



# ***Ecclesbourne Express***

*Newsletter of the Ecclesbourne Valley  
Railway Association*

**Issue No. 67**

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**£1.50**



***The Wirksworth to Duffield Line***

# **Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association**

**(Company No. 5257082 - Limited by Guarantee)**

**(Charity No. 1106810)**

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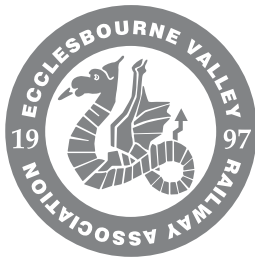


**Next Edition will be published in October 2017** – Contributions welcome by email or post to John Hastings-Thomson, see above, by **Friday September 22nd 2017**.

**Front Cover** – EVR 150 Special on its return to Wirksworth 16.6.2017.

**Back Cover** – Top: HM Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire, William Tucker unveiling the plaque celebrating the 150th Anniversary of The Branch.

Bottom: Michael Moore (executor of Sam Winfield's Will) talking about Sam's connection with the Railway after the unveiling of the plaque at Duffield 16.6.2017 Lft to rt: William and Jill Tucker, Michael Moore and David Kent (executer).



## NEWS UPDATE - Mike Craft

After some difficulty the BSK was returned from the workshop at Peak Rail. Unfortunately a considerable amount of work still has to be carried out before it can enter traffic. We had originally expected that it would be running this season. Work has already started on the TSO with the clearing out of the contents of the inside and the removal of the steam pipes, together with the disposal of the asbestos which was at the back of the pipes.

We had an extremely successful day on Friday 16th June, celebrating 150 years since the branch line was opened in 1867. HM Lord Lieutenant William Tucker, our patron, unveiled two plaques at Wirksworth. One commemorated the opening of the line and its closure. The second plaque and a similar one at Duffield were unveiled at the request of our benefactor as a condition of his will, which we were happy to fulfil. The wording on the plaque reflected his happy youthful memories of travelling from Hazelwood Station on the train affectionately known locally as the Wirksworth Express. The plaque reads

*In remembrance of Miss Dorothy Malin and staff of Hazelwood Station and the Wirksworth Express during and after World War II.  
Donated by Samuel John Winfield.*

After the ceremony at Wirksworth over 80 Association members plus their guests joined the train and celebrated with fizz and canapés, arriving at Duffield for the second unveiling, where Michael Moore, one of the executors explained Sam Winfield's connection with the line and unveiled the second plaque. A smaller number of members and guests travelled on the second and third trains, but I was slightly disappointed that more working volunteers and members did not take the opportunity to ride on this celebration train.

The EVRA portacabins and containers, which have housed the shop, information centre and the model railway for a number of years, are deteriorating fast. The Museum Coach needs thousands of pounds spending on it to bring it up to standard. As the number of passengers increases, it is obvious that the toilets are inadequate. It has been decided with WyvernRail plc to enter into a joint project to construct a purpose-built building based on the design of a Midland Railway Station, which would house both EVRA's requirements and WyvernRail's. (The design is on page 9). The building would cost around £450,000, depending on the inner cladding etc. The Trustees have decided to use as little of the legacy as possible and we are asking for donations no matter how small to help us with this important project to take the EVR a great leap forward. We will be launching our appeal soon. Donations to EVRA by tax payers can be gift aided, which adds 25% to the donation.

To mark a memorable year of anniversaries, it has been decided to offer a free pint of cider or the equivalent in the ticket price of £19 for our last steam hauled event of the

year, "Cider with Rosie" on September 9th. With folk group "Celtish" playing this will be a great evening, but tickets are limited so early booking is essential. Tickets are available from the EVRA shop and via the website, paying by Paypal.

Another date for your diary is our AGM on Saturday 4th November at 2pm at the Red Lion in Wirksworth; the papers are enclosed.

The tickets for the Draw are going well but just to remind any of you if you do not want tickets sent to you in future please just let us know. Every year unsold tickets are returned to us anonymously, which cost us money to print and for you to return; we have a system operated by Vince Morris so that you won't be sent any more.

## **SALES MATTERS - Pat Craft**

The shop sales have continued to remain buoyant, partly as a result of the wagon sales but also due to commissioning of an 150th Anniversary mug, which is selling well; indeed a box of 36 was sold during the celebrations on 16th June! Thanks are due to Trish Birks who masterminded it and to Colin Wright who allowed us to use his painting of Idridgehay in 1947, as the image on the front. There is a list of the special anniversaries on the back. The mugs are priced at £5 and are on sale in the EVRA shop and in the SO bar on weekend steam hauled trains. We have already had to order a further 72!

Colin Wright is producing small more affordable framed prints of his Idridgehay painting, specially for the 150th anniversary, which will be for sale in the shop soon.

The other major factor in the better sales at the shop is the 2017 timetable, which gives passengers more time at Wirksworth.

Over May Day Bank Holiday weekend we held what was the last bric a brac sale. As usual the sales were good and are currently around £600. It was decided to call a halt to these sales because storage space will disappear in the near future and at that sale we were able to get all the boxes out of storage by Sunday evening, some of which had not been seen since 2015! This gave us a good chance of clearing everything – only a very few boxes remained at the end of the Monday and these are now being sold at local car boot sales. I must thank all of you who have donated items over the years, to those who have been able to Gift Aid them too, and also to those who came to buy. Thanks are due to those who helped set up, sell and pack away over the years. The sales have been a very valuable source of income, benefitting the railway by helping with EVRA projects.

Therefore we would be grateful if there are no more donations of bric a brac type sale items. However we will be pleased to continue to accept books of all types, DVDs, CDs, railway videos, magazines, jigsaws, model railway items and railwayana – such as lamps, uniforms etc. If in doubt please contact me (details inside the cover). We are very grateful to a member for a large donation of new Hornby Bassett-Lowke wagons, which are available in the shop.

Two further volunteers for the shop have come forward and are already on the rota!

## **WYVERN RAIL UPDATE - Mike Evans.**

It is pleasing to report that the visitor numbers have increased again this year and the visiting steam engine has attracted additional passengers.

The Maintenance facility extension is now complete with electric, lights and painted floor. The roller shutter and entrance doors have also been fitted which will enable the staff to work in the dry and warmer environment.

Our next large project is a new station building which will house a seventy seat cafeteria, toilets, booking hall and shop plus EVRA's bookshop, museum and model railway. This will be a joint project between Wyvern Rail and EVRA and there will be fund raising projects similar to the ones which raised money for Duffield booking Office.

We now have a new Civil Engineering Manager Mike Fairburn who replaced Mick Thomas who unfortunately is on sick leave. Mike's last project was relaying the track on the Isle of Man and I am very pleased to have him working with us. Our unsung heroes who are presently replacing sleepers in the Duffield area have received two new Robello hand tampers, a new Bance and a fishplate greasing machine which will improve their work output and reduce the back pain !! Our workhorse the Komatsu has received a 27K refurbishment. Brakes have been fitted to the rail wheels, a general overhaul and repaint . We must never forget that without the track maintenance all the other projects become fruitless. Mike and I are presently planning a six panel track renewal north of Duffield tunnel with new track and concrete sleepers utilising some outside contractors to assist with the base removal. The drains have already been cleared in this area in readiness for this project.

We still struggle at times to operate our train service but somehow someone always seems to step in and fill the vacancy. I wish to thank these volunteers and all the staff who go over and above their duties to keep our wonderful railway running.

## **THE ECCLESBOURNE WAY – Martin Phillips.**

The Ecclesbourne Way is a walking route, following the course of the River Ecclesbourne. The idea evolved from an environmental project originating from Environment Agency to improve water environment and raise awareness of wildlife.

In July 2013 Friends of the Ecclesbourne Way was formed to establish the walk in collaboration with several other groups. A comprehensive leaflet was produced at the end of 2015, now widely available locally including Wirksworth and Duffield Stations.

Starting in Duffield, the 11 mile walk follows the full length of the Ecclesbourne upstream, Northwest, to Wirksworth. Hilltop, at 650 feet, with its panoramic views is the 'highlight' of the route, although the highest point is 768 feet. The walk can easily be done in one day, or can be divided into sections at Shottle and/or Ildridgehay.

In 2016 Derbyshire Wildlife Trust obtained extensive funding for a one year project, now almost at completion, to enhance the route. This includes interpretation boards at the four EVR stations, physical improvements to stiles, gates, etc and a full revision of the leaflet. The new leaflet includes an optional extension to Alport Height, an extra mile, and taking you up to 1,034 feet. The route is also currently being way marked.

On reaching Wirksworth you can return to Duffield by train on the EVR as an enjoyable and practical way of ending to the day. The website gives full details, and paper/electronic downloads for walking the route: [www.ecclesbourneway.org.uk](http://www.ecclesbourneway.org.uk).

The walk was officially opened by Sir Patrick McLoughlin on Saturday 9th July at Shottle attended by 60 people involved in the creation of the walk, followed by an excellent Buffet at Wirksworth Station.

Amber Valley Ramblers will be leading a walk over the entire Ecclesbourne Way route(11 miles) on Sunday 10 September. This walk is shown on the Amber Valley Ramblers' website ([ambervalleyramblers.org.uk](http://ambervalleyramblers.org.uk)) and printed programme and is also being included in the Amber Valley and Erewash Autumn Festival of Walks Brochure. The walk starts at 9.30am from EVR station car park off Chapel Street, Duffield, with lunch at Ildridgehay station, which is approximately the halfway point. There is an option to finish there at the 6 mile point and return to Duffield or proceed to Wirksworth by train or bus. Alternatively you could join us there to start the walk to Wirksworth at around 12.30pm. A train leaves Wirksworth at 12.15 arriving Ildridgehay 12.31. We intend to arrive in Wirksworth to catch the 4pm EVR train back to Duffield. Please bring a packed lunch and drinks with you. Dogs permitted providing on a lead.

## **JULY MUSE - Vince Morris.**

I've just turned over my doubled sided calendar, which means that we are more than half way through the year and the "Idle Hill of Summer" beckons. Well, hopefully idle for our visitors (in the nicest possible way: running with the gears disengaged – because we are looking after them), but not so idle for the workers (fully engaged). But isn't that the way we want it? No-one volunteers with the intention of doing nothing although some roles impose periods of inactivity: Station Master at Ildridgehay might qualify, so it is probably fortunate that no-one has applied for the job (yet – please form an orderly queue). However, most volunteers volunteer with the intention of working hard and expect to finish the day tired, underwhelmed with their contribution but happy at having enjoyed time furthering a project they believe in. This is, of course, far easier when the days are bathed in sunshine, our guests are in holiday mood and the Valley is showing off its summer plumage. But all good thing must come to an end, and as a glorious summer (well, we can hope!) morphs into autumn our timetabled activities decrease until, as winter comes into view, we are just running a minimal service (apart from Santa injecting a bit of excitement in the run up to Christmas), and even that pauses throughout January. But our railway does not hibernate, we are an all year operation, it's just that our public face changes with the seasons. We still have trains to preserve and conserve, track to maintain, drains to clear, fences to keep up, vegetation to keep down, buildings to look after, future activities to plan, tea to drink, bills to pay and money to worry about. And that is what makes being part of running a railway such fun – to see anything from the inside is so completely different from



looking in from outside. We are in this for the long haul, not just for the long summer days, but for the short winter ones, too. 2018 will soon be with us, closely pursued by 2019 and 2020. What we do now will affect what we do then: each year has, so far, been better than the previous one, so by 2020 we should be unrecognisable from that group of pioneers who set off with saws and axes in 2000. And how about 2030? Let's not get too far ahead of ourselves, we've got this autumn and winter to deal with first, and it might snow.....

A bit of trivia about the 24/7 railway: until the 1970s trains ran on Christmas Day, so the booking office at Waterloo never shut. With the decision to stop passenger trains on 25th Dec the last clerk to leave was asked to lock the booking office door. Problem: there was no lock on the door. Solution: a couple of British Transport Police officers spent their Christmas Day shifts sitting in the booking office. Truth or myth it's a good story.

## **PERMANENT WAY REPORT, JUNE 2017- Anthony Watt.**

Since the last report there have been two major developments. The first is the return of our indispensable friend, the Komatsu road-rail vehicle. It was sent north for essential modifications (the fitting of brakes to the rail wheels) and a thorough overhaul and repaint. Shortly after its return, an in-house training session was held so that there are now four qualified and certified drivers. All boxes are now ticked.

It was pressed into service with little delay. First, we started to sort our pile of scrap metal at Shottle, and load it into skips, which will be collected by the scrap merchant, so that we can reclaim its value. Other tasks followed: unloading bundles of replacement sleepers so that the empty wagons could be used to move our tool store and mess room to just north of Duffield. This is the site of our current spot re-sleepering work, and, with all tools and facilities on site, we now can make more rapid progress.

Our work rate should also be improved by the generous provision of some new 'toys'. Two petrol engine powered ballast packers, which will reduce the load on elderly muscles and joints during shovel packing under sleepers (a universally loathed task), and also achieve better results. A pressure sprayer for fishplate oil/grease will remove the need for total removal of the plates during re-greasing. However, care and attention in its use will be essential or someone may go home looking like the tar baby.

Not all of our work has needed new technology. We used drainage rods, a long-handled scoop and a water pump to investigate and improve the drainage of the track just north of Duffield tunnel. We need to flush the drains out, but are making noticeable improvements ahead of a relaying project in the winter.

The second major development is a change of personnel. With great sadness we said farewell, perhaps not permanently, to our supervisor Mick Thomas. Mick has retired, but we have welcomed as his replacement Mike Fairburn. We hope that he'll find us a cheery bunch, and soon get used to our little foibles and eccentricities (some take sugar, some don't; most have milk, but a few don't). The big unanswered question is whether Mick left that essential item of permanent way literature: The Big Barnsley Book of Jokes and Ballads.



**Sir Patrick McLoughlin opening the new Ecclesbourne Way Footpath 8.7.2017.**

**The new Miniature Railway is now up and running. *Richard Buckby.***







**Two generations meet at Shottle during the May Multiple Memories Weekend:  
153 meets Iris. *Andy Fowler.***

**Drawing of proposed new Station Building for Wirksworth.**



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## **BAGNALL 2746 THE DUKE - Tim Oaks.**

The connecting rods have been returned from Loughborough with new big and little end bearings fitted. The big end bearings have required some further machining in the 8F machine shop and are now being scraped in for the final fit.

We called in at the boiler works when we picked the rods up. Locomotive Maintenance Services have formed the flange on the new copper tube plate and the old back head has been removed. They were both badly cracked and our decision to replace both these items has proved correct. David Wright is waiting for the components for a new ring to be delivered, but other boiler work continues. The new bunker should arrive on 15th July.

The steam heat and vacuum pipes have been re-made and re-fitted. Work on the cab fittings continues. Planned work over the summer includes cleaning out the saddle tank and painting the outside.

No.2 van is now reasonably weather tight but still needs a great deal of work to complete.

## **MULTIPLE MEMORIES GALA - Leigh Gratton.**

I cannot believe that this year was the 5th Multiple Memories DMU Gala we have held. They started back in 2013 with the launch of the Class 119. They have grown in scope too as we only had single line working back then allowing 4 return services and an evening special. Introducing the Shottle loop a few years back greatly increased the scope of the gala, allowing more interesting combinations and increasing the number of return trips in the day.

Last August we trialled the hire of a Class 20 diesel locomotive for the Diesel Gala weekend which was very successful. There was a noticeable increase in takings over the weekend as the interests of enthusiasts were awakened. A similar situation occurred back in March for our Diesel Gala in the form of a Class 14. This got us thinking about the DMU Gala! It is well known that we have one of the largest collections of first-generation DMUs in the country and there seemed little point in going to the expenditure of adding a first-generation unit for the weekend but what could we do which was totally different?

We have a good working relationship with local main line operator East Midlands Trains. Their management were here at Warksworth a month or so before the DMU Gala doing a team building day. It became apparent that there might be a possibility of one of their trains visiting the railway! It was a minor miracle that everything worked in our favour with diagramming and permissions from top bosses to allow us to hire a

Class 153 from them. These units have visited other preserved railways before but not by a low loader. There are huge fleet constraints for East Midlands Trains too as they have just enough units to cover the services without one leaving for several days!

As if the visit of the unit wasn't special enough, we were delighted that they agreed that the unit would be named "Ecclesbourne Valley Railway 150 Years" in recognition of this special year. We are extremely grateful to East Midlands Trains for allowing this to happen.

We had rather a nightmare of a time getting the unit to Wirksworth the day before the gala. If it was going to go wrong, it went wrong. This included parking issues on the entrance to Etches Park depot causing the unit to have to be loaded at the RTC instead, and then the low loader breaking down twice en route. Derby to Wirksworth is one of the shortest road moves we could do and it took nearly 12 hours. The wheels touched down in the dark at exactly midnight.

Fortunately, the rest of the weekend went very smoothly. It was very strange seeing the unit on the railway but also quite enjoyable. It really sparked the interest of enthusiasts who came along to see it alongside our fleet and watch the naming ceremony too.

## **BUS & COACH RALLY 2017 - Geoff Clark.**

The sun shone bright and very warm on Sunday July 2nd for our Annual Bus and Coach Rally at Wirksworth. We had booked in 14 vehicles originally but, during the week before the event a couple had gone down with mechanical faults, fortunately I was able to bring in another, so only one down by Sunday morning. As with older vehicles things tend to go wrong from time to time and they get longer to fix as spares for these machines get more difficult to find.

Sunday proved to be a testing ground for putting these large vehicles on the old dust dock site with a smaller turn around area, although we did not have a major issue with the parking arrangements I was not entirely happy with the way it worked out, so maybe we will revert to the lower yard again in the future.

During the Sunday morning I learnt of two other vehicles had not turning up for various reasons, however we were very pleased to receive a Leyland Tiger coach from our friends at the Dewsbury Bus Museum in West Yorkshire, who we have visited many times in the past with our bus. Buses from the older company names such as Midland General, Devon General, Trent Motor Traction & East Midland to name but a few gave much pleasure to our visitors, some vehicles giving free rides down to Duffield to connect with the train and perhaps a return journey by train or visa versa. I even got to drive an Ulsterbus Bristol RE (Rear Engine) owned by good friends from Nottingham, a pleasure to drive and another one ticked off the list! We also put on a Route 2 service on again of around 30-35 minutes passing by Carsington Water through the villages of



Hulland Ward and Turnditch before wending our way via Shottle Crossroads back to Wirksworth and all with good loadings on all journeys. The day proved to be the best on record for visitors to date and for income to the railway. I would like to place on record my thanks to all colleagues at the railway for their support in putting on another splendid day.

## **THE MINIATURE RAILWAY - Ron Davenport.**

If all goes according to plan, by the time this edition of Ecclesbourne Express drops through your letter box, the miniature railway should have carried its first passengers. Running initially for a modest 60 metres or so, from the end of platform 1 to a point just beyond Wash Green Bridge, the railway is of 7 1/4 inch gauge, the most popular gauge throughout the World for small ground-level passenger-carrying miniature railways.

Restricted as we are for the time being by the limited storage available for locos and rolling stock, we can presently only provide one sit-astride bogie coach for our passengers and a four-wheeled wagon to accommodate the guard, whilst our loco stud is confined to a freelance battery-electric steeple-cab shunter of narrow-gauge scale and a third-scale Kerr-Stuart "Wren" class saddle tank steam loco, see photo.

As more track becomes available we intend to extend southwards in stages. It is hoped to reach the cross-over ground frame by the end of the year, by which point the line will be about 100 metres in length. The most pressing need however, is for the construction of a roomy, secure shed, large enough to accommodate more stock, with perhaps three roads accessed via a traverser.

Another need is for the general tidying-up of the area surrounding the present end of our line which, it must be admitted, is not an attractive prospect for our passengers as they emerge into the daylight beyond Wash Green Bridge.

Despite our limitations, and dependant on the availability of volunteers to run them, it is our intention to operate our miniature trains most weekends during the summer season. For further information about the miniature railway, either see our Facebook Page: WMRAilway or visit our website at [www.wmrailway.co.uk](http://www.wmrailway.co.uk)

## **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.**

Dear Sir,

I'm in the process of joining EVRA, and was reading through some of the back numbers of the Railway's magazine, when I came across the article headed 'Hindlow Station on the C & HPR', by Vince Morris.

In it, Vince refers to a local garage - W. Bagshawe and Sons - which collected Sunday newspapers from the LMS at Buxton Station, and delivered them around the High Peak area, and says:

"My research suggests that there was a 'W. Bagshawe & Sons, Motor Engineers' at Brierley Bar from 1930 - 1981; does anyone know any better?"

I suspect that the garage in question may have been at Brierlow Bar, rather than Brierley Bar - where there was a motor engineers and garage owned by two brothers by the name of Bagshawe. Two pictures of the brothers and their garage appear on this web page: <http://buxtoncivicassociation.org.uk/tag/brierlow-bar/>

Out of interest, much of the original building is still at Brierlow Bar, and is now a bookshop and cafe - which still has a couple of the old hand-cranked petrol pumps, together with some old photographs. This link goes to their website, and the heading picture shows how much of the original structure is clearly recognisable:

Bookstore Brierlow Bar – One of the country's largest independent bookshops:  
[bookstore-uk.co.uk](http://bookstore-uk.co.uk)

With best regards, Jack Enright, Buxton.

Many thanks Jack. I think you have a first here, certainly since I have been involved with the EE, in a new feature "Letters to the Editor."

Over to Vince or anyone else for comment. Editor.

## **EVR TIMETABLE: July - September 2017.**

### **For further details see website or printed timetable.**

Day Rover Fares will be: Adults £13, Concessions £12; Children £6.50; Families (2+3) £33. Special Event Fares may be higher.

**Wirksworth to Duffield**, Trains between Wirksworth and Duffield will operate on Saturdays, Sundays, Tuesdays, Thursday and Fridays in July and August. The last Friday service is 1st September. Please see below for the Special Events Weekends.

**The weekend services will be steam hauled in July and August except for weekends 12/13th & 19/20th August when they will be hauled by a heritage diesel locomotive.** Tuesday services will be diesel locomotive hauled. Thursday and Fridays will be either diesel locomotive haul or DMU's. Please check the timetable or website for further details.

**Steam will operate on the incline service to Ravenstor all weekends in July and August and 2/3rd & 9/10th September except weekend 19/20th August.**

**PLEASE NOTE THERE IS A SUPPLEMENTARY CHARGE FOR THIS SERVICE.**

## **SPECIAL EVENTS.**

**Diesel Locomotive Weekend**

**Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th August 2017**

The perfect weekend for the diesel enthusiasts, featuring our intense timetable and an evening special on the Saturday.

## 1950s Bank Holiday Weekend

**Saturday 26th, Sunday 27th and Monday 28th August 2017**

Sample what life was like in the 1950s when some of our trains were new! This special event has displays, period menus in the Pullman Buffet and music to entertain you. There will also be our popular **Murder Mystery Evening Land Cruise** on the Saturday evening.

## Tunes and Chips Evening Land Cruise

**Saturday 2nd September 2017**

Enjoy an evening on the railway with a return journey between Wirksworth and Duffield, live music during the journey and a portion of fish and chips served at Duffield.

## "Cider with Rosie" Evening

**Saturday 9th September 2017**

Try a cider tippie on the train, **first pint or equivalent free**, in an evening hosted by the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association. A steam hauled return trip from Wirksworth to Duffield; enjoy draught ciders from the bar and British Isles folk group: Celtish. £19 per person.

## Jazz and Chips Evening Land Cruise

**Saturday 14th October 2017**

There'll be a live jazz band on the train for this jolly evening, with a portion of fish and chips served at Duffield.

Full details at [www.e-v-r.com](http://www.e-v-r.com) or phone 01629 823076

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