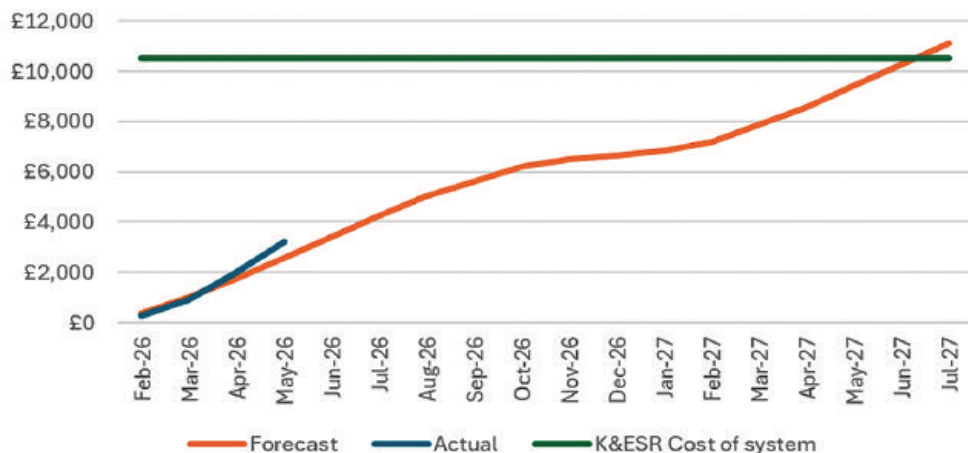
The budget we have agreed for 2026 is realistic and cautionary, whereby income and costs remain broadly the same as the previous year, adjusted for inflation. Importantly, cash-at-bank is planned to be stable with the year-end cash position remaining much the same as in 2025.

We plan to achieve this despite significantly increasing capital spend on permanent way and carriage restoration which have suffered from under investment in recent years.

To achieve our 2026 plans, we have agreed with Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust that we can draw down the remaining grant funds for the purpose of bringing forward our capital investment plans earlier in the financial year. This will mean that work can be undertaken at a more appropriate time to better suit the engineering windows for the work to be undertaken.



Tenterden solar payback



The table above demonstrates the current performance of the solar installation at Tenterden against the forecast

This has been agreed on the understanding that the grant cash equivalent will build back throughout the year to meet the planned cash at bank position at year-end.

Tracking sustainable cost savings:

I'm delighted to report that the savings being generated by the recently installed solar panels at Tenterden - to power the Carriage & Wagon shed, the Tenterden station cafe, the signal box and Pullman dock are running ahead of the business case predictions.

As of 25th May, the Tenterden array has generated £3,000 in benefits through self-generation of electricity and export of excess production to the grid. This is 22% ahead of payback expected, meaning we are on track to fully pay back within the anticipated 18 months. This means that 29% of the railway's investment in the scheme has already been recovered.

Following a review of other possible sites across the railway, a 52-panel installation on the carriage shed at Rolvenden is proposed which is forecast to produce electricity savings of £7,300 per annum at a scheme cost of £24,000.

A donation of £10,000 plus Gift Aid has been received in May, and a further donation of £5,000 has been made towards this scheme, reducing the required investment from the railway to £6,500 which is forecast to pay back in 12 months. A

project has been initiated for the installation.

Renewable power is an attractive area as it reduces costs, increases our environmental credentials – set against our necessary use of coal and diesel for traction – and grant funding schemes are available. It doesn't get much better than that!

Storm clouds are gathering because of the war in the Middle East:

Although we have set out a robust plan for this fiscal year, things can potentially change at short notice which can disrupt our plans, so we must be both grounded and realistic in our endeavours this year. In this respect, we are monitoring things closely because, at the time of writing, it is difficult to predict what effect this will have on the public's perception concerning the pound in their pocket in coming months.

There are potentially two outcomes: passenger numbers drop and therefore revenue falls, or the home market will strengthen as people decide to holiday at home rather than attempt to go abroad on holiday. Of course, this will also depend on the availability of fuel for both customers and volunteers to get to the railway should things not improve.

To address the enterprise risk to the business which has been identified by the Risk and Compliance Committee, the Board has set up a small group of Trustees to establish at what point

action would be needed should revenue start to significantly decline beyond that which has already been considered in our budget.

In the meantime, the Finance Review Group (FRG) continues to monitor the current situation monthly, making changes as necessary between board meetings.

Changes to the Operating Department are being developed:

Pete Salmon, our Operating Manager for 26 years, retired at the end of April and his position is currently being covered by secondee Matt Green on an interim basis until a permanent replacement is appointed. Matt is a long-standing volunteer and member of the railway; he is currently on secondment to provide guidance to the Executive Steering Group (ESG) and is leading the Business Transformation Project as we get ready for opening the railway to Robertsbridge in Easter 2028.

He has a strong heritage railway pedigree and is well respected throughout the preservation movement. Importantly for us, he has worked on many extension projects so understands some of the difficulties that must be addressed to ensure the railway's continued success.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Pete Salmon for his many years of service to the railway and to wish him a happy and well-deserved retirement, although I don't think he will be a stranger to the railway for very long!

Not a member of the Operating Department? but a stalwart of our commercial team, Lin Batt has also retired, she will be missed by our group travellers, Wealden Pullman customers, and not forgetting those people booking for the Santa Specials. Thank you, Lin, for your dedicated service – everyone at the railway wishes you a long, happy and fulfilling retirement.

Changes to the Locomotive Engineering Department:

Changes are on the way for how the Locomotive Engineering Department is managed and organised. As part of these changes, we are now advertising for an Engineering Manager who will sit across the Locomotive, Carriage and Wagon, Yards, and Traction and Rolling Stock departments.

Once the new Engineering Manager is in place we will be working towards the development of a

restoration team as part of the Locomotive Engineering Department.

In addition, the temporary position of Administrator: Engineering, Maintenance & Operating, currently being covered by Roberta Brice, has now been made permanent and the post will formally be advertised. Roberta has so far done an excellent job of making sure all policies and procedures including competency records are kept up to date and filed.

Matt Webb has been promoted to the role of Rolvenden Yard Supervisor. He now has responsibility for planning and undertaking boiler washouts and routine maintenance exams, including running repairs using a combination of volunteers and part-time staff who report to him. The Administrator role will assist with planning of routine maintenance including the monitoring of availability to meet the train service plan in liaison with the operating department.

In the meantime, I must say a big thank you to Lawrence Donaldson, Matt Webb, John Street, Steve Latham and the team of volunteers and staff at Rolvenden who worked to ensure that we had locomotives to run all the scheduled Santa Special trains.

They have also completed the winter maintenance during the closed period so that we could meet the new timetable at the end of February. Liam Head, the former Senior Engineer who left for pastures new in November last, has continued as a valued volunteer; this has been a great help, so again thank you - your efforts are appreciated.

A Good Turnout at Robertsbridge Junction:

On Friday 17th April 2026, VIP guests travelled to the railway on a special charter train from Tonbridge to Robertsbridge. Guests included Lord Peter Henty of Richmond Hill, Huw Merriman (former local MP and Rail Minister) and many other invited guests including local celebrity Suzy Eddie Izzard and Kieran Mullan, MP for Bexhill and Battle. Our thanks to Hastings Diesels Limited and GB Railfreight, who made the use of the Hastings DEMU 1013 possible for the celebrations.

The purpose of the day was to celebrate the completion and opening of both the new station building and the recently completed extended transfer siding at Robertsbridge by Network Rail. The new station building was formally opened by



A view of things to come - passengers at Robertsbridge

(Jack Evans)

Huw Merriman and Councillor Andrew Mier jointly cutting the ribbon allowing our special guests to enter the new station building. After a buffet lunch, guests moved down to the site of the locomotive shed and turntable to witness Hastings DEMU 1013 breaking through the ribbon onto RVR metals via the newly completed transfer siding.

Before the day ended our guests were treated to a trip on Hastings DEMU 1013 down to Northbridge Street and back.



Visitors in the new station building at Robertsbridge

(Jack Evans)

The station was open to the public, residents, and members of the Kent & East Sussex Railway the following day when a frequent interval shuttle service using Hastings DEMU 1013 was operated between Robertsbridge Junction and Northbridge Street.

More than 1,500 people attended the public open day, and the most encouraging part was the large numbers of people who turned up using Southeastern train services from both the Tunbridge Wells and Hastings directions.

Visitors were encouraged to make donations towards the appeal for the new locomotive shed, in lieu of an entry fee and train ride tickets. Many were very generous with their donations!

You can read more about the excellent progress being made to deliver the extended railway to Robertsbridge in the article by Helen Douglas, a Trustee of Rother Valley Railway Heritage Trust, later in this edition.

Finally:

Good communication is key to our railway being successful, so I have started recording a series of monthly updates about the railway – the updates are available on the Kent & East Sussex Railway YouTube channel. April and May updates are currently available, and June will be available by the time you have read the magazine. When visiting the channel don't forget to **Like and Subscribe**.

On a personal note - thank you for your continued support – it means a lot.

Derrick Bilsby

Chairman – Kent & East Sussex Railway

FROM THE BOARD

As I'm writing this report towards the end of May, we have just reviewed the financial results of the first six months of the year.

2025/26 Half Year Results

Apart from the Santa period at Christmas of course, this half of the year is dominated by expenditure rather than income. However, with support from the Rother Valley Railway in boosting our cash flow it has been possible to accelerate some key projects.

Our income was under budget by £8,000, less than 1%. This was mainly down to difficult trading over the Easter holidays due to the poor economic situation and world events. Also, it has taken us longer to get up to full steam with on train meal service on the "A" set. As Derrick says elsewhere, we had a good Christmas which gave us a great start to the year to help mitigate the downturn.

On the cost front we have continued to keep a tight reign on expenditure that is not absolutely essential and by negotiating deals with key suppliers that allows us to defer payment until later in the year. To the end of April, we are £25,000 better than budget (2%). Therefore, our operating Loss is "only" £175,000, £17,000 better than budget.

This, though, is not the whole story, as the funding from donations and grants, less exceptional restructuring costs, is £110,000 better than budget. This means the Profit & Loss account for the period November 2025 to April 2026 shows a loss of £77,000, better by £130,000 than budget.

In addition to the P&L account we have spent £74,000 on capital works: Solar Panels; level crossing renewal; P-Way materials; loco overhauls; carriage restoration; the Railcar; catering equipment; IT equipment, plus continual pay down of the bank loans.

Forecast for year

As Derrick says, the economic climate is very unsettled. It is difficult to predict what is happening next week, let alone for the next six months! Therefore, we press on with developing new products and offers to tempt passengers. The Railway cannot survive just on passengers wanting the bare trip, as nice as that is! We have developed a "Summer of Fun" series of activities for every day

of the school holidays to tempt families: Theatre trains to keep people entertained; meal services to feed them; experiences to educate and engage.

I'm pleased to say that forward bookings are excellent: for Santa, ahead of last year; Pullmans nearly all sold out for the Summer; Murder Mystery nights going well; group bookings are also ahead of last year.



Members of staff representing the railway at a recent event at Waterloo Station (Emma Calder)

Sometimes it feels overwhelming to those who deliver these on a day-to-day basis, but without the extra value the Railway could not survive. There is so much more we could do, if only we had more volunteers to help run them. Ideas are not in short supply it's the people to make them happen that is!

Having said all that where do I think we will end the year? I think we will make a modest (under £100,000) profit to help build up our reserves. With about £120,000 more cash at the bank than the previous year. This will be barely enough to get through the winter without earing extra money in January / February or restricting expenditure during the "closed" season.

How can you help?

Apart from the assistance needed in all departments to run the existing service and develop new income streams, money please!

The Railway has the Pannier appeal running to fund 1638's restoration. We also need cash for improving all aspects of the Railway. There are many small and large-scale projects that are just waiting for money to be available. David Nibloe does an excellent job in seeking funding for these, but donations from the membership helps to

demonstrate the commitment that supports the application.

Legacies can be tax efficient, but any donation is welcome.

Please use this QR code to



make a donation.

If you want to discuss making a donation then please contact me at ILegg@kesr.org.uk

IL

MOTIVE POWER

Loco Report

Matt Green

By the time you read this we will hopefully be concluding recruitment for a new Engineering Manager. Happily, we can report that Liam Head continues to volunteer with us and his knowledge and experience of water treatment and steam locomotive maintenance continues to add considerable input to the running of Rolvenden and the locomotives in our fleet.

We can also happily report the promotion of Matt Webb to Rolvenden Yard Supervisor. Matt's role is to keep the running fleet going, by completing maintenance activities, looking after Rolvenden yard and improving the condition of the fleet and site. Many of these tasks are ones that Matt has been undertaking since Liam's departure, so we're delighted to have been able to recognise Matt's efforts as he's stepped up to the plate.

The team at Rolvenden is also being supported by Roberta Brice who is helping us ensure our records are kept up to date while recruitment for a permanent administrator is ongoing. Roberta brings a wealth of knowledge and is also helping our Carriage & Wagon Department.

Our steam operations have been admirably handled by a trio of Hunslets. Our thanks go to the owners of all three locomotives, they're all proving popular with the crews!

Our ageing infrastructure and water scarcity in the south east is throwing up some challenges. Northiam column started to slow up during May, resulting in a situation on the spring bank holiday weekend where the tank ran dry towards the end of the day. It's likely that we'll need to look at our options here as the flow rate is definitely a lot lower than it once was. In the first part of the year, Rolvenden's water column decided to play up with a new valve being required to replace one that's become life expired. Some significant external issues with water have been having a negative

impact on the reverse osmosis plant at Rolvenden. So far all of these challenges have been overcome by the team at Rolvenden; thank you for all of your efforts!

K&ESR No.12 Marcia:

The repaint and repairs on *Marcia* are ongoing in between other jobs. Matt Webb has completed the coach painting and volunteer Matt Green is applying the lining as the loco is restored to Peckett green. It's hoped *Marcia* will return to traffic later in the year, but before that can happen *Marcia* will need lifting off her wheels to remove some wear to the axle boxes.

LB&SCR A1x No.70 Poplar, K&ESR No.3 Bodiam:

The locomotive remains stored pending the manufacture of new connecting rods. The old rods were dispatched to Ian Riley's in May and it's hoped that the repairs will be completed during the year allowing a return to service of the engine soon.

LB&SCR A1x No.2678 Knowle:

The loco has steamed and passed a recent boiler exam. Operationally there's an issue with the locomotive's air brake that's being worked through. Fault finding is proving a challenge for the team at Rolvenden, but it's hoped that when repairs are completed the engine will return to service for the peak season.



Charwelton steams again (Trevor Streeter)

BR Standard Class 4 No.76017:

This loco has now left the railway for overhaul. We are grateful to the owners for letting the engine have a base on the railway for the last two years of it's boiler ticket.

Hunslet Austerity No.68032:

In service.

Hunslet Austerity No.75008:

In service.

K&ESR No.14 *Charwelton*:

Assembly is almost complete at the Flour Mill, and *Charwelton* has been steamed, and moved on a short section of track. There is no date as yet for her return to the K&ESR.

K&ESR No.15 *Hastings*:

In service.



USA No.DS237 *Maunsell*:

The overhaul of *Maunsell* progresses as maintenance to the running fleet allows. The locomotive has passed a recent hydraulic test and a new bush made for the right-hand combination lever on the motion. Moff has been making linkage for drain cocks, as it's been decided to fit manually operated drain cocks to the loco. It's hoped that *Maunsell* will reach a point where running in can commence soon.

Ford Diesel:

The overhaul of this loco progresses well. Richard Stone is taking the time to carry out some long-standing repairs and is making progress with these as time allows.

Ruston:

Our stalwart diesel shunter at Rolvenden has at long last reached the point where some serious maintenance is now required. Our diesel team are

drawing up a plan of works so costings can be prepared for the required works. It's likely that repairs will focus on wheels, spring hangers, air receivers and the engine.

BR Class 03 D2023:

In service. There's a charging issue with the batteries, which is being worked through. Otherwise, the loco is providing good service as the Tenterden Town Pilot loco.

BR Class 03 D2024:

The overhaul is progressing on 3 road in the carriage and wagon works. Lots of new material is being let into the platework on the cab where corrosion has taken its toll.

BR Class 08 08359:

In service. The loco has recently had a C exam completed. The loco is now based at Rolvenden as the yard pilot. At the end of May the Class 08 saw service on fire patrol helping manage lineside fire risk.

BR Class 14 D9504 *Jon Grimwood*:

In service

BR Class 108 DMMU:

In service

BR Class 205 DEMU:

In service

4253 Locomotive Company

Kelvin Williams

Four months on from our last report, work is complete on the installation of all the pipework connecting the gauges, taps, levers, etc on the back plate within the cab. Fabrication of the 'elephant's ears' has been the most demanding part of the cladding over the last few months. These are the two side sections of the cladding that connect the round boiler barrel to the square rear water space and firebox. Not so easy considering the angles that need to be bent into it. Work is now concentrated on all the pipes and fittings within the smoke box.

Our second team of volunteers is very near completion of the building of the bunker for 5164, a GWR Large Prairie. Having built it, then dismantled it, we have built it again using 1,124 rivets and a small amount of welding as required. It has received its internal coat of sealant in the water space, and the outside has received the

green undercoat as requested by the owners. By the time this newsletter is published, it will have departed Rolvenden.



On Thursday 21st May, locomotive 4270 was delivered to Wittersham Road, and is currently in the carriage shed at Rolvenden. It will shortly be moved to the locomotive shed at Rolvenden, where the work by 4253 volunteers to get it operational will be carried out.

08359

Mark Stuchbury

During spring 08359 has continued to be used regularly by the P. Way department for both works trains and the annual track weedkilling train. Following its annual C Exam in late May, 359 was put into action for mobile fire watching during the record-breaking heatwave that hit the south-east over the late May bank holiday weekend. In a new initiative, the loco patrolled the line between Rolvenden and Tenterden in between up steam hauled trains to ensure any potential small fires caused by stray sparks were either dealt with or reported quickly.



Matthew Green taking time between firefighting runs to give 08359 a clean (Christopher Stuchbury)

GWR Railcar W20W

Chris Mileman & Neil Edwards

Well, when we last reported for the Spring Terrier at the end of January 2026, we left you with a bit of a cliff-hanger; the failed south engine. We had returned the engine to Paul Morris, the original engine rebuilder but awaited his inspection and report. We are relieved to tell you, this time, that the initial engine assessment showed that the issue was limited to number 6 piston and cylinder. It is believed that the engine had suffered an overheating issue during the test as a result of a cooling modification introduced when the sump oil cooling was disconnected in BR days. This may have caused insufficient water to flow around the cylinder, whilst the engine was being stress tested. During March the engine rebuild commenced with the No. 6 cylinder-liner being honed, a new piston fitted and the sump re-fitted. The engine then underwent a very limited (due to no coolant) but successful test run. It was then cleaned and prepped and the opportunity was taken to paint the complete engine. We now await transport to return it to Tenterden, hopefully before the end of May. The engine will then undergo some agreed modifications to the cooling system, to provide additional coolant flow around the back three cylinders. If this change to the plumbing proves successful then the same modification will be applied to the north side engine.

Once both engines are reunited with the vehicle and their coolant systems connected, a further series of tests will be conducted, under the very watchful eye of the engine rebuilder.

Although this has been a disappointing episode, it is better to have established this potential vulnerability now rather than when the vehicle was back in service.

As we expected, the engine issue has had only a limited impact on the overall project time-scale with other work continuing apace.

Due to the original air powered wiper motors being deemed to be ineffective in use and beyond economical repair, period replacement electric units have been sourced. Ron Nuttman has continued his assessment on how to make adaptors for us to be able to utilise the new motors and arms. With four windscreen wiper motors and arms now identified and purchased he has again attended site to re-evaluate the task of adapting the wiper arms to fit the motors and has now

delivered all wiper adaptors to site. Many thanks, as always, to Ron for his exceptional engineering skills and assistance. The final windscreen wiper motor of the same type as the others was located on-line, in “new old stock” condition, and purchased. Two of the four motors have now been installed in the Headcorn cab. The Robertsbridge end will be undertaken when suitable safe access can be arranged. Finally on the wiper front, we still need to identify, acquire and fit suitable blades to complete the task.

Preliminary system testing.

To test the air system the air reservoirs were charged from the workshop supply and air pressure retained in the system for 20 -30 mins. All EP valves were manually operated and proper operation of air motors witnessed. However, one air seal was identified as leaking on the south side forward/reverse final drive mechanism. This was dismantled and the piston seal was taken to a specialist supplier for identification and confirmation of availability. Subsequently, new air seals were manufactured to pattern and supplied for the final drive direction control air motors. Two new seals were fitted to the south side final drive and it was tested satisfactorily. Spare seals are now available for the north side unit if required in the future.

There has also been lots of progress with the controls:

- Electrical power has been connected to the control circuitry for the first time and both cab controls powered up as expected.
- The driver's controls have been exercised, including clutch, forward/reverse, high/low, gear select and throttle and all air valves operated as expected, except for the missing EP 4 valve. A modern replacement has been sourced and will be adapted into the existing control system, with the approval of the independent competent person (ICP)
- The gearbox + high/low function was checked and all the various gear selection operations confirmed.
- Fwd/rev function tested from both cabs for correct operation. Confirmation of correct wiring and air-pipes achieved.

Electrically;

- Replacement cables were pulled in for the main cab supply.

- Additional control cables were pulled in to feed cab instrumentation.
- Final additional control wiring has been completed
- Replacement main cab supply cables terminated in Robertsbridge cab and in battery compartment.
- Cab wiring installation is continuing.

Internally, cab woodwork fettling has continued and the wheelchair hold-down mountings have been installed in the luggage compartment.

Externally, the surface preparation for painting has commenced. The temporary paintwork has been rubbed down to ascertain how well it is adhering to the base metal. The replacement body sheets, which were supplied some 20 – 30 years ago, were galvanised and now there is some concern with regard to how well the paint will bond to the ageing galvanising. Test paint application will take place before the final livery is applied to ensure that the final finish will be durable.



*The newly repaired south engine arrives
(Phil Edwards)*

We complete this summary with a bit of good luck. Project manager Neil Edwards was visiting the Detling Transport and Bus Rally in April when he spotted a starter motor lurking under a seller's table. Knowledgeable as ever, he spent a little while convincing himself it was the correct item for the railcar and a good price. Luckily, he was right on both counts so we now have a spare starter motor. It looks brand new internally. This is of particular interest to us, as one of the current starter motors is being a bit lazy in operation. We now have a spare to replace the fitted one, if it continues to cause us concern.

Funding from the Colonel Stephens Museum

We should at this point properly acknowledge the

generous donation to the GWR W20W Railcar Restoration and Conservation Fund by the Colonel Stephens museum. Without this significant contribution to the project, the engine repairs and transportation costs would have used up the remaining ring-fenced funds, putting the return to traffic of the vehicle at risk. Although, as with all projects the funds are still tight, with the

museum's assistance the project is able to keep progressing. Many thanks to the museum's management for their generous grant towards the railcar project.

“STOP PRESS” The engine was returned to Tenderden on the 27th May and is now undergoing the coolant modifications as recommended.

ROLLING STOCK

Carriage & Wagon

John Wheller

Maunsell NBO 4443 (K&ESR no.54)

With the signing and lining to the platform side completed the coach was given a light rub down and the side given a sealing coat of varnish.

The replacement ceilings were completed and the coach left the shed in the middle of February to resume its place in the Wealden Pullman Dining Train set.

Pullman Dining Train set

In early February the three other coaches, Barbara, Theodora and the Kitchen car, took turns to enter the shed for safety checks and minor maintenance prior to the dining train season commencing.

The Woolwich Coach 27687 (K&ESR no.67)

Continuing on from the bodywork repairs, the affected sections were repainted and sign writing replaced prior to leaving the shed in mid February.



*The Woolwich Coach receives attention
(John Wheller)*

BR Mark 1 CK S25446 (K&ESR no.63)

Towards the end of February no 63 came back into the shed to cure a problem with leaking windows to the platform (corridor) side. To cure the leaks all the glass, the timber glazing beads and mouldings were removed to store for an intended

reuse. Unfortunately the water ingress had taken a toll on the timber with rotten and damaged mouldings, so the decision was made to replace all the timber beads and mouldings with new. In addition some of the ply panels below the windows were also replaced. Following completion of the glazing, all the new timber was given a final coat of varnish, the handrails refitted, one of the passenger door restraints replaced and the coach returned to traffic at the end of March.

BR Mark 1 Kitchen Car RU S1955 DIANA (K&ESR no.69)

Diana entered the shed near the end of February for an exam and general service. The train crews had reported uneven running so the as part of the general service the bogies were run out to be checked. Some of the springs were replaced and the bogies packed up with metal shims to improve the ride height and try to cure the uneven ride. While in the shed a brake test was carried out and the coach returned to traffic near the end of March.

BR Mark 1 S9254 PETROS (K&ESR no.75)

Petros came in for a B exam, brake test and safety checks, the ride height was adjusted and the coach returned to traffic at the end of March.

BR Mark 1 TSO S4640 (K&ESR no.85)

No 85 came in for an A exam and brake adjustments.

SECR Birdcage (K&ESR no.61)

The Birdcage has been out of service for some 6 years so the decision was made for it to be brought ready to re-enter traffic. The coach was given a B exam and thorough safety check which included adjustments to the ride heights, brake adjustments and testing. Checks completed the Birdcage left the shed early in April available for when required.

BR Mark 1 BCK W21245

The specialist asbestos removal contractors commenced the asbestos removal in mid April and completed their task by the end of the month. This allowed the volunteers to resume the stripping out of the coach interior.

While waiting for the specialists to come in work continued and the items that had been removed were worked on. These included the internal compartment doors which have rubbed down and re-varnished ready for when they are required to be refitted. The external doors which were all removed early have been stripped of all the wood panelling, sliding windows and their operating mechanisms and all locks and handles. The doors, some of which are steel sheet and others are cast aluminium, are in the process of having many layers of paint and filler removed. While the cast aluminium doors are all in good order most of the steel doors will require either replacing or extensive welded repairs. The aluminium window frames have all been cleaned up and work has started on checking the sliding units, repairing as necessary.

With the completion of the asbestos removal the volunteers were able to re-enter the coach and continue stripping out the compartments. All the ceilings were removed, which were a combination of hardboard, which has suffered

water damage, and in the third class compartments Formica over the hardboard. As it is necessary to rewire the coach all the wall panelling, either ply or Formica, has been removed together with all the mirrors, luggage racks and light fittings. As the coach had been on main line duty with Riviera Travel it had electric heating which we cannot use so all of this has been removed and saved for someone who can.

I can report that we now have, at long last, a virtually empty shell so work can commence on the restoration. There is an awful lot of work to do, to have the coach ready for Robertsbridge but at last we can now get on with it.

Pullman PFK BARBARA (K&ESR no.52)

In early May Barbara entered the shed to have a failed brake cylinder replaced and a subsequent brake test, before returning to traffic.

The Family Saloon (K&ESR no.84)

At the end of May the Family saloon joined us for a B exam and works to make good the excessive play in its couplings by the in house manufacture of steel spacers to take up the slack.

It has been, at times, a very busy period in the shed as along side the restorations the day to day servicing of the stock has to be carried out, the shed is never empty.

OPERATING

Operating Department

Matt Green

After many years of service Pete Salmon has retired from the position of Operating Manager. His last day was the 30th April. Pete has said that he's planning on having some time away to do all the things he was unable to do while employed before making a return as a volunteer. Pete's contribution to the K&ESR is significant, with more than 40 years service to the railway.

Pete's retirement presents us with the challenge of finding a replacement, by the time you read this we will hopefully be well on with recruitment and with a fair wind, the new incumbent may already be in post. In the meantime, we've dragged Matt back from Dorset to hold the fort. Matt Green has been a volunteer at the railway for 25 years and was an employee from 2006 to 2014 before he headed west to take up a role on the Swanage Railway

where soon after he was promoted to General Manager. These days Matt works for Vicia Railfreight as a consultant helping heritage railways and rail freight facilities with making improvements, training and safety management. During his time with Vicia he's spent two and a half years as the Operations Director of the North Yorkshire Moors Railway.

Matt brings a wealth of knowledge on charity operations, visitor attractions, and railway management, and is helping advise the Board on improvements that can be made, while also heading up the Operating team exploring ways of improving efficiency, safety and resilience while ensuring tight costs controls are adhered to. Management of everything that goes on in the department is too much for one man alone, so Matt would like to thank George, Sarah, Kev, Laura, Neil and all of the inspectors, roster clerks and everyone else who makes the wheels go round

and provide continuity as we transition from one manager to another.



Congratulations to Samir Oussalah (centre) on passing his firing test. Samir is in the company of Paul Beale (left), and Adrian Clark-Monks (right)

The footplate team have been revising their competence management system. This has seen the introduction of a depot driver competence. The purpose of this competence is to provide a mechanism primarily for fitters to enable them to undertake their own shunts. Other changes are based around the training logbooks that we issue and an intention to introduce an assessor competence to help out the team of inspectors.

Just as the footplate team have been revising their documentation, the guards inspectors have been undertaking the same exercise. At the time of writing a consultation has been launched to seek views on proposed changes to the role of passenger guards. Passenger guards on the K&ESR have always been required to shunt trains. This has served the railway well for many years, however with the number of shunting mishaps occurring it's becoming increasingly apparent that it's about time we consider if this is still fit for purpose. With that in mind we looked to other heritage lines to see what they do and have concluded that it might be sensible to split out the role of shunter from that of the passenger guard. We want all passenger guards to retain their shunter competence, but with many turns involving little to no shunting there were increasing risks from skill fade. The Isle of Wight and Spa Valley Railways have operated like this for many years with limited impact on operational flexibility.

New for 2026... With the ever increasing risk from lineside fires, during May 2026 we have introduced fire patrol. The last week of May was a scorcher, not only had the lineside fire risk increased, but so



"We are deeply saddened to have to report the passing of Adrian Chapman, former footplate inspector, and a long-time K&ESR driver. Our condolences go to his wife Kathy and family. We hope to carry an obituary in the next edition of the Terrier."

had the risk from heat fatigue. To remove the need for crews to nip down the bank during their meal breaks to tackle fires they had started on the approach to Tenterden, we've launched a new initiative using the Class 08 shunting locomotive, lots of water and a few watering cans. Fire patrol using "the Blue Goddess" (because it's about as fast as the Bedford Green Goddess equivalent) sees us follow trains that have travelled to Tenterden Town from Rolvenden extinguishing the small grass fires that are set thus preserving the meal breaks and hopefully avoiding the need to call upon our local fire and rescue services. Early trials showed this worked very well and we're exploring ways of improving this further. My thanks go to Frim, Jonathan Marsh and Christopher Stuchbury for their help with trialling this. Fire patrol was also helpfully used to conduct some training with fireman Matt Webb helping on one of the days and cleaner Matt Marien another. Matt Webb will likely be one of our first depot drivers.

Speaking of training, I'm happy to report that there's been a number of promotions in the department. Congratulations to everyone who has been promoted since the last issue.

Lastly, I'd like to highlight the efforts of the RSWG. This group look after the rule book on behalf of the operating manager. I've now attended two of their meetings and they are incredibly well run. There's an awful lot of hard work that goes on behind the scenes to make sure that our rule book is fit for purpose.

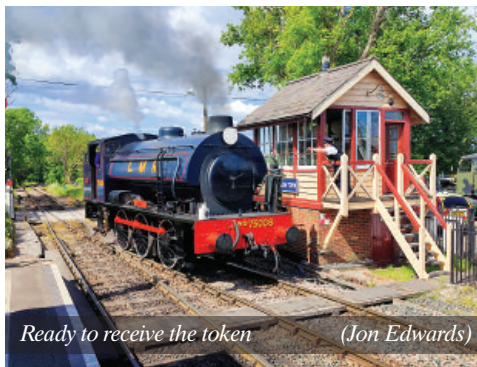
Signalling

Tony Ramsey

Although there were no passing out turns for signalmen in the period covered by this report, we are pleased to congratulate Pete Boyes on qualifying as a crossing keeper by passing out at Cranbrook Road. We also congratulate Dick Denyer and Luke Arnold for passing out at Rolvenden and Northiam gates respectively, in both cases their second crossing.

In addition to its consideration of changes to our existing Rules, Regulations and Instructions, the Railway Rules Working Group has now developed the rules and instructions necessary for the operation of the new level crossings on the extension to Robertsbridge. It is currently working on the Local Instructions which will apply at the new station at Robertsbridge.

We are grateful to timetable planner Laura Clark-Monks for arranging some non-passenger workings (affectionately known as "ghost paths"), thereby giving us additional opportunities to open Northiam signal box to enable more signalmen to learn the box in preparation for running trains to Robertsbridge.



Ready to receive the token

(Jon Edwards)

We congratulate signalman Kenneth Yarham and his wife Kristine Joy on the birth of their second son, Nathan.

Our signalman training officer, Joel Pearson, has continued to create short training films as time permits. Recent publications include "Indication of route", "Points" and "Working block instruments".

We are sorry to have to say farewell to signalman Tim Coutts, who has moved to a new teaching post in Herefordshire. Although only with us for a relatively short time, he made a valuable contribution, and we trust the skills learned with us will be able to benefit another heritage railway nearer to home. We also sincerely thank Patrick Nairne, who has decided to retire after eleven years as a signalman at Wittersham Road; happily, he continues with us as a crossing keeper.

Station Masters

Geoff Colvin

After a long, hot May I find myself at Bodiam on a very wet Saturday in June. We are a small team today, Mike Ayres the crossing keeper, Wendy Gray running the shop and Stuart Gray helping me with the platform.

As usual, lunch together after the 12:45 departure and conversation turns to the already missed deadline for this *Terrier* article, what to say this time?

There have been the big events; the opening of Robertsbridge station building and the 40s weekend, but it is the routine of regular services that brings us all back to the K&ESR week after week. Bodiam holds a special place in the lives of all of us here today. Our commitment to the railway is common, our motivations very personal.

My thanks to Mike, Wendy and Stuart for allowing me to share a little of their stories. Written in their own words:

Mike Ayres, Bodiam crossing keeper and platform assistant:

"My wife and I had always enjoyed the K&ESR and travelled on it whenever we stayed at our holiday home in Rye. Then when family commitments allowed, we moved to Bexhill and became 'Life Members'.

"In 2022 my wife suddenly died and I was totally lost as to what to do with myself, and sitting alone at home was driving me crazy. I decided that I needed to get out more and meet new people, and while I was on one of my day trips to Tenterden on the railway I met the station master, who kindly showed me round Bodiam station and explained what was involved in running the railway, that I had enjoyed so much in the past. I asked how I could get involved and he gave me a volunteer application form.

"My time as both a platform assistant and a level crossing keeper has both given me a new level of interest and led to meeting hundreds of people but also given me a new and rewarding reason for living. It gives me a timeline to organise life round and gives a structure to my week, meaning I'm busy at home in order to allow me to come to work."

Wendy Gray, Bodiam shop staff member and mum of Stuart, platform assistant:

"K&ESR and Bodiam in particular is a very special place that has transformed Stuart's life. People with learning difficulties rarely have the chance to contribute to society, but at Bodiam Stuart works as a qualified Platform Assistant, treated as part of the team, as an equal. The effect on his confidence has been amazing, he enjoys interacting with staff and passengers whereas before he was quiet and slow to communicate with those he didn't know.

"Through Stuart I now volunteer in the shop and witness for myself just how special the team and atmosphere is."

We all smile and wave as trains depart, behind the face we put on for our visitors there is so much more.

Added to the ranks since my last report is Jim McDougal who has qualified as station master at Tenterden; welcome aboard Jim.

COMMERCIAL

Travelling Ticket Inspectors

Murray Motley

I've previously mentioned our work with the junior heritage volunteers which has led to our team now spanning several generations. It has been a real pleasure to welcome Ben Styles (14) as our first qualified Junior heritage assistant travelling ticket inspector, followed a few days later by Paul Frankland (76) as the latest adult member of the team. Consider that there is a 62-year age difference between them! They are both showing equal amounts of passion and enthusiasm for our railway; that is a tribute not only to them but also to the wide-ranging appeal we offer volunteers.

Thinking of time spans, in March several of us staffed the "Rail 200" train. Celebrating railways spanning twenty decades, of which the K&ESR has existed for the last twelve (give or take), it was



Ben Styles (left), with assessor Murray Motley (via Murray Motley)

stabled at Hastings station. We had a small stand which generated a large amount of interest – especially about Robertsbridge. As I write this, on a similar theme, some of the cohort are joining colleagues from K&ESR and other heritage railways on the "Southern Six" stand at Waterloo main line station, space kindly donated by our

friends on the national railway.

On the technology front, we've taken the decision to make greater use of the ticket issuing and accounting software available to us on our K&ESR smartphones. Over the next few months, we will move to recording all transactions on these devices, not just those with a bank card. This will provide much better sales information to our finance colleagues whilst making it easier to carry out an end of shift balance. We continue to issue paper tickets where necessary and have no plans to stop doing so as this is part of the heritage experience.

Regular readers will know about our passion for making sure our customers have a great day out with us. Sadly, in the last few months we've had a couple of occasions where members of the public have tried to travel either for free or on platform tickets, the latter arguing that they'd been sold the wrong ticket – they hadn't. This can create a difficult situation. We want to present a friendly

face but we have to remember we are a charity run by largely unpaid volunteers, points we're happy to make to such people. We're hoping that this is not part of a new trend.

Whilst on the subject of valid tickets, we've also had some situations where HOPS card-carrying volunteers are travelling on the train at no charge – perfectly correctly – but bringing friends or family with them without tickets in the hope or expectation that they'll also get a free journey. That is not the case. As a reminder, a K&ESR volunteer HOPS card provides free travel only for the holder. Please don't cause us or yourself embarrassment by hoping we'll give you a nod and a wink. If you think you have a valid reason for taking your companion for free, please discuss it with the booking office or TTI before travelling so we can issue an appropriate ticket.

Aside from all that, here's hoping for a busy and prosperous summer season and we look forward to seeing you on board!

WAYS AND WORKS

Permanent Way

Paul Jessett

Spring has sprung and off we go for another full-on year on the P. Way. Just as the wetness ceased we were able to get out for the first weed treatment of the year. An 06:00 off shed to get us out on the railway before the breeze gets up. It really is a privilege to be out that early in the morning along the railway with no-one about.

Our winter working week was spent replacing the timbers in Charlie's crossing outside Rolvenden signal box. The wooden bearers had started to disintegrate, and the crossing was at risk of collapse if a heavy vehicle passed over it. The opportunity was taken to replace the wooden bearers with high density recycled plastic sleepers that had been donated to us. This will improve the structural integrity of the crossing. During the same period, we replaced the wooden sleepers at Rother bridge user worked crossing, but this time using concrete sleepers.

In early spring, the recovered rails from the carriage storage shed, mentioned in the last *Lineside News*, were used to rerail Rolvenden platform. The old rails were very worn and deemed to be too worn to reprofile when we were

using the Schwebbau rail grinder back in January. The team removed all the old rails and took the opportunity to carry out a bit of spot re-sleepering. The brand-new second-hand rails were then installed. The old rails were all removed and stored in the yard for the next scrap drive.



Track replacement at Rolvenden (Paul Jessett)

As the team will be involved in the track laying on the extension over the coming months, we took the opportunity to get out on the railway on the Fridays when we were not running trains to clear as many of the small faults that had built up over the winter as possible. This is mostly seized fishplate bolts and lifting and packing dropped

joints. This involved taking a train out to a section, so we had all our tools with us and walking the track looking at each fault. We either cleared them or categorised them for future work packages. Seized fishplate bolts must be cut off and replaced; this can be time consuming, but very necessary to get the joints as tight as possible. Using an engineer's train also allowed us to take the forestry team out with us, and they have been able to clear much of their workload.

We have just finished the first track laying session on the extension since the sign off from the relevant authorities. We laid 480 concrete sleepers with associated rails, joints and fittings, plus laying the rails on the newly installed bridge adjacent to the mulching field just beyond Austin's bridge. The weather was against us for one of the days, but we exceeded the RVR's expectations. We will now start to lay track back from the bridle path crossing in Salehurst, back towards the mulching field. The next session is week commencing Monday 6th. July and then the first full week of each month up until the autumn. If you want to be part of this exciting project, please contact one of the P. Way team for details of where and when to meet. All you need is a sturdy pair of boots and a hi-vis; we will supply the rest, including tea. You will receive a short induction to the site, and we will put you to work.

Forestry & Conservation

Steve McMurdo

The 2000 whips supplied by KCC and mentioned in our last article were all planted before Easter, and the vast majority appear to have already successfully settled in despite the intensely dry ground conditions in recent weeks. The intention had been to plant a good number around the newly restored and extended pond at the far end of the Rolvenden site. We have been involved with the organisation and management of this conservation project from its inception, and have devoted many hours in all conditions to create what is there today, including site preparations, liaising with contractors and other interested parties, overseeing excavations and earthmoving as well as controlling unwanted undergrowth and trees. The whips, including the five larger and rooted elms have settled in well.

The initial proposal had been to plant the remainder and majority of the whips alongside the running line nearby. There was however an urgency to complete the planting but waterlogged conditions at the originally selected site meant this

could not be used. In the end, the stretch on higher ground from Cranbrook Road level crossing down the gradient towards Rolvenden was selected. This has the advantage that this K&ESR contribution to conservation can be clearly seen by passers-by on the busy road and also be easily accessed by us where necessary for ongoing care.



*Planting the new trees near Cranbrook Road
(Steve McMurdo)*

In earlier days and well before our time, our department was apparently known unofficially as "Slash and Burn", a simplistic and far from inclusive or accurate description of today's forestry & conservation activities. Our responsibility these days is to ensure lineside vegetation does not compromise or adversely affect safety. Trees, shrubs, grassland and undergrowth have to be monitored and kept under control by considered cutting back or complete removal. We also plant new trees.

Unfortunately, there are now a number of very large but diseased and thus unsafe ash trees extremely close to the line in several locations and which have reached the stage to be of great concern to us. After careful consideration, monitoring and assessment, our decision has been made, conveyed to and accepted by the Railway that these must now be identified as dangerous trees which will need early felling to prevent what could be a catastrophic incident taking place. At the time of writing, we expect to commence work imminently.

GROUPS AND ASSOCIATES

Bodiam

Malcolm Burgess

The summer season is upon us and after a succession of cold, wet Tuesdays we now embark on heatwaves! For some time at Bodiam we have had a surplus of platform trolleys and barrows, carefully maintained but without adequate space to display them and no demand for them elsewhere on the railway. Recent discussions with the Rother Valley Railway have enabled us to dispatch four of them for use at Robertsbridge and prior to their departure Graham Holden and Jim Barnes worked hard to ensure they were in the best possible condition.

We have been delighted to welcome back Chris Wadey who has recovered sufficiently from injuries sustained in an accident at home earlier this year to enable him to rejoin the team. We have plenty of tasks to keep him busy.

With the benefit of some professional advice from Chris Levett, a local grower, Colin King and Frank Wenham have nurtured the hop garden into its best ever condition this year. Provided growing conditions remain reasonably favourable we look forward to a bumper harvest in time for the country fair in September. In early spring we were treated to a beautiful display of primroses and some cowslips on the yard bank and this display goes from strength to strength. Further down the site Bruce Sharpe and Ron Gray have been tackling the Himalayan Balsam before it gets out of control so that hopefully we may see some more

native wildflowers. They have also built a new compost compound from old sleepers.

Gates and fences have also had some attention with Adrian Freeman and myself sprucing up areas to keep the site presentable and welcoming. We all worked hard to prepare the site for the 1940s weekend so that it was fit for the various participants including the Royal Navy Commando.

Gardening

Carol Usher

The weather is not being too kind to us this year. It's either too hot or too wet; a bit in the middle would be so nice. We got a lot done earlier in the year, so it is a case now of just keeping up with the weeds and letting the gardens grow and flower. The weeds, as we all know, don't worry about the weather, they grow anyway.

The signal box garden has had many new plants, which we hope will grow nicely, they might not flower this year but hopefully will take off next year. Also, on that side of the track, the sad news: The box hedge that was shaped into a train has had to be removed. It had what is well known as box blight. We managed to save it two years ago, with a lot of spraying and light trimming, but it took hold so quickly this year, that in one week, it was beyond saving. It was one of a few that has been lost this year. As a team, the gardening group has been discussing what we will do with the space it has left.

I planted the hanging baskets at home, kept them watered and let them fill out a bit before they were



Bodiam goes to war

(Paul Randall)

hung up at the station, to give them more of a chance, which seems to have helped this year. They are a mass of colour and are growing nicely, thanks to the watering system that was patiently checked and worked on by the Wednesday group to make sure it watered when we needed it to.



The Hanging Baskets of Tenterden (Carol Usher)

We also planted some hops that were donated to us. They were put on the wild side of the steps that lead up to the play area, with the hope that they would grow up the trees that are there. Fingers crossed.

The gardens are springing into life very quickly and we hope our travellers enjoy them as much as they enjoy the trains.

Museum Notes

Chris Jackson

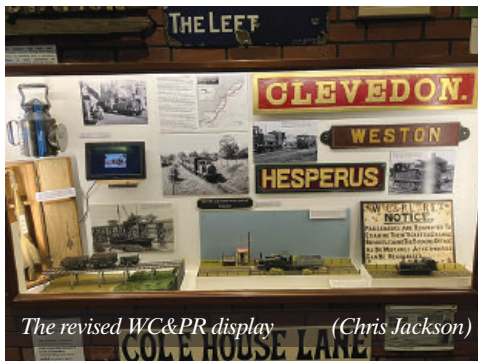
Visitor numbers at the Colonel Stephens Railway Museum seem to be holding up well in the early months of 2026, in line with railway ridership. Up to the end of May, we had recorded just over 4,000 visitors on 48 opening days – around one-third of the way through the season. This was slightly down on the equivalent number for 2025, when we exceptionally opened in mid-February compared to the end of March.

Donations per head have increased slightly following the repair of the card donation terminal,

although sales income is down as we have not had as much model railway equipment for sale this year. Hopefully that should improve as we have recently received a useful donation of models which are currently being overhauled for sale. More specialist items are being accumulated for a stall at the K&ESR model railway exhibition in August.

The curatorial team has completed the refresh of the East Kent Railway display, which was still underway at the start of the new season. We have subsequently revised the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway cabinet with some new photographs and a better presentation of the locomotive nameplates. We have also completed the exterior refurbishment of the recently acquired Webb & Thompson electric train staff machine, and are currently in discussion with the S&T department to consider whether this could be restored to working order. There have been relatively few notable acquisitions in recent months, although we are always on the lookout for relevant items.

Our archives team continues its never-ending task of bringing order to our extensive archives and the ever-expanding photographic collection. One volunteer has helpfully been sorting donations of general railway photographs with a view to selling these off as a fund-raising exercise, although finding suitable outlets has not been as straightforward as we had envisaged.



The revised WC&PR display (Chris Jackson)

We have been delighted to welcome several new volunteers to the museum team this season, both as front of house attendants and working in the archives. More volunteers to take on the essential customer-facing role would always be welcome – please contact me for details. At the time of writing, we are preparing to welcome a cohort of young people from the railway's introductory

youth programme for a hands-on day learning about the work of the museum.

We have received something of a glut of second-hand books in recent months, so there are plenty of bargains to be had as we seek to clear our shelves ahead of any further arrivals. Donations of model railway equipment and railwayana are always welcome at any time, as these can be sold to raise funds for the acquisition of further artefacts. Donations can be brought to the museum on any day we are open, on Tuesdays and Thursdays when we are working behind the scenes, or at other times by agreement.

Tuesday Group

Andrew Limpkin

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone in the Tuesday Group team for their hard work at Northiam over the past three months. While there have been some challenges along the way, we have achieved a great deal.



The repairs to Cottage One (Andrew Limpkin)

Renovation work on both cottages has continued at an excellent pace, helped by favourable weather conditions. The work has included excavating strip foundations and pouring concrete bases for brick piers to support the front of Cottage Two.

Inside the cottages, we have removed the original pot-belly stove, which was beyond repair, replaced damaged floorboards, and built new storage shelving in one of the end rooms.

Cottage One has also seen significant work carried out to the exterior weatherboarding, with a number of boards on the end wall requiring replacement. Scaffolding has been erected at both ends of the station to allow essential repairs to be undertaken on the bargeboards, one of which had to be completely replaced due to wood rot.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks to our resident carpenter, Steve Dunne. Not only does Steve work tirelessly at Northiam, but he also regularly spends his own time, in his home workshop, crafting replacement wooden items that help keep these restoration projects moving forward.

Wednesday Working Group

John Holland

The railway shuts down for a short period after Santas, but the group is still working behind the scenes, on infrastructure projects which benefit the K&ESR and our guests. The list of outstanding work gets longer as inclement weather often delays our work days, but we continue to be happy and get on with the job. Tenterden station takes a lot of attention. A new disabled toilet door has been fitted just before the old one fell off. Tenterden signal box stairs were repainted, and additional anti slip edges attached. The station decorating for the Forties event always seems to fall into our lap although there is an events group. The handrails on the steps up to the Pullman viewing platform were particularly bad on one side. These have now been renewed; the other side is to do. The sleeper garden wall and non-existent handrails adjacent to the play area have had some splendid work done to make this area look good once again. Guest bench seats are always needing maintenance which is always a long job, but they look good when finished. How could we forget Wittersham Road? The early job there is to cut and strim all grass areas and to maintain this during the season. What are the future jobs for the summer? Lots! Rolvenden platform guttering and mess windows to be reinstated and painted; white lining the platform and, with every good wish, to spend hours on the signal box refurbishment. Time will tell.



The Pullman steps get a refurb. (Kelvin Williams)



68032 passes the Class 108 DMMU at Wittersham Road on 14th February 2026

(Phil Edwards)



Hastings on shed at Rolvenden on 4th May 2026. 75008 Swiftsure in the background

(Phil Edwards)

*Looking immaculate, 68032 on
Tenterden crossing on 24th May 2026
(Phil Edwards)*





'Thumper' DEMU 1118 ascending Wittersham bank on 6th April 2026

(Phil Edwards)



An unusual view of the top end of Tenterden yard on 24th May 2026

(Phil Edwards)

KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY 300 CLUB

PRIZE WINNERS

January 2026

1st	Peter Halden	No. 383	£100
2nd	Richard Seddon	No. 261	£90
3rd	Michelle Kenward	No. 595	£80
4th	Colin F King	No. 1165	£70
5th	Mrs E Lambkin	No. 804	£60
6th	Chris McNaughton	No. 324	£50
7th	Tony Greenwood	No. 1188	£40
8th	Alan Dawes	No. 010	£30
9th	Mrs M E Bignell	No. 662	£20
10th	Clive Norman	No. 389	£10

February 2026

1st	Peter Jefferies	No. 188	£100
2nd	Leonard A Peppiatt	No. 734	£90
3rd	Mrs M E Bignell	No. 396	£80
4th	John Glenn	No. 218	£70
5th	Lynda Shepherd	No. 806	£60
6th	David Orpin	No. 1030	£50
7th	Richard Crumpling	No. 865	£40
8th	Frank Cooper	No. 184	£30
9th	Mr C Tucker	No. 711	£20
10th	Mrs Sally Williams	No. 313	£10

March 2026

1st	Mrs Nita C Jackson	No. 1186	£160
2nd	Ernest C King	No. 167	£140
3rd	Mr A L Gillard	No. 854	£120
4th	Terry Hannocks	No. 562	£110
5th	Jeremy Nelson	No. 425	£100
6th	David Nichols	No. 1144	£90
7th	Mrs V J Wood-Mewett	No. 194	£80
8th	Jolyan Vickers	No. 314	£70
9th	Mrs J E Sparrow	No. 207	£60
10th	Peter Gore	No. 141	£50
11th	Debbie Patrick	No. 1305	£40
12th	Ron Reid	No. 1075	£30
13th	Ian Cullis	No. 943	£20
14th	J Collett	No. 797	£10

April 2026

1st	Steve Carter	No. 706	£100
2nd	A J York	No. 185	£90
3rd	John Ward	No. 971	£80
4th	Clive Fitzjohn	No. 452	£70
5th	Andre Freeman	No. 051	£60
6th	Stephen Bush	No. 1393	£50
7th	A W Dixon	No. 164	£40
8th	Robert Bradford	No. 594	£30
9th	Michael Tredway	No. 267	£20
10th	Peter Bennion	No. 696	£10

To join the 300 Club or for more information contact Chris Garman or Colin Avey at 300Club@kesr.org.uk
Registered with Ashford Borough Council under the Gambling Act 2005, per Paragraph 39 of Schedule 11

Rolvenden Tea Club Appeal



They say railways run on tea and it is fair to say Rolvenden Locomotive Works is no different!

The Rolvenden Tea Club fund aims to raise money to bring much needed investment to Rolvenden Locomotive Works and the surrounding areas.

We have an ambitious target to get 100 people to join and donate £2 a week (£10 a month), less than the average cost of a cup of tea in a high street coffee shop, towards the development of Rolvenden over a five-year period.

We understand that money is tight but we hope that by giving a small, regular amount, you can support this important work. This target gives us circa-£10,000 per year. This will be bolstered by up to £10,000 per year in match-funding by **Rapido Trains UK**.

In return, everyone donating to the Rolvenden Tea Club fund will receive an exclusive enamel badge. We know it's not big - but it is a something to say **thank you** for your support. You will get to see

Rolvenden develop, building a better foundation for our locomotive fleet and commercial operations as we expand into the future.

For more details and to download the application form visit <https://kesr.org.uk/rolvenden-tea-club-appeal/>

Thank you for your support!

Andy Hardy



Robertsbridge Report Summer 2026

*With thanks to Helen Douglas, Appeals Director,
Rother Valley Railway. fundraising@rvr.org.uk.
All photos Phil Edwards*

Fundraising Update

The response to the Locomotive Shed Appeal has been exceptionally encouraging, with more than 300 donations received to date. This generosity has brought us significantly closer to our £350,000 target and has already enabled early work to begin on the locomotive shed - which will become the operational heart of Robertsbridge Junction. The ash pit - an essential facility for preparing and disposing of steam locomotives - was the first major element to move into construction in early March. Designed in consultation with the Kent & East Sussex Railway and modelled on the proven layout at Rolvenden, the pit includes a newly installed drainage system and a carefully engineered concrete base to ensure safe and efficient operation. We are grateful to the volunteers who contributed specialist engineering design work to support this stage.

April saw two landmark moments for the wider project, both made possible by the long-term commitment of our supporters. On 17 April, we welcomed Lord Peter Hendy, former MP Huw Merriman, Cllr Andrew Mier, and guests from across the rail industry to open the new station building at Robertsbridge Junction formally. This building represents the culmination of Phase 1 of the Buildings Appeal and stands as a tangible symbol of what donor support has already achieved. Immediately afterwards, guests gathered for the official reopening of the extended Network Rail headshunt - the vital stretch of track that physically reconnects the RVR to the national network.

Representatives from GB Railfreight, St Leonards Engineering, Network Rail and Southeastern Railway joined us to mark this significant milestone with the ceremony conducted by the Hastings Diesel which then spent the afternoon giving guests rides between Robertsbridge Junction station and Northbridge Street. This would not have been possible without the generosity and goodwill of our friends at Hastings Diesels Ltd and GB Railfreight and we are extremely grateful for their support.

The celebrations continued the following day with a community open day that welcomed more than

1,500 visitors. Many arrived via the mainline station and walked directly into the RVR site, offering a powerful glimpse of what full reconnection will make possible. Families, local residents and enthusiasts enjoyed rides on the Hastings Diesel between Robertsbridge Junction and Northbridge Street, experiencing the atmosphere of a heritage railway coming back to life. Drone footage of the route to Bodiam prompted lively discussion and renewed excitement about the next stages of the project.

We were especially pleased to welcome many of our donors over the course of the weekend. The presence of so many visitors who are already supporting the project and the aims of the buildings appeal, created a warm, celebratory atmosphere and reinforced the sense of shared achievement that underpins the entire project. Thanks to the efforts of our media team, the event also received coverage from ITV Meridian and BBC South East, extending the reach of our project story to a much wider audience.

With Phase 1 now complete and early progress on the locomotive shed underway, the project has strong momentum. However, £130,000 remains to be raised to reach the Phase 2 target. Continued support is essential if we are to move from groundwork to construction and see the structure of the shed begin to rise. The passion and enthusiasm of our supporters have driven the RVR forward for 15 years, and with your help, we will take the next decisive steps towards restoring heritage train services to Robertsbridge.

Civil Engineering Progress

Preparations are beginning on the trackbed between Salehurst and Junction Road, with track laying planned to start this summer from Bridge 24, the double span flood relief bridge. Indeed, recently the progress of the ground preparation meant that our works vehicle could drive the route from Junction Road to Salehurst for (we believe) the first time in 52 years!

Approximately 100 yards beyond Austen's Bridge towards Robertsbridge, the track laying will begin and progress westwards towards Salehurst, for approximately 200 yards. The next phase will see track laying from Salehurst bridgeway, in the direction of Junction Road, preserving the formation of the trackbed.



L to R, Helen Douglas, Huw Merriman and Cllr Andrew Mier



Robertsbridge Junction station as seen from the main line side

Over the winter, detailed design work has advanced on the bridges that require repair between the two current “heads of steel”. The first bridges to be tackled will be the stream crossing and flood relief opening near Salehurst. The beams that will carry the track over the drainage channel are currently with Playfoot Engineering, where fabrication of the deck and walkways is completed awaiting delivery.

We currently anticipate working on the flood wall works near Northbridge Street (approved by the Environment Agency in Autumn 2025) in early Summer 2026. Stone for finishing the trackbed and preparing the route for tracklaying has begun to

arrive on site.

Two key level crossings - Junction Road and Northbridge Street - are scheduled for installation this year, timed around school holidays to minimise disruption for school buses and local traffic.

The much discussed A21 level crossing is planned for installation in early 2027. The barriers and control equipment have already been manufactured and tested by Schweizer Ltd in Switzerland and have now arrived at their UK engineering centre in Tamworth. Once the civil engineering works are complete, these components will be brought directly to site for installation.



Robertsbridge Junction platform side



L to R, John Smith CEO, GB Railfreight, John Atkinson and John White of St Leonards Engineering, David Davidson and Steve White of Network Rail and Southeastern Railway, Lord Peter Hendy, Huw Merriman and Mike Hart.



Hastings Diesel Unit 1013 between Robertsbridge Junction and Northbridge Street



The approach to the Junction station



K&ESR staff already on site! Murray Motley, Peter Conroy, Jonathan Reed, Geoff Colville, and Carol Mitchell

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir - The fascinating article in the Spring 2026 *Tenterden Terrier* was most interesting, if a little difficult to follow at times. Some gaps and overlapping appear in the dates that O1s worked on the K&ESR until the final four saw out the remaining years of the Headcorn section. Presumably these reflect differing availability of O1s although the running numbers and dates generally correspond with other sources. However, an additional O1 is mentioned in Brian Hart's splendid survey of the railway which seems to have avoided being reported elsewhere.

This is 1123 which he records as being derailed shortly after arrival at Rolvenden on 14th September 1948 with the 8.50am Headcorn - Robertsbridge where a Terrier was due to take over.

A long time ago, but perhaps this will stir a memory for someone.

Peter Clark, by email

Charles Judge comments

All history is elusive and compilers like myself can only be as good as records, research and time dictate.

K&ESR loco usage is reasonably certain. Written records of hire and mileage are available although the World War 2 period, and therefore O1 usage, is problematical. With the coming of BR loco allocations and usage it is matter of finding reliable records and photographs. I freely admit to having overlooked Brian Hart's record of 1123. Although he quotes no source the loco was obviously used for services. Of course, until about 1950 many O1s were available to fill in for failures etc. amongst the regular Ashford engines (Rolvenden being then its sub-shed) I believe. I am not certain, but I believe that 1123 was a Tonbridge engine, so a short fill in turn seems probable. No doubt there were others at times, but not, perhaps, regulars. Let us hope that, (even after these many years), good records of loco usage will come to light to show other omissions.

Anyway, thanks to Mr Clark for pointing out a clear omission to my listing of the complex utilisation of these locos which stayed for such a short, if notable, time during the long history of the K&ESR.



65, normally on the Bluebell Railway, at Bodiam during its 2009 visit to the K&ESR (Graham Williams)

ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY - 125th ANNIVERSARY

Edited by Steve Griffiths

A4 Booklet, 20pp; Published by the Rother Valley Railway Supporters Association; RRP: £5 (+p&p);

This booklet follows on from previous Rother Valley Railway Supporters Association (RVSA) publications *Reconnecting Robertsbridge* and *The Robertsbridge Turntable*. It commemorates 125 years since the opening of the railway in 1900, then known only as the Rother Valley Railway.

This publication also highlights how the line was opened in stages and that there were plans to extend further to Cranbrook, Rye, Ashford & Pevensey, none of which ever materialised.

Also mentioned is Hodson's Mill and the hop pickers who were important additions to the line's traffic. It enjoyed a revival as an important supply line and diversionary route during World War 2.

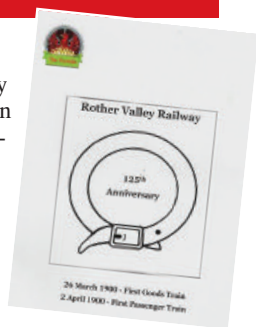
Rare archive photos from the Colonel Stephens Museum add to the story of the railway's growth until its closure in 1961 and then its gradual

heritage era return as the Kent & East Sussex Railway from 1974. The inauguration of the new and occasionally-used extension from Bodiam station to Junction Road came in 2011. As readers will be aware, the final section to reconnect to the main line at Robertsbridge is presently underway and planned to be completed by 2028.

The Robertsbridge end of the line naturally takes centre stage with the final pages covering the rebuild of the line from Robertsbridge Junction station towards Bodiam including bridges, station platform, station building and of course the turntable rescued from Hither Green depot which was restored and installed by their dedicated volunteers.

All proceeds will go to the Rother Valley Railway. It can be purchased directly from Robertsbridge Junction station (open Sundays) or by emailing reception@rvr.org.uk

DW



HERITAGE RAILWAY GUIDE, THE KENT & EAST SUSSEX RAILWAY

Richard Marks

158 pp, comprehensively illustrated in monochrome and colour, paperback, Pen & Sword Transport,

George House, Beevor Street, Hoyle Mill, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S71 1HN, 2025, ISBN 978-103616614. RRP £16.99

This is the second of a new series of guides to heritage railways. The first, about the Swanage Railway, was reviewed in this journal's Spring 2026 issue. Once again,

the intention appears to have been to produce something for the casual visitor whilst including enough detail for the enthusiast looking for some basic information about the railway

After a fairly lengthy introduction which places the K&ESR in overall railway history and the development of the light railway concept, the book includes chapters on the following:

Getting to the Railway
A Brief History of the Area and the Kent & East Sussex Railway
The Railway Stations and Other Things To Do
A Trip Along the Line
The Robertsbridge Extension
The Locomotive Fleet
Special Events & Experiences
Why Not Stay Awhile? Other Places to Visit Nearby
Sources and Further Reading

Regrettably this book contains a number of factual errors which would suggest haste in preparation. Examples include stating that the 1896 Light Railway Order was replaced by an enabling Act



and not the other way round, inaccuracies regarding the numbering and naming histories of Terriers *Bodiam* and *Knowle*, and that following closure the track between Robertsbridge and Rolvenden was lifted by British Railways.

At £16.99 (already discounted by Amazon) the price is reasonable and the illustrations and much of the text are of an acceptable standard. However, anyone seeking definitive historical information about the K&ESR is advised to look elsewhere.

NP

THE STROUDLEY BRIGHTON TERRIERS. A TALE OF LOCOMOTIVE ARTISTRY AND SUCCESS

John Scott-Morgan and Peter Steer

152 pp, comprehensively illustrated in monochrome and some colour, hard back, Pen & Sword Transport, George House, Beevor Street, Hoyle Mill, Barnsley, South Yorkshire, S71 1HN. 2025, ISBN 978 1 03612 717 6. £29.99

The Stroudley Brighton Terriers were one of the most successful designs of tank locomotive to run on the railways of Britain. They were introduced in 1872. Fifty were built and operated in diminishing numbers on the main network until November 1963, following which ten members of the class were preserved. This volume seeks to tell the intricate story of their service and operational life, both on the main line and later when many of them saw further service on light railways and in industry.

The book consists of two introductory essays totalling about twenty pages by the joint authors; one on the LB&SCR years and the other their subsequent service. The history of the Terriers in their often long lives is complex and difficult to narrate and this work tries hard, particularly in the introductory essays which also seek to set a broad railway background often of less direct relevance to the Terriers themselves. The biographical and other details seem to rely heavily on earlier works particularly the first essay which looks to the nearly

sixty year old standard biography of Stroudley himself (this is listed in the Bibliography).

The substantive balance of the work consists of two sections; the first with 160 un-indexed monochrome photos, the second a colour section with 10 photos. The layout of the monochrome section, whilst broadly following chronological build order, has some seemingly random exceptions. The photos are mostly locomotive portraits so if you are seeking pictures of every individual Terrier this might be a useful and enjoyable book, but with the caution that the captions contain many, too many, small but important errors, particularly dates, with assumptions and typos not uncommon.

This reviewer was particularly drawn, as examples, to the first two pictures in the second section. The first caption is about the Highland Railway progenitor locomotive *Bahnain* renamed *Dornoch* (here without explanation), saying it was one of two rather than the actual three. The second photo and caption state that the Terriers were designed for shunting rather than passenger work; certainly never the case. There are many further caption errors, some of which are simply mystifying; e.g. the band on *Clapham's* (L&SWR No 735)

chimney was not to 'hold the chimney together'

but to carry a wire control gear (page 67); also whenever was there a Westenhanger colliery in Kent (page 69)?

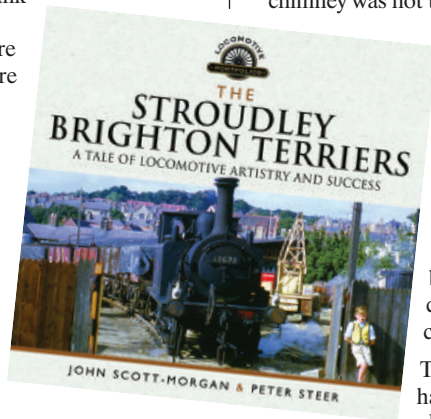
Scattered within the photos are some simplified drawings which seem intended to highlight detailed alterations but which do not appear to come out clearly in the digital copy reviewed.

The book concludes with some hand drawn map annexes on which much more care was

needed: Uckfield was not on the Eastbourne bound 'Cuckoo' line, Llanymynech station was not in Wales and Portishead pier was not on the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead.

For this additional work on this popular class this reviewer's recommendation is to simply enjoy the pictures. However treat with informed caution the commentaries and captions which too often differ from known facts and make assumptions not always rooted in those facts.

FMC



Happy Retirement



(Picture by Alan Crotty)

Pete Salmon!

Thursday 30th April saw the retirement of Pete Salmon after more than 25 years as the K&ESR's Operating Manager.

It is 40 years since Pete joined the Railway as a volunteer - back in the days when he was still driving buses for a living. After several years on the footplate he joined the paid staff as assistant to Simon Long and took over as Operating Manager in 2001.

In the hectic years since, Pete has become one of the 'fixed points' of Kent & East Sussex life as Board members have changed and General Managers come and

gone. Colleagues organised the customary retirement collection and there was a presentation at Tenterden Town Station on 29th April, attended by Chairman Derrick Bilsby.

Pete has said that he will be glad of a break; hardly surprising considering the key responsibilities involved in running the Operating department. It won't however be the last we shall be seeing of him, he'll soon be back as a volunteer driving locos up and down the Rother Valley.

NP



Pete Salmon with Matt Green, Acting Operating Manager, (left) and Simon Long his predecessor (centre)

(Alan Crotty)

76017 – Welcome or Controversial?

Driver Ian Scarlett looks back at one of the memorable features of the 2024/5 Seasons

It is now over six months since 76017 ended its visit to the K&ESR. I think it's fair to say that this Class 4 tender loco was a big hit with the footplate crews. It was not the first BR Standard on the line but it was the first one to stay for any length of time. That meant crews could get used to it, drivers could fire it and could allow the more experienced firemen to drive. Trainees could also learn the technique for that Belpaire firebox, conditions permitting of course.

Being a modern locomotive designed for 'network' use it was a step-change from the home fleet engines. The big boiler had plenty in reserve and there was power to spare, although the loco could slip easily on wet rails. Being a tender engine meant taking water once per round trip instead of twice. A self-cleaning smoke box, rocking grate and a hopper ash pan all meant that disposal was a 15 minute job rather than 40 minutes. Prep was generally easier too but with one exception; draining and filling the trailing axle boxes which are under the ash pan which had a tendency to drop burning char on you.

76017 did require a fair bit of remedial work when it arrived though, not having run for at least a year. Being eight-and-a-half years into a 10-year boiler ticket it was in 'well used' condition and consumed quite a lot of shed resources over its stay.

There was a degree of negativity in some quarters including questions along the lines of 'Why do we need such a (expletive deleted) great thing like that'. The Railway has hosted a number of larger locomotives in recent years and there are two sides to this argument. I understand that the editor intends to give them an airing in due course.

It wasn't originally intended to use 76017 on Pullman services (although it somehow looked right with the set) but in the end was rostered for pretty much anything, including a driving test. I think it fair to say that the presence of the engine raised the railway's profile during its stay.

Personally I was sorry to see it go. Non-traditional K&ESR it may have been, but a fine engine that was a pleasure to drive.

THE NEXT GENERATION:

BEN STYLES



(Picture by Tony Ramsey)

Ben's first visit to the Railway was when he was just three months old and, he adds, "I've pretty much been a regular visitor ever since". He cannot remember a time when he did not want to volunteer. "I asked if I could and it was suggested I join the Youth Heritage Scheme which had just been started by Tori Jones. I had always been interested in becoming a platform assistant and travelling ticket inspector (TTI), so that seemed the obvious place to start.

"Being a platform assistant involves welcoming the passengers (and their dogs!), answering their questions, keeping the platform clean and tidy, and moving the steps to help people on or off the trains. Being a TTI involves selling or checking tickets and answering passengers' questions – sometimes they ask about the view or the location, but mostly they seem to want to know about the Robertsbridge extension. At the end of the day, we must hand in the money at the shop (today I took £126 in first class fares) and the passenger numbers at the station master's office."

I ask Ben what he likes and dislikes about his roles. "I really love it all. My top favourite is talking to the passengers, but I also love working with other volunteers. I don't mind what I do – I'm even happy to clean the toilets. The worst part of the day is having to leave at the end. In the future, I would love to explore some of the other roles, especially guard or signalman."

I wonder where Ben gets this passion for all things railway-related? "I think it's from my dad. He has always loved trains. Apparently, when I was one week old in hospital, I wouldn't stop crying, so my dad showed me a video of a train going up a hill, and I immediately stopped crying!"

As usual, I ask if he has made any embarrassing mistakes. "Not really, but I can be a bit absent-minded. I once went to clean the floor and picked up the toilet mop by mistake. I regularly walk into closed doors. On one occasion, I forgot how many coaches there were on the

train and tried to open the end-gangway door. At school, I fell asleep once in an English class (I'm not very keen on languages); unfortunately, I happened to be sitting next to the projector switch and accidentally fell against it and switched it on!"

Ben has always been locally based, first in Westfield then more recently in Tenterden, where he lives with his parents and younger brother. He attends Homewood School and recently went on a school trip to France to visit the site of the Battle of the Somme, followed by five war cemeteries and on to Ypres. "It was tiring but very interesting," he recalls. In due course he expects to stay on in the sixth form centre and would be interested in studying catering, geography, PE and sports studies. His current ambition is to become a rail freight driver. I used to say I wanted to be a Red Arrows pilot, until I went on a rollercoaster and was sick! I think driving freight is more interesting than driving passenger trains; even if you keep doing the same route, you can carry a different load each day. Class 20s are my favourite."

When I ask Ben whether he has any other hobbies apart from railways, he leaves me breathless as he reels them off. "Football – I play for Biddenden Under 14s, where we are sixth in the table. Cricket – I play for Tenterden, and we won the League last season. Cycling – mostly locally. The longest I have done so far is 2 hours 15 minutes, but I would love to do the London to Brighton ride. Running – mostly on my own, although I am also in the school team. Army Cadets – I'm a corporal in the Youth Cadet Force. We meet twice a week, usually lighting fires in a field for cooking, doing patrols or playing games. Gardening – I have created a raised bed at home to grow vegetables." Ben seems to have an inexhaustible supply of energy. Last year he took part in the pump trolley challenge. Most of us would have collapsed after that: Ben went for a 5km run!

It is a common complaint among the older generation that young people are always buried in their phones. But anyone who has seen Ben at work will have observed how good he is at chatting to our visitors and making them feel special. While Ben is as happy as anyone else to use a phone, he doesn't want to be glued to it. "I prefer to be doing things," he explains. Perhaps that is the secret to his success as a volunteer.

Tony Ramsey

100 Years of the Has

*The K&ESR's classic Pullman cars, **Barbara** and **Theodora**, were 100 years old this year. This article looks at how they and their four sisters were used in the 38 years before they arrived on the K&ESR in September 1964*

The London to Hastings line via Tunbridge Wells was no stranger to luxury travel. As early as 1892, the South Eastern Railway had taken delivery of some superior carriages from an American builder, to compete with the Pullman cars being introduced on rival railways. At first these were used individually on certain expresses to Hastings and Dover, but in 1896 they were remodelled and formed into the Hastings Car Train, which formed the 8.40 a.m. up from Hastings and the 3.35 p.m. down train from Charing Cross. This carried first, second and third-class passengers with no supplementary fare in a style to which SER passengers had not previously been accustomed. The train was withdrawn at the start of the Great War in 1914.

In 1923 the railways of southern England were merged into the Southern Railway. Still recovering from wartime demands, the new company's services were heavily criticised, not least in Hastings. A deputation from Hastings Town

Council met the SR general manager, Sir Herbert Walker, in March 1925, and was promised a better train service and the introduction of Pullman cars.

Six new cars were ordered by the Pullman Car Company from the Metropolitan Carriage, Wagon & Finance Co. Ltd. of Saltley, Birmingham. They were generally similar to other Pullman cars of the period, with a steel underframe, a wooden body with matchboarding below the waist, four-wheel bogies and Pullman gangways with drophead buckeye couplers. However, they were narrower than usual, being only 8ft 1in over body panels, to suit the narrower tunnels of the Hastings line. There were seats for twenty first-class passengers, arranged in two saloons of eight and a coupé for four. The seats were upholstered in "art shades" and had tables in dark wood with glass tops. An electric bell was provided at each table to allow passengers to summon the attendant. The walls were panelled in wood, with marquetry in different designs by A. Dunn & Son of Chelmsford. There



Theodora at Stewarts Lane in the late 1920s

(Photographer not known; C.A.M. Ford collection)

Hastings Pullman Cars



Car 185 ex-Barbara 1958

(Photographer not known; via Tom Burnham)

was a lavatory with nickel-plated fittings. The kitchen had a gas-fired double cooker with rings, grill and ovens, and an ice chest. The pantry next to the kitchen incorporated storage for six dozen bottles of wine, a special cabinet for cigars and a locker for champagne in a recess under the floor. Water for the kitchen and lavatory was stored in a tank below the floor and supplied to the taps by compressed air from an electric pump.

The cars were in the familiar Pullman umber and cream livery and were named *Barbara*, *Camilla*, *Latona*, *Madeline*, *Pomona* and *Theodora*. In addition to the usual girls' names, *Latona* was the Roman goddess of darkness and the mother of *Apollo* and *Diana*, and *Pomona* was the Roman goddess of fruit trees.

Barbara, *Camilla* and *Madeline* entered service on 25th March 1926, with the remaining three following shortly afterwards. A single Pullman car was included in the 8.10, 8.35 and 11.15 a.m. and 5.5 p.m. trains from Hastings and the 10.30 a.m. (Saturdays only), and 2.10, 3.35, 5.4 (from Cannon Street) and 7.20 p.m. from Charing Cross. At first, the Pullman cars ran with older corridor carriages of SE&CR or L&SWR origin (requiring the use of gangway adaptors) but in April 1928 new corridor coaches of Maunsell design were ordered for

Hastings and Bexhill services. These were delivered from September 1929 and were mainly formed into 3-coach sets, with a Pullman car sandwiched between two sets. From mid-1931, the powerful 'Schools' class 4-4-0s began to appear on the Hastings line, following improvements to the permanent way, and Hastings expresses took the form they were to have until diesel trains began to appear in 1957.

There was a demand for Pullman travel to be available to third-class passengers, and, following a request by the Southern Railway to the Pullman Car Company, the cars were modified at the company's Preston Park, Brighton, works to have a first-class saloon with seven armchairs and the coupé with four, and a third-class saloon with ten chairs. The change was implemented at the end of July 1932. The supplement in addition to the normal fare was two shillings in first class and one shilling in third.

All Pullman and catering services were withdrawn during the 1939-45 war, and the Pullman cars were placed in store in various out-of-the-way sidings. After the war, *Barbara*, *Madeline* and *Pomona* were modified to offer a snack bar service, with the lavatory converted to a second pantry, a new bar counter with stand seats and an enlarged saloon

with 17 unclassified seats. The traditional Pullman livery was retained, but the names were replaced with the words “Refreshment Car” and Pullman staff were still used. In a nod to the new, more utilitarian post-war era, the Southern Railway’s public relations officer commented that the cars “were designed to feed the maximum number of people in the minimum amount of time”. The first train including a refreshment car was greeted at Hastings by civic dignitaries on 5th January 1946.

The other three cars, *Camilla*, *Latona* and *Theodora*, were refurbished as all-first-class cars and transferred to the SR Western Section for use in Ocean Liner boat trains between Waterloo and Southampton.

The British Railways modernisation plan of 1955 did not propose the electrification of the Tonbridge to Hastings line, which was instead to be operated by diesel-electric multiple unit trains. These came into service between May 1957 (following a fire which destroyed Cannon Street signalbox) and June 1958. Seven of the units included a buffet car, and when these were all in use there was no further need for Pullman cars on the Hastings line.

Following this, all six cars were rearranged as non-supplement buffet cars, including a Formica-topped bar counter. They were painted in BR Southern Region green, and lettered “Buffet”. As such, they were mainly used on Ocean Liner boat

trains, and in 1960 they were sold to BR and renumbered in the Southern Region coaching stock series.

As they were the only Southern Region catering vehicles built to the “Restriction 0” loading gauge of the Hastings line, they appeared as buffet cars on a couple of special excursions to Tenterden Town over the remaining goods-only section of the K&ESR. These were the “Kent & East Sussex Special” organised by G. R. Lockie of Upper Norwood on 18th October 1959, and the “South Eastern Limited” of the Locomotive Club of Great Britain, which ran on 11th June 1961 to mark the closure of the Hawkhurst branch and the final closure to goods of the K&ESR. The buffet car in the latter train was S7874S, previously *Theodora*, perhaps foreshadowing what was to come!

By December 1963, all six of the former Pullman cars were deemed surplus to requirements by BR. Fortunately, the former *Barbara* and *Theodora* were saved while en route to a scrapyard in South Wales and in September 1964 they were delivered to Robertsbridge goods yard, where rolling stock was being assembled for the nascent K&ESR Preservation Society.

Some details are from “Pullman Profile No 2: The Standard ‘K-Type’ Cars”, by Antony M Ford. I should like to thank Doug Lindsay and William Barter for assistance with this article.

Tom Burnham



Barbara (leading) and Theodora (third vehicle) on the Wealden Pullman

(Phil Edwards)

Glenn Roofthoof

Glenn Roofthoof was born in Antwerp on 3rd November 1948, the son of Georges, a professional photographer and his wife Joyce, who met in Belgium towards the end of WW2 and married there in 1947. After the birth of Glenn's first sister Diane in late 1950, the family moved to Hull where his second sister Margo was born. When Glenn was thirteen the family moved to Purley, where he made lifelong friends and where their garden backed onto the Brighton main railway line. On leaving school he took up an apprenticeship in the printing industry; however, he realised that his real interest lay in trams and railways - including volunteering on the pre-opening K&ESR.

In late 1973 Glenn left England for Australia as a 'Ten Pound Pom'. He joined one of his friends from Purley who had emigrated several months earlier to Western Australia, for adventure as much as anything. With the temperature in England close to zero, Glenn arrived in Perth and then joined his friend in the small town of Wyndham in the north-west of Western Australia, where the temperature was 45°C. The two emigres did various jobs, including at the local hotel and bar, and also as 'wharfies' loading bales of materials at Wyndham wharf. After a while the pull of rails proved too strong and Glenn decided to move to Melbourne to meet up with more English friends who had found work on the Melbourne tramway system. Glenn was quickly employed as a tram conductor and was soon promoted to driver and instructor on the fleet, some of which dated back to the 1920s. In 1976 he married, and switched to driving buses which provided better pay and hours. The fleet included 1950s half-cab AEC vehicles, so the vintage connection was maintained.

Glenn's marriage did not last, and after his divorce he left the tramways and used his print-industry skills to work for ICI Australia as a graphic artist, together with the friend from Purley who had originally encouraged Glenn to travel to Australia. In 1980 he developed two forms of cancer. The first was treated with surgery in Melbourne; for the second, about six

months later, he returned to England for treatment at the Royal Marsden in London. After some three months, the treatment was successful and thankfully Glenn remained free of cancer for another forty-six years.

He returned to Melbourne and resumed his career on the tramways, where he saw the introduction of the new fleet of trams and light rail vehicles. He was also able to drive the vintage 'tourist trams' both in Melbourne and 115km away in Ballarat.

Glenn's interest in steam was not confined to the



Glenn at work in Rolvenden yard

(Ian Scarlett)

railways. With some like-minded friends at the Maritime Museum in Melbourne, he built two steam launches. Seeking adventure, he travelled to Sydney to help bring a coal-fired steam tug back to Melbourne. The crew encountered severe weather and mountainous seas, during which the tug lost radio contact and it was feared that she might have been lost. The crew worked four hours on / four hours off shifts while stoking six furnaces, which dispelled any ideas of the romance of coal firing at sea. At one point Glenn was carried out of the stoke hold and onto the deck and hosed down. Apparently, he would not have missed it for the world!

Glenn returned to England in 1987 with a new partner in life, who he married in 1994. He returned to the print industry and rejoined the Kent & East Sussex Railway as a locomotive cleaner, in due course becoming a long-serving and highly respected fireman.

When the Croydon Tramlink system was being built in the late 1990s Glenn applied for a job – a story relates that when the interviewers heard about the experience he had acquired in Melbourne, they practically locked the door to prevent him leaving! He worked on commissioning new trams as they were delivered and became one of a small team of trainer-drivers, teaching new recruits how to drive the trams. Shortly after the system opened in 2000 Glenn arranged a visit to the Therapia Lane depot for his friends and colleagues, including many from the K&ESR. It concluded with a ride out on the trams to the terminus at New Addington.

After a while Glenn, joined Victa Railfreight, a company with strong K&ESR connections. Victa were training drivers, and shunting and operating the extensive but temporary freight yard at Beechbrook Farm, used by the contractors building the Channel Tunnel high-speed line (HS1) across Kent during 2001 and 2002. At one point during this contract, it is said that the team established a haulage record for the Class 14 diesels of 1000 tons! The company also worked at the new Network Rail freight yard at Whitmoor in Cambridgeshire – with the requirement not to sound loco horns before 8am in case it woke the prisoners at the adjacent jail. Glenn's next job beckoned in the form of the rebuilding of the East London line to become part of London Overground (now known as the Windrush line). This involved more training and assessment of construction drivers and shunters. The team worked in Brunel's historic Thames tunnel – one-time stamping ground of the LB&SCR Class A1 'Terrier' engines with which Glenn would have been familiar on the K&ESR. Once the infrastructure was complete, he became a pilotman as the trains and signalling were commissioned.

After that, Glenn returned to main line freight.

He accompanied nuclear flask trains in charge of shunting, loading, security and the complex paperwork. Approaching 2013 and nearing retirement age he realised there was not enough time to pay off his former railway cottage at Coulsdon. He took his final job as a construction train driver on the Crossrail project (now the Elizabeth Line). The job was to move spoil from the tunnel boring machine working between Paddington and Farringdon on a 3-foot gauge system on what he considered to be the most dangerous job he had ever taken. He did not enjoy it but the money was good and a month after his retirement age the house was paid off.

As well as full-size steam railways Glenn was an active member of the Surrey Society of Model Engineers based at the Leatherhead Miniature Railway, where he owned and operated several locomotives. He also built a railway in his garden and was an avid collector of railwayana from around the world.

Glenn's other consuming interest was as a member of the 18th Missouri Volunteer Infantry regiment of American Civil War re-enactors. He participated regularly in events in the UK and the US. Glenn continued to visit the K&ESR long after his retirement, most recently in 2025 while visitor 76017 was running.

At the end of 2025 Glenn's cancer returned and spread quickly. He died on 18 March 2026. His funeral was held on 16 April and was attended by his family, friends and colleagues. He will be remembered as being knowledgeable, kind, an excellent firing instructor and possessed of a fine sense of humour.

Compiled by IS using material published in the April 2026 edition of The Toolbox newsletter of the Surrey Society of Model Engineers with additional input from Glenn's family and friends in Australia and the UK.

John Creed

John sadly passed away peacefully in The William Harvey Hospital in Ashford (Kent) on Sunday 29th March 2026. He was 67 and had been in declining health since before the pandemic and latterly was slowly fading.

He worked for Post Office Telephones/British Telecom (BT) throughout his career, at least latterly as part of a small team planning how BT would respond to all types of emergency. As a result he became very knowledgeable about BT infrastructure throughout the South East.

I first met John after he joined the Signalling Record Society (SRS) and regularly was our point of contact with that organisation, and he did much research for

me on the signalling arrangements of the K&ESR.

In 2018 his health began to deteriorate and he felt unable to continue his visits to various Kent signal boxes, and he told me that he was "hanging up his duster."

John's knowledge of the signalling and operations of the railways in Kent, Surrey and Sussex was immeasurable. Much of this knowledge was scanned to create research notes on CDs that were freely available, he also worked with others to produce three regional signal box registers and wrote 16 articles for publication in *The Signalling Record*. Always willing to help enthusiasts and others his kindness showed through his natural reservedness. I will miss him as a friend of 30 years, as will the many others with whom he came into contact.

NSW

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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