



Ecclesbourne Express

*Newsletter of the Ecclesbourne Valley
Railway Association*

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WINTER 2023



The Wirksworth to Duffield Line

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association
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Our Spring Edition (Issue 90) will be published in April 2023

Contributions are welcome by post/email to the editors: ***editorsEE@talktalk.net***

The **DEADLINE DATE** for inclusion in the Spring Issue will be **March 12th 2023**

NB A reminder will be sent 7 days prior to the deadline date.

PLEASE REPLY TO: *editorsEE@talktalk.net*.

We cannot emphasise enough how important the deadline date is!

Front Cover: The Last Day of the 2022 'Train through Christmas Countryside'.

photo supplied by WyvernRail

Back Cover: 80080 hauls The Memorial Train weekend service on 12th November.

photo © David Hayes

Letter from the editors

Well that's it for this year, Santa's been and gone, the New Year toasted and we start all over again in the 2023 season.

First of all, a **BIG** thank you to all who contributed to Hannah's appeal featured in the last issue. We have now raised £1200 for Nottingham City Hospital, and the appeal remains open. Enter "Gofund.me/544a9ea7" in Google to donate if you can (with out the apostrophes).

We have had a cracking year, Halloween was a success and the Wizarding Weekend saw the miniature railway carry its most passengers ever, with Tubby, the battery loco, doing 47 trips and travelling over 10 miles in the day.

As usual, our Christmas presentation has gone very well with the trains sold out and lots of happy, smiling faces, young and old.

The overworked permanent way team are currently taking huge strides with sleeper replacement south of Hazelwood in order to return at least the southern part of our line to normal speeds. After the Christmas runs are over, they will no doubt be sorting the more northerly sections as well, so, a big thank you to them as well.

The cold weather early in December proved to be a challenge, especially for the steam teams as the water feeds at Wash Green were frozen solid and 17th December saw this editor with a gas blowlamp trying to free off the valve on the feed tank! We were half an hour late getting away but no-one seemed to mind too much - maybe thanks to Sandra's mulled wine from the new sales shed on platform 1... The buffet had no water either, so lots of people were ferrying bottles of water around for the first hour or so. But we made it!

HAPPY NEW YEAR



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**As always, please check at
e-v-r.com for up-to-date
information regarding
services, times and
facilities before travelling to
the Railway.**

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ECCLESBOURNE VALLY RAILWAY ASSOCIATION REPORT FOR 2022

The EVRA Board.

EVRA was formed as a charity when it became obvious that there were advantages in having both a charity arm and a PLC arm for the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway.

The charity can apply for and get grants that the PLC cannot and vice-versa.

Since 2002 EVRA have provided much needed materials, equipment and volunteers to the railway. We are not permitted under the terms of the Charity Commission rules to make cash payments, even as loans to any PLC, so we have always supplied materials only or paid for services.

Having said that, any Heritage Railway relies heavily on its volunteer workforce, and all of our volunteers have to be EVRA members to be insured, or to work on site, so we effectively supply a large part of the labour force as well, free of charge to the PLC (WyvernRail).

The material cost for any serious work on the infrastructure is horrendous. This year alone we have provided materials to the cost of over £27,000 for ballast and sleepers for the intrepid Permanent Way team to repair and replace sections of the line. See the later article for the current situation with that, it also included the cost of supplying new blades for the Duffield North points at around £12,000 and the costs soon mount up. A late problem was discovered with a broken rail near the steam shed which has involved even more ballast and sleepers being needed, work is on going as this is being written.

In addition, EVRA have supplied and installed a new mess room at a cost of £7000 (plus fitting) to replace the old Portakabin that was rotting away after many years of service, initially on platform 1 followed by a surprisingly successful move down the yard (it did not fall apart!) when the railway was granted use of the current booking office and shop.

We supplied, fitted and installed the new Victorian style lighting on the approach road and car park at a cost of approximately £9,000 in time for the Christmas Season running, despite some pretty awful weather conditions during the week of installation.

Our two Barclay locos now need some attention. Henry Ellison's boiler refurbishment at a conservative cost of £20,000 plus Brian Harrison's annual boiler inspection and any remedial work required will add to this year's expenses. (See appeal on page 7.)

Add to this, the projects we have assisted with over the last 20 years and money, which amounts to over £1,300,000, has been well spent we feel. The new museum and EVRA shop is just one part of the proposed new station building, and plans are afoot to get the next phase up and running in the near future.



WINTER REPORT

Ian Bowley Company Secretary

Well, here we are again at the end of another year and unfortunately not a great deal has been achieved. Still no steam shed! It has taken many months to decide that we should move its location further south down the car park and increase its width to around 50 ft x 120 ft long. This of course means a higher price of around £148,000 for the shed plus pits, electrics, water etc. and we still need a lease.

As for phase two & three of the station building, we now have a new architect and structural engineer as we need to change the design internally to achieve more space. As yet we don't have a revised estimate but like everything else it will increase in price. The other stumbling block is that we are still waiting for a lease as unfortunately WyvernRail are waiting for the land registry to register their purchase of the railway.

Henry Ellison remains on loan to Cambrian Railways and is making us some money for its boiler. That will be out of ticket at the end of the year and will possibly need somewhere around £20,000 to £30,000 spending on it. (Please see an appeal for funding in another part of this magazine). Cathryn is still not finished, but is getting there. The problem is with the safety valves, which must work to perfection for obvious reasons. The TSO coach is slowly but surely being rebuilt by Lee Sharpe and our volunteers. We have decided to mothball the SO coach until further notice as it needs a large amount of time and money spending on it and WyvernRail do not have an immediate requirement for it.

Following a request from Neil Ferguson-Lee, EVRA trustees decided to provide lighting for the Station Approach. The Victorian style lamps, certainly look the part at night. (Comment from the editor, all we need now is people wearing Victorian dress). The installation wasn't without problems as wet weather threatened to delay the work but the lamps were ready for the beginning of December and the Santa season. At the same time we installed safety/security lamps in the car park beyond the Museum and further down the yard.

Anyway, enough of my ramblings. I hope you all have had a very Merry Christmas and wish you a prosperous New Year. And many, many thanks to all our volunteers, without whom there would be no railway.

SALES MATTERS

Pat Craft

As always we have received a very large number of donations of books, DVDs and other items – probably over 2,000 items in total to be dealt with – pricing, Gift aiding where appropriate and then finding space on the shelves or in storage. We are very grateful for all these donations, without which the shop's contribution to EVRA's funds would be much less.

The total taken in September, October and November was £10,126 gross plus £898 from e-bay sales. In October, during the Model Railway Exhibition, we held the annual half price book sale, raising £1367 in the shop and £695 at the Exhibition and a stall at Mickleover Model Railway show at the start of October also raised £723 to help with this total. Running days were reduced in both October and November so the opportunities for sales were fewer. Once again, both the Trustees and I are very grateful to the shop volunteers who help in so many ways to raise this sum.

At present we are snowed under with magazines (with a small container full) and ask that only the last couple of years of Steam Railway, Heritage Railway, The Railway magazine Modern Railways and model railway titles are donated.

MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION 2022 & 2023

Mike Craft

The 17th Wirksworth Model Railway Exhibition in October was a great success, following the two year enforced gap. It was pleasing to see so many regulars back again and also the numbers of new visitors too. Numbers were on a par with 2019 and people were delighted to see a high proportion of new layouts, many produced in lockdown and to stock up with items from the varied range of traders. The profit will go towards EVRA projects on the railway.

Following discussions during the Exhibition the organisers are now planning two events for 2023. There will be a new exhibition: The East Midlands Large Scale Model Railway show, with O gauge, G scale, Gauge 1 and 16mm layouts and full trade support. This has received sponsorship from British model manufacturers PECO and will be held in the Maltings (formerly the Parish Rooms) and the Memorial Hall in Wirksworth on Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th July. Unfortunately, we have had to move the date of the 18th Autumn exhibition to 30th September and 1st October, because one of the national shows has changed its dates to mid -October and many of our traders would be going to that one.

Details of both will be on the national website and the EVRA website in the New Year.

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Steve Orchard

Hello! A brief introduction, I've been with EVR for 18 months, I joined following a very enjoyable Driver Experience Day with Lewis Chuck and Peter Blount. I've now trained and qualified as a guard and am thoroughly enjoying doing my bit for the railway in whatever way I can. I've been made to feel very welcome at EVR and hope to do the same for others new to the organisation.

I shall gradually take over as Treasurer from Lindsey Bowley, starting as Assistant Treasurer to Lindsey, giving me an opportunity to be trained and get to grips with all I need to know, we will then swap roles in a few months. Relevant to the position of Treasurer, I've been a Bank Branch Manager (back in the day when banks had lots of branches, remember that?!) and an Independent Financial Adviser. I've also been Treasurer for a flying syndicate and chaired a charitable organisation. I'm employed as a presenter and programme editor at commercial radio station, Lincs FM. I live with my wife, Anne, a couple of rescue moggies, and a slowly developing model railway, near Wollaton Park, Nottingham.

I look forward to getting to know as many members as possible over the coming months and years.

Just a quick reminder of how lucky EVR has been.

This note is an extract from the HRA update for November 2022:

The West Somerset Railway has, this week, had to close part of its line near Tribble Bridge following a 'land shift' from adjoining land. The adjacent land suffered the consequences of a significant downpour in the early hours of Tuesday morning, resulting in a huge wash of spoil, waste and water being sent across part of the railway, which has also impacted on nearby houses. This is in a similar location to a previous issue which led to the A358 being closed after the 'potato wash-out'.

HENRY ELLISON FUND RAISING APPEAL

Lindsey Bowley

Our much-loved blue Barclay locomotive, Henry Ellison, will shortly be returning from his holiday home at Cambrian Heritage Railways as it is time for him to undergo his 10-year boiler overhaul and certification. This is essential maintenance that is required to keep him in action for the next 10 years. Until the boiler has been stripped down the cost of repairs is not known but is likely to be in excess of £20,000.

I am therefore asking our membership to donate to this Appeal to ensure that we keep Henry on track.

WAYS TO DONATE.

***TEXT GIVING:** The easiest way to donate to the appeal. Simply text HENRY followed by your donation amount to **70470** to give that amount. Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message and you will be opted in to hearing more from us. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear more from us, please text: **HENRYNOINFO**.

***BACS PAYMENT:** If you would prefer to make payment by BACS please send donations to Sort Code 30-90-25 Account Number 01212020. Please quote your surname and HENRY in the reference.

***BY CHEQUE:** Cheques made payable to EVRA may be sent to Lindsey Bowley, 164 Cole Lane, Borrowash, DERBY DE72 3GP. Please write HENRY on the reverse of the cheque.

***REGULAR MONTHLY PAYMENTS:** If you would like to make a regular monthly payment to support our steam locomotives and coaches please let me know and I will forward you a form to join our Locomotive and Carriage Club. You can contact me by email on treasurer@evra.com, mobile 07756011790 or by post at the address given above. Thank you for your support. EVRA Treasurer.

100 CLUB CHRISTMAS PRIZE DRAW

Andrew Denham

1st Prize: £89.53 C.A. of Wembley

2nd Prize: £63.95 I.S. of Derby

3rd Prize: £51.16 P.S. of Spondon

4th Prize: £25.58 R.H of Belper

5th Prize: £25.58 S.H of Ambergate

Please note that legally we are no longer allowed to give names, so only initials appear here. All winners will be advised in the normal way.



BAGNALL NO. 2746 The Duke

Tim Oaks

We continue to be plagued by supply chain issues, but these are beginning to ease. The old main copper steam pipe has been delivered to Newtons of Cromford for use as a template for the manufacture of two new ones' which is very cost effective as one piece of steel stock pipe is just big enough to make a pair. The second one will be greased up and put into store.

Mick and John have completed the ashpan damper linkage, and are now working on the whistle operating links

We are hoping to make use of the original SJ vacuum ejector, provided it can be persuaded to operate down to a lower pressure, but getting hard information on the subject is proving difficult; in principle it should be possible to fit different sized cones inside, but the exact details remain a mystery. Plan B would be to fit a different design of ejector, but this would require a new combined steam/vacuum application valve, which is not easy to get. Some Austerity locomotives are fitted with a Penberthy No.6 ejector and two of these are on order.

The 8F van body roof has now been fully recovered and the 3 phase wiring inside is complete; we await connection of the workshop to the mains and have made a contribution to the connection cost.



Left:

Bagnall No. 2746

'The Duke'

All photos © Tim Oaks



Our two latest Dapol wagons have arrived, Hillhead Quarries Ltd £15-00 and Buggleskelly Industrial & Cooperative Wholesale Society £16-00; both are selling well at the moment, postage is £4-50 for up to 4 wagons.



THE TRAIN THROUGH CHRISTMAS COUNTRYSIDE 2022

Leigh Gratton

It is that time of year again! The Train Through Christmas Countryside is in full swing. This year we've sold around 40% more compartments than last year which shows that the popularity of this product is growing year on year. The whole event takes a huge effort from all departments on our railway, either directly or indirectly, so I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody for their hard work and effort. These trains are vital for the railway in terms of revenue and they also do a lot to boost our reputation too.

Preparations begin in the summer when tickets go on sale and the team from On Track Productions beaver away in the background preparing the audio tracks and holding auditions for the cast. In the meantime, we focus on marketing. It is once the season ended in November that activity really ramped up with the new shelter on Platform 1 being decorated with our lovely decorations, the new sales shack being commissioned and, for the first time, Shottle dressed as Santa's Station getting illuminated through the use of a generator.

It takes a lot of volunteers to operate the trains in top and tail formation plus handling the logistics of carrying thousands of people in a short space of time. Cookies and hot chocolate making is a big undertaking, as is check in admin and cleaning. One important task which can go largely unnoticed is the packing of the presents before each train so that the children receive a present from Santa. Disaster was averted a few days before the last week of trains as the twenty-six boxes of gifts for the eight day run were caught up at the parcel depot due to strike action. Whilst the carrier used wasn't on strike, the additional demand they were experiencing caused chaos. We're very grateful to Reid Freight Services, usually seen transporting locomotives and coaches for us, who rescued the gifts from the parcel depot and brought them over to Wirksworth just in time!

We'll be producing a Christmas Special of our documentary 'Beyond the Tracks' available via Facebook and YouTube to show just some of the activities which take place in preparation for and during the event. A period of calm descends after Christmas as we prepare and plan for the 2023 season which begins on 1st April 2023.





New shelter for this year on Platform 1.



Mulled wine or a hot drink anyone?



80080 provides some much needed heating!



Santa, Elf and Helper at Shottle.



The Red Lion



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The work this period has consisted of finishing off the new siding 5 at Wirksworth and getting started on the big track relaying jobs on the main line. The first site we have tackled is between Hazelwood and footpath crossing F4. Train crews will be familiar with this section as it is subject to a 10 mph TSR pending completion of this work.

After the last service train of the season to Duffield we broke the track at F4 and started the relay, working northwards. The method of work is to first release the elastic spikes that hold the rails down. This can be a devil of a job, as they get rusted into the baseplates. We have been fortunate so far in that we have only had to resort to the big hammer a few times. Once the rails are released, they are lifted out with one of the road/rail excavators and stood to one side. The baseplates then have to be gathered up (by hand) and stacked at the lineside. These weigh 18 kg each, so plenty of exercise on offer! The old sleepers are loosened with a bar then picked up with the mini digger and stacked at the lineside for later retrieval. The mini digger then grades the old ballast (what is left of it) to a level surface and lifts in the concrete sleepers, one by one. These have to be lined up to a string line before being fitted with rail pads. The rails are then lifted back in and clipped up. The new track is, of course, higher than the old, so there is a step between new and old. This prevents rail vehicles from traversing the site, and is why we have to do this work in a blockade of the line.

On a few panels of track, the ballast is so fouled with soil from the fields that we will have to excavate it and take it away. This is a slower process and new bottom ballast has to be brought in. Once all 11 panels have been re-laid, the track will be ballasted using the dogfish hoppers and then we can use our new tools - the lifting and slewing machine and tamping head. The tamping head has already been used to pack siding 5 and very quick it was! The lifting and slewing machine has been expertly restored to as-new condition by Joe Hallford-Marsden and his assistants. We can't wait to try it out. The track will be lifted in two stages, of 75 mm each, so that there is around 150 mm of new ballast beneath the sleepers. The new track should outlast us all!

The work of the P'way team is always varied and new volunteers are always welcome. We meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays with Mike Fairburn.

Contact Mike by email: mikefairburn57@live.co.uk




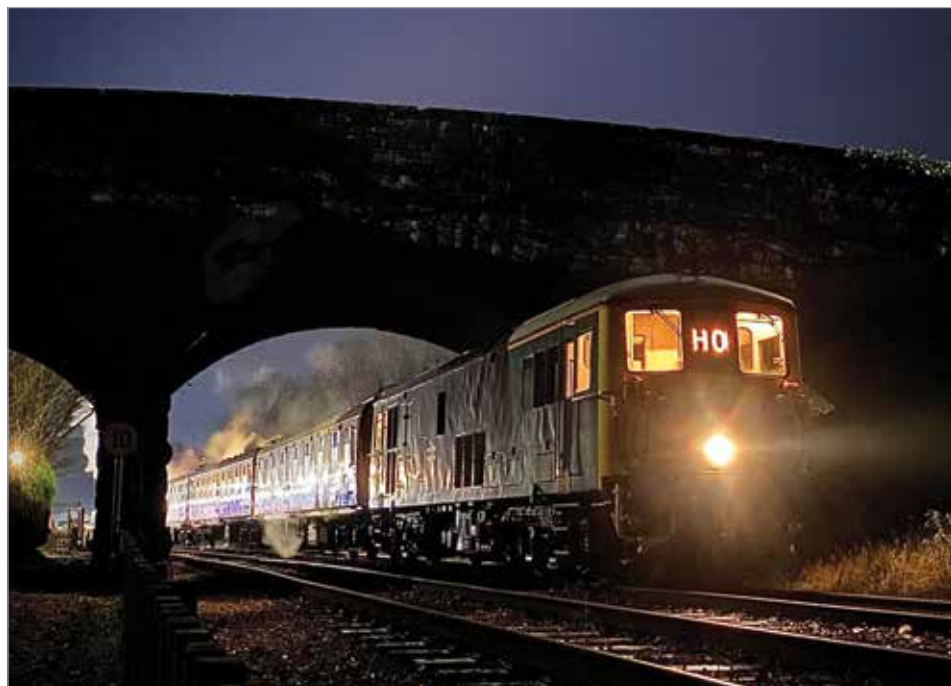

**Ben Field starts
Christmas preparations
at Shottle Station**

Photo:

© John Stokes







Our resident diesels, D9531 (Teddy Bear) and 73001 on Santa duty with 80080 at the North End, providing steam heating and a gentle push.



P12 Top left: 73001 about to depart from Wirsbworth on 10th December

Photo © John Stokes

P12 Bottom left: 73001 on the same day at 18.00 also about to leave.

(Had to get a HO-HO in somehow — Eds)



Photo © Oliver Hodgkinson

P13: D9531 waits as 80080 takes water on 19th December.

Photo © Andrew Mitchell

P14: 80080 emerges from the icy murk on 17th December after taking water ready for the first service of the day, a little late owing to weather conditions.

Photo © Andrew Denham



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A REALLY COLD START: 17th DECEMBER.



The 17th of December will stick in my mind as the coldest day I have ever experienced on a loco. We booked on at 05.45 that morning and it was fortunate that we did, as everything down the yard had frozen. We normally have a hose pipe to top up things ready, but not that day! The driver

only lives a few hundred yards away and had been able to keep the fire alight overnight so we were ready to go by about 08.00 to warm the coaches after we had coaled up and unfrozen the loco brakes! Once on the coaches, we spotted a massive steam leak at the Wash Green end and so I went to check. The heating valve had been left open. Whilst down there, I checked the water column and it was frozen solid! Not good when the steam heating is being used.

We abandoned the coaches and went to try to free off the water column. Even the emergency feed was frozen and we were running out of both time and water. After applying hot water from the loco's slacking pipe, the column was still solid. Similar treatment with a bucket did not free the emergency supply valve. A small gas blowlamp was being used to free off the frozen toilet water feeds and so we hijacked that and were able to get around 600 gallons in our tanks along with the ice already in there.

The 71 had issues with frozen brakes as well and later the horns froze, so we used our slacking pipe to free them.

We were still low on water, so the poor passengers had no heating on the first trip back, but no-one seemed to mind too much.

We heaved a sigh of relief when we were able to fill 'er up for the second run of the day. *The next day was even worse as the tank feed had frozen and no water was going in to the tank! By the end of the day it was getting crucial!*

Andrew Denham, fireman on the day and part of the editorial team.

MEMORIAL TRAIN

Editors



Photo © Dave Williams

On 11th November we ran a special memorial train for the Routes Of Remembrance. 80080 pulled the private charter.

Our intrepid steam team booked on at 04.30 that day to ensure everything was ready for the departure.

The train carried the wreath for the whole weekend to mark the event.



(See also rear cover picture.)

LET THERE BE LIGHT!

On a lighter note, literally, the station approach is finally better lit. The much needed lamps were fitted during a week of pouring rain, but the result is pretty good. Well worth the effort and cost we think.





Mitchell's Artisan Butchery

Mitchell's Artisan Butchery is an independently owned butchers shop, located in Wirksworth, Derbyshire, UK. We only deal in locally sourced meats derived from good farming standards.

We believe in respecting our animals. This means that we only sell free range, local meats. We also pride ourselves in being able to use the entire carcass, and not wasting anything provided to us from our local farmers.

21 Market Place, Wirksworth
www.mitchellsartisanbutchery.co.uk 01629 820261



17th MODEL RAILWAY EXHIBITION

October 2022



A very successful event. These pictures show some of the layouts in the Parish Rooms in Wirksworth. See p 5 *All Photos © John Hastings-Thomson*

Firstly, A Merry Christmas to All.



As winter is now upon us with short days and cold nights, the steam team has been frantically preparing for the Santa Season, which this year will be the busiest ever.

Unfortunately, a late major blow to us is the ban on the use of the steam shed due to the parlous state of the track leading into it. Plans are being drawn up to fix the situation asap, but, meanwhile, we cannot risk putting the weight of the Std 4 on it whilst the Santa trains are running. See picture after a start was made!

Meanwhile, we are using the Maintenance Pit for loco prep with provision made to keep the risk of blocking the pit pump with ash deposit to a minimum. The first weekend of Santa trains has seen that adjustments need to be made to the working practices.

Whilst the Std 4 does sterling stuff on the mainline, Barclay No3 'Brian Harrison' has been stripped down awaiting its annual boiler inspection. Its use this year has been mainly for 'Steam Experiences', a job it is admirably

suitable for, and 'Driver for a Fiver' at our Gala days. These proved to be very popular, though, with costs rising, it might cost a bit more next year !!

Barclay 'Henry Ellison' has been away on loan to the Cambrian Railway at Oswestry, where it has been a great success for them over the summer. Its 10 year boiler ticket has now expired, but Oswestry have been granted permission from the relevant authorities for it to be steamed to provide steam heating for their Santa trains.

I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who has given their time to help the steam team during the year. It's not an easy task maintaining steam locos. As you know, I am fond of saying, '5% is posing on the footplate, the other 95% is sheer hard, dirty work' !

So once again thanks to those willing to come in and get very mucky week in week out. I salute you !!

Cheers and a Happy New Year.

We were passed the following note:

"I have received a Christmas card from Norman Boulton who also sends his best wishes to EVRA as well

It might be appropriate to convey his greetings to the team, especially those who know him.

Happy Christmas to all from me, Eric Boulton"

GUARD TRAINING

John Jarman

A guard is primarily in charge of the safety of a train, its passengers and crew. The guard inspects coaches before commencement of service, controls attachment of a locomotive onto a train, performs brake tests and gives authority to the driver to depart from a station. He or she is also responsible for timekeeping and keeps a log of times and the number of passengers.

During their working day a guard will communicate with passengers, locomotive crew, station staff and the responsible officer. They also work closely with the mobile crossing keeper, who both operates level crossing gates and performs ticket checks. The guard will manage incidents such as breakdowns, delays and illness or injury, for which first aid training is provided.

At the time of writing, the railway has 17 qualified guards with 2 more in training, 9 new guards having qualified in the last two years. We always have room for more and are inviting applications to train as a guard in 2023. It's usually possible to qualify around 3 months after commencement of training, which starts with formal instruction on Wirsbworth Yard, stock examination and level crossing operation. Guards then complete a minimum of 6 supervised turns on regular services, both with locomotive hauled stock and DMUs. During the period of training a trainee must pass the written guards' theory paper, plus online assessments covering route knowledge, track safety, the rule book and shunting.

Guards must be physically fit, able to climb in and out of a train from track level. They must be smart in appearance, willing to wear a uniform and provide both this and the majority of their equipment at their own expense. In return you will get satisfaction and pleasure from performing a vital, frontline role on the railway, being a prominent public face interacting with customers. Guards are often asked to pose for photographs and frequently engage in conversation about the railway and its trains.

As the department is currently all male, we'd particularly like to take on female trainees. Prospective guards are invited to register their interest by contacting:

The Head Guard, John Jarman, via email to: johnjarman2502@gmail.com

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

A big Thank You from us to those who managed to get their articles to us on time, it makes it a bit less of a rush at this busy time of the year.

Please remember that we are always on the lookout for articles, anecdotes, pictures or anything to do with the Railway, or just the area around the line and its history.

So get out that new pen set/computer/i-pad/tablet that you got from Santa and get scribbling.

Finally: **Thanks for a GREAT Year to all the railway staff, volunteers and, of course, all of the paying visitors who actually pay for this train set!**

REBUILDING A BR MK1 COACH

James Hallam

Over the last year, EVRA's Mk1 TSO has seen the majority of the welding work completed during a stay in the maintenance shed. In this issue of the Ecclesbourne Express we will focus on the rebuilding of the toilet end of the coach also known as the No 1 end.

When the coach entered the shed, the end was largely stripped back with the majority of the corrosion previously cut out on its last visit. The major framework had been braced at this point to limit warping and distortion. The first job was to fit a new gusset plate, at 3/8th (~10 mm) and spanning the width of the coach it forms the base on which the end structure sits. To secure the gusset plate to the underframe it was plug welded to the top of the headstock and via fillet welds to the main longitudinal member.



Next up: the replacement of the 4 Collision pillars. Collision pillars on Mk1 coaches are a key area for corrosion. Where the pillar meets the gusset plate forms a water trap for condensation. The TSO was no exception, the coach has been out of service for a long period of time and thus all 4 pillars needed around 8-10 inches of pillar renewing.



The next focus was to repair the 2 toilet bodysides. Like the gusset plate, the bodysides are secured to the underframe with a 3/8th plate. On to which, angles (called "outriggers") extend outwards to clamp the curved top hat section. The extent of the corrosion is usually expected on the toilet end of the coach, mainly due to the steam heat radiator sitting within the bodyside.



Both 3/8th plates have been renewed as well as the outriggers, and the wasted Top hat and Z sections. Once this was complete, the Lazy L was attached to the bottom edge of the bodyside structure, giving the exterior

Cont'd:
skin rigidity. The exterior skins were then stitch welded on, panel joins were seam welded and ground flush before the window aperture was cut out.

With the end structure complete, the next job was to fit the formed end skins. The skins are the item that makes the most visual impact when undertaking a full reskin. Within a couple of days the bare framework is virtually all covered by new material!

To facilitate a full end reskin, around 3" of roof skin has been cut back; this allowed us to remove the body-end closure strip. With the new end skins fitted, a new closure strip can be fitted. These items were supplied by South Devon Railway Engineering, who manufacture and sell steel stock components to help these vehicles to be preserved.

With the closure strip fitted, a new mild steel roof skin can be formed around the roof line and tacked down, before seam welding fully to the existing roof sheet.

Part 2 will be in a later issue of the magazine when this end of the coach will be completed.

Picture information:

Page 15:

Top: Toilet Left side panel refurbishment.

Centre: Right side refurbishment

Bottom: New panel fitted

Page 16:

Top: Side panel with window cut out

Bottom: Closure strip in place.

We are sure that James' efforts are appreciated by all at EVRA and the Coach Club contributors.

Eds.



All photos © James Hallam



A NEW YEAR AND A NEW APPROACH

Neil Ferguson-Lee, Chairman, WyvernRail plc

In November, this railway as a community owned and managed venture entered its fourth decade, and with it I eased into the Chair, having been guided for the past three decades by John Snell, a man who, while self-effacing, had the vision and tenacity to see through a vision at a time when most rational observers saw a lost cause. John proved the doubters wrong and has left us a legacy that we must cherish and help grow. John has been elevated to the role as President of WyvernRail plc: this reflects John's continuing critical role in the strategy of the railway.

The environment we face in 2023 is different not only to that in 1993 but also to that as recently as 2013. The regulatory environment we operate in today is considerably tighter than when we first opened to Duffield, while environmental concerns have moved to the forefront. From a commercial perspective, events and catering must be the priority: in 2022, catering accounted for nearly 50% of revenues for most of the peak season, while revenues for our *Train Through Christmas Countryside* hit £125,000; £30,000 more than 2021 and approximately twice the revenue taken in 2020.

To operate in a tighter regulatory environment while performing at this level strains the whole organisation. Without our volunteer base, willing to come out in all weathers and times of the year, we would be dead in the water. In turn, our few paid employees provide far more than they are contracted-to, showing a level of dedication that many firms can only dream-of.

It is very important to stress that we continue to seek-out new volunteers, especially in permanent way and infrastructure roles. Should you know of any friends of family who may be interested, please do reach out to them and introduce them to the railway.

But it is our infrastructure that is under the greatest strain. Until we took title of the line in 2019, we had a free ride with much of the infrastructure as Network Rail retained responsibility for structures (28 bridges plus about 100 other items), but cracks are developing in what we have - in one or two cases, quite literally. In turn, our track is probably 70 years old, having been recycled from the Millers Dale line in the early 1970s. We face a challenge where the track is deteriorating at a rate that our permanent way team is struggling to match, with the result that temporary speed restrictions may become a feature of operations over the next two or three years. To address this, we need resources in the form of equipment, volunteers and funding.

These challenges pale into insignificance in comparison to what we faced when the 'first eight' started on the track in November 2000, so I have every confidence that what we face now can and will be overcome. However, we must up our game in three areas: the management and coordination of projects and the acquisition of new funds through grants and awards. In the first area, we are seeking to create one single list of projects that must be prioritised and costed, but in the second I fear the

organisation has a very long way to go to seek, apply for and follow-through with external funding, whilst you will see that I have stressed the need for volunteers already.

This is where we need you! Grant funding takes a great deal of effort to arrange. There are organisations who will assist with the process, and they will often do a lot of the hard work with the applications, but – ultimately – we need to create a strong and compelling case for why our railway may receive funding.

With a clear set of priorities and objectives, we have the ingredients for us to start some major projects in 2023, some with funding in place and others acting as the basis for a funding bid. For the latter, we need to ensure any bid ‘ticks the boxes’ of education, inclusivity and a demonstrable, enduring, benefit. This takes time and requires a strong, sincere and well-written application.

Such a change in approach will take time to bed-in. First of all, we need to agree the priorities while agreeing the team. This will all take place in parallel with a multitude of other activities, so it will take time.

But we can do this. We have achieved a considerable amount in the past and we have a reputation with visitors for there being something new for visitors every time they return. A great example took place just prior to the start of the Christmas season: in the space of a few weeks, we acquired, installed and wired-up a set of Victorian-style lamps along the station approach at Wirksworth. We had a clear objective, a good handle on the costs (including costing and rejecting an option that was not practical given the time and budget) and – most important of all – the motivation to make things happen.

This has to be our method of operation for the New Year with clarity of purpose, firm objectives, and a common approach. When the chips are down, we are capable of great things, and this must be our ethos for the future.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2023

*****EVR reopens 1st April 2023*****

East Midlands Large Scale Model Railway Show

Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th July

18th Wirksworth Model Railway Exhibition

Saturday 30th September 2023

&

Sunday 1st October 2023 (more details later)



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