



Ecclesbourne Express

*Newsletter of the Ecclesbourne Valley
Railway Association*

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The Wirksworth to Duffield Line

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association

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(Charity No. 1106810)

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Next Edition will be published in October 2018 – Contributions welcome by email or post to John Hastings-Thomson, see above, **by Friday September 21st 2018.**

Front Cover: EVRA's restored BSK in traffic August 2018.

Back Cover: Upper: New area for wheelchairs and a seat for the cares in the new EVRA BSK. Lower: New tables in the BSK Compartments.



NEWS UPDATE - Mike Craft

We apologise for the late publication of this Edition of the Ecclesbourne Express. This is due to a number of factors which delayed compiling this issue. Normal publication dates will resume with the next Edition in October.

As some of you are probably aware, I have been EVRA's Secretary for 17 years and Company Secretary for almost 15 years and have carried out much of the work of Treasurer for 10 years. As I am now in my early eighties I feel I should stand down from both Secretarial roles at the AGM. The Trustees are recommending Ian Bowley to you as Company Secretary, but unfortunately none of the Trustees has volunteered to take on the role of Association Secretary, so there is a vacancy which needs to be filled at the AGM. If anyone of you is interested in becoming Association Secretary you will need to be proposed as a trustee at the AGM in October (the form is at the bottom of the Agenda enclosed). If anyone would like any information about the work involved, please give me a call for a chat.

There is also a need for a Minutes Secretary for the Trustees meeting, but this could be carried out by someone who is not a Trustee; this post becomes vacant in October at the AGM. Again if anyone would like to discuss this please give me a call.

With your approval, I would wish to remain as Treasurer until the end of the financial year in March 2019, introducing Lindsey Bowley to the job so that she can take over on April 1st 2019.

I wish to remain as a Trustee for as long as possible as this is a project close to my heart, particularly the three aspects where I have been closely involved and hold responsibility. These are

- The Mark 1 coaches and their restoration
- The proposed station building at Wirksworth
- As responsible officer and signatory on the leases, the steam engines would remain under my control.

The other important AGM item is the matter of an over-arching Chair for EVRA, which was raised at the AGM in November last year. The Trustees have debated this on two occasions, but after a full and frank discussion on 9th July 2018 and taking advice from Edward Wint, who has a wide knowledge of matters relating to charities, it was agreed that there was no justification for changing the status quo after 21 years.

The EVRA BSK came into service in mid August and was immediately used by several wheelchair users. The luggage section has been partially removed to accommodate wheelchair users with new seating to allow carers to accompany them. Work will then accelerate to complete the TSO.

The crossing boxes in place at Gorsey Bank and Ildridgehay have now been finished and we are grateful to all those involved in their construction, painting them and making steps etc. They were used on several weekends in August and their use certainly speed up train operation.

The Children's Play Area has had a much needed restoration. Again many thanks to the volunteers involved.

Unfortunately, the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund was not successful, since they do not fund new-builds. Had we known that 12 months ago we would have been much further forward with our fund raising. However, they will consider any application we make on the conservation and display of heritage items. Since we have been offered a collection of Midland Railway and LMS items, the Trustees decided to construct the northern section of the building to house the displays, interactive displays and EVRA shop; this is possible due to the modular design.

Henry Ellison had not passed its annual test by late April and as a result, we had to cancel the Malt Whisky Tasting and were very sorry to disappoint those who had booked. **Cider with Rosie** – will be, as advertised, on **Saturday September 8th**. Tickets are available via PayPal on the EVRA website, via e-mail or phone (see page 2) or in the EVRA shop on platform 1, when trains are running. We have sold most of the seats so don't delay booking!

This year, since we couldn't be given a guarantee that the floor in the Parish Room would be complete by October, we have had to reduce the size of the Model Railway Exhibition, although we have an extra room at the Town Hall. There are a number of new layouts making their first outing so do come along to see them with all the others.

As I reported last time the bar on the SO is proving very successful, although financially we are not pulling up any trees, but every bit helps; it is an opportunity to talk to people about the railway, the Association and the Appeal and to sell draw tickets. However, we do need more volunteers to man the bar to lighten the load on the those who already help

Similarly we have no-one to operate the narrow gauge railway on a regular basis - so again please help if you can! Full training will be given.

SALES MATTERS - Pat Craft

Sales have picked up over the quarter to the end of June with the weather and steam at weekends in June. However, there are still some dire days and I am grateful to our shop volunteers who keep coming back for more. We have had a number of large donations of books and magazines, some of which are still waiting to be processed – at least the dining room carpet is in no danger of fading at present! Another outside sale in June yielded good returns and emptied several boxes of books and magazines - a lighter load to bring back! It was also a good opportunity to publicise the railway and our Model Railway Exhibition.

E-bay is another source of income and the sale of books by Ann and Alan Alldred has reached a new annual record (£650) and that of model railway items by John Kelsey

yielded a cheque for £542. Selling on E-bay involves a lot of work – cleaning and checking model railway items, photographing them, keeping an eye on how the sale is going and then packing them up to send to the buyer, so we are grateful to them. Once again we are grateful to all those who donate items, to Vince Morris for pricing all the books that are new to us, to our jigsaw checkers at home and especially to the volunteers in the shop, who cope with it all.

NEW WIRKSWORTH STATION BUILDING

John Hastings-Thomson

Regular Giving Scheme.

With this edition of the Newsletter you will receive a leaflet outlining the regular giving scheme which has now been set up. This will be for period of 25 months or a lump sum of the total of the 25 payments. It will have 4 levels: Bronze, £5 per month or lump sum of £125; Silver, £10 per month or lump sum of £250; Gold, £20 per month or lump sum of £500; Platinum, £50 per month or lump sum of £1,250. A number of people have already pledged to join the scheme and these will now be processed following the distribution of the newsletter.

There are a number of incentives at the various levels and all contributors will receive at least one year free EVRA membership and have their name placed on the Roll of Honour. There will be graduated incentives for the various levels of contribution including cab rides and footplate experience courses.

Please can I commend this scheme to you. Raising the finance needed for the station building is quite a daunting task and regular contribution can be make a real difference. The pledges already received total nearly £5,000. Which will be added to the £25,000 raised from other sources. It would be good to match the £25,000 raised from other sources with £25,000 by regular giving, in the near future to give us confidence to move forward with the next phase of the project.

Schemes like this can form the bedrock of any appeal as they give a forecast of income over a two year period. Please consider taking out at least one of them and help the Railway provide these urgently needed facilities as soon as possible. Please contact me for further details by email, hastingsthomson@btinternet.com or post (SAE please).

PROGRESS ON PERMANENT WAY BUBBLE CAR

Leigh Gratton.

The Bubble Car for the Permanent Way Department is progressing slowly as resources permit. Volunteer labour has been temporary redeployed onto other commercial projects, such as coaching stock, but a substantial amount of work has already taken place.

The exterior bodywork and structural repairs have taken place and are now virtually complete. These were far more extensive than initially imagined, with both fibreglass

domes having to be removed to allow cant rail repairs to take place. It seems that when the vehicle was converted in the early 2000s both cabs didn't receive any attention despite major alterations to the rest of the body.

The majority of the underframe components have been sourced and some have been refurbished and tested. This includes the two Leyland 680 engines which had various components missing. Both engines have been test run on the floor and are now fitted to the vehicle.

The cab windows have been cut new and are awaiting fitting. The vehicle should be due back in the Maintenance Facility soon to allow the roof to be glossed.

Going forward, progress will be steady with work on other mechanical components on the horizon as well as making the vehicle completely water tight. There is still a considerable amount of electrical work to take place, especially in the cabs where the plywood flooring is rotten. We also await suitable lifting jacks so that both bogies can be changed for serviceable ones, as some of the wheelsets currently under the vehicle are defective.

PERMANENT WAY REPORT - Graham Clark

It seems hard to believe as I write this in the middle of a drought, but the biggest challenge to the track and earthworks this winter was water. I don't know what proportion of an average winter's worth of rain we had, but the ground became completely saturated and rainwater ran off everywhere. Those who travel to Wirksworth along the Duffield road will have seen the water flooding the road in all sorts of places, some even on hills. A good proportion of this found its way onto or under our track. This is a problem for several reasons. Firstly, it washes fine silt and soil into the ballast and secondly the water softens the ground beneath the track. The track ballast is intended to spread the load onto the ground beneath the track and provide an elastic support to the track. This elasticity can be seen if you watch a train pass over a sleeper; you will see the sleeper press down into the ballast as the wheels pass then spring back up. When the ballast becomes clogged with silt and fine material, it loses this elasticity. The water also softens the ground beneath the ballast allowing material to be pushed up through the ballast clogging it, giving what is called a wet spot. Fortunately we don't have many of these, but we do have problems where soil has washed onto the track, notably around Ildridgehay level crossing.

Around milepost 137, between Shottle and Ildridgehay, a large pond formed in the field beside the line, our embankment forming a dam to impound it. Investigations found that there was a culvert here which was blocked by a large Ash tree. Removal of this tree to clear the drain was a major piece of work. Prior to the removal of the tree, the alignment of the track in the vicinity was surveyed, so that reference could be made to ensure that the alignment wasn't affected by the earthworks, and significant misalignment of the rail top was discovered prior to the start of the excavation, this has been corrected. The ongoing temporary speed restriction has been left in place until the excavation and installation of a new catch pit on the end of the drain, has been completed. Hopefully we can complete this soon and lift the speed restriction. (This has now been completed and the speed restriction removed. Ed.)

After the relaying work at Duffield was complete, there was a large amount of material arising from it. The rails were mainly fit for scrap but some of the sleepers were quite new, having been spot replaced during the 'dash for Duffield'. The baseplates were removed from all the sleepers and put into store as spares. The sleepers were then sorted in good ones that could be reused (some hardwood sleepers were recovered, which are particularly useful), medium quality ones that would be OK for use in sidings and scrap ones. The scrap ones were further graded into those that could be sold for garden landscaping use and those for redeployment to the lineside as bug hotels. The sale of scrap material from track relaying is a valuable source of income to a railway such as ours.

Other work has included all the regular track maintenance tasks, like ditch clearing, joint packing and sleeper changing. Our next big challenge is to deal with track fastening spikes north of Barnsley Lane, which are starting to lose their grip in the sleepers. More on this next time.

July 100 CLUB DRAW RESULTS - Andrew Denham.

1st prize of £78.30: Mrs J Cooke of Belper Derbyshire

2nd prize of £46.98: Mr G W Clark of Derby

3rd prize of £31.32 :Mr D Styles of Stoke Heath, Coventry

Many thanks to all who contributed.

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Bob Gibbens on the foot plate of Jinty 47406 on his last driving turn. - Leigh Gratton.

Cathryn's smart new newplate. - Bob Gibbens.





Pat Leggett on his last day driving with Graham Walker and Leigh Graton. - *Eric Hills.*

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TWO DRIVERS RETIRE – John Hastings-Thomson.

This summer's timetable has been challenging to staff in all areas and departments. It highlights the importance of continuing to recruit and train volunteers with the skills to support the railway's operation or the willingness to be trained to perform duties safely and competently. It is therefore sad to record that two long term drivers and instructors have decided to retire: Pat Leggett on the diesels and Bob Gibbens on Steam.

Pat has been a volunteer at Wirksworth since the very early days and as well as driving DMU's he has passed on his skills to many of the current Diesel Drivers involving hours of patient training which no doubt was sometimes nerve wracking!

Bob Gibbens joined us around 2007 when we started the overhaul of Ferrybridge No. 3 and once No. 3 steamed he then started the long process of training volunteers as firemen and drivers, slowly building up the department we have today. Training steam footplate crews is of necessity a long drawn out process which is why it takes so long to establish a thriving department, which Bob has achieved, while also completing the overhaul of "Henry Ellison" and now making steady progress with "Cathryn."

Both Pat and Bob have made a massive contribution to the Railway's operation and development and it is to be hoped that they will feel able to continue to support the railway in other ways. In the mean-time our heartfelt thanks to both of them for their hard work and encouragement of so many volunteers.

These two retirements highlight the need to continue to recruit and train more volunteers. It is a sad fact that we are all growing older and Bob and Pat's decision to step down from operational duties highlights this. Often this Summer it has proved difficult to staff the timetable and sometimes services have had to be cancelled. This is not desirable. We urgently need more volunteers across all departments: Drivers, Guards, third men are obvious. However now we have crossing keeper boxes at both level crossing we desperately need people to open and shut the gates. This would make a massive difference to the efficient running of the timetable and help to minimise late running.

We need more people to help in the booking office, EVRA Shop, Buffet Car – the list goes on and on. Then there is all the background work keeping the track, infrastructure and rolling stock in good order. There is something for everyone to do, so please join us!

**We need you to volunteer at
The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway!**

STEAM DEPARTMENT UPDATE - Dave Williams.

The arrival of No 47406 Jinty from the GCR for its summer spell with us, has brought home the fact that half the year has gone and the workload for the steam dept doesn't get any easier.

In fact the Jinty, although a sterling performer out on the line, has brought with it a seemingly endless array of minor faults, that seem to be occurring on a weekly basis.

Barclay No3 decided to get in on the bad boy act when, after a faultless test run the day before, leaked steam through several washout plugs when being steam tested the following day by the boiler inspector. That obstacle had been overcome, but, at the beginning of June the Jinty was failed with a badly leaking injector gasket, No 3 joined in again by blowing the gasket on the blow down valve blanking plate. This has been a particularly hard fault to rectify, but, fingers crossed the latest repair seems to be holding.

Barclay Henry Ellison, having covered itself in glory performing winter carriage warming duties up at the North York Moors Railway, has been failed by the boiler inspector for having the wrong thread taper on several of its washout plugs compared with the corresponding taper threads in the boiler. Also several boiler threads were cracked and have had to be re-cut. It has taken several weeks to cast, cut and re-thread new washout plugs, but we are hoping the inspector will now allow us to proceed to doing a steam test.

Joe and I were recently having a discussion in which we realized that over the last year we had, for various reasons, lost 7 members of our steam crew complement. This represents nearly 50% of our qualified crews which would go a long way to explain why we have had so much difficulty in filling the roster this year. So it is with a small sigh of relief that I extend congratulations to Gary Dixon and Chris Richardson who have passed out as Driver and Fireman respectively. Both have come to us from that railway over the hill which shall remain nameless, but they obviously prefer it at the EVR. Also congratulations to Arron Crawford who also passed out earlier in the year as Fireman. We have one or two more people in the pipeline who should qualify in the near future, so hopefully the crewing situation should soon ease.

BAGNALL LOCOMOTIVE GROUP, SUMMER 2018 - Tim Oaks.

Boiler.

The new copper tube plate has been fully drilled out and machined, so it is ready to fit. The new foundation ring is also fully machined and temporarily bolted into place ready for riveting. The new outer side sheets are welded into place and fully drilled, tapped

and stayed. All the work done so far has been inspected and approved by the boiler inspector, who also condemned the longitudinal stays; having seen the state of the one we extracted at Wirksworth, I am not at all surprised. We await the new backhead. When that has been machined and fitted I think we will see a little light at the end of the tunnel.

Saddletank.

Now this has been moved to the back of the shed we can get at it; we managed to pull out the copper sieve tubes and found these were choked with scale. In the end we cut two openings in the drivers end of the tank to clear out inside. The problem is that the tank is around 20 feet long. We began with a long length of copper pipe jammed into an industrial vacuum cleaner, which did quite well, then moved on to a wire brush and scraper bolted to the end of a series of roofing laths, alternating with a pressure washer blasting in through the tank filler cap; we shifted at least two barrow loads of scale but the tank is still in good condition and as clean inside as we can get it. Tony is steadily cleaning and priming the outside.

Cab and Bunker.

The bunker is firmly bolted into place and is being fitted with coal rails to increase the capacity which have been made by Mick and John. The cab roof has been re-fitted courtesy of the PW dept who took the Komatsu into the shed and lifted the cab roof up inside the building.

Van No.2.

Work continues steadily; most of the exterior is in BR bauxite livery and timber has arrived for the manufacture of a new pair of doors.

LMR Brake Van.

Craig has begun repainting this vehicle in LMS grey and has made stencils for LMS lettering. It is looking much smarter already.

Sales.

Sales of the new "Sydney Farrow of Peak Forest" wagon are going reasonably well at £13-00. We have also managed to sell quite a few of the "Birmingham University" wagons, often to the families of Birmingham University Graduates at £10-00. There are only about 40 of the latter left in stock out of an order of 200. The Bown and Shaw of Wirksworth wagon is down to about 10 left in stock, so if you want one order it soon - £13-00. Postage and packing, £3-50 for up to 4 wagons, cheques by post to Bagnall Locomotive Group 13 Trenchard Drive Buxton SK17 9JY.

SUMMER MUSE - Vince Morris.

I hate litter and, working with the Permanent Way team, I see a lot of it; casually, or maybe deliberately, thrown over the bridges that cross our line; over the back fences of adjoining properties or, dare I say, from our trains. It is both unsightly and possibly environmentally damaging. I particularly hate plastic litter, a hatred going back long before Blue Planet 2 made it the subject of public debate. Discarded plastic remains an eyesore for years, but it finally degrades into slivers of non-degradable material which are eventually washed into the Ecclesbourne, then the Derwent and ultimately the Trent to join the sea at the Humber Estuary.

I always pick up any litter I see, making, I suspect, in the eyes of my PW colleagues, a fetish of it. I know that many people disagree with me, for either informed or un-informed reasons, but as this is my muse I can say what I think, and I think that controlled incineration is the best means of disposal of residual, non-recyclable, plastic waste. (The major drawback to my mind is that incinerators require a minimum throughput of rubbish to become self-sustaining, which means that they may reduce the incentive to genuinely recycle, or need to get rubbish from a large surrounding area, increasing road journeys and distances.) The types of plastic litter we mainly find on the railway are thin film which re-processors cannot handle (it gets caught up in the machinery and also absorbs water), and/or contaminated (a plastic bottle which has been lying in the undergrowth is not acceptable for recycling). Most such plastic consists of polyethylene (plastic bags/milk bottles), polypropylene (food trays/woven sacks) or polyethylene terephthalate (drinks bottles). At the right temperature and dwell time at that temperature they break down into water vapour and carbon dioxide. We all know that CO₂ is a greenhouse gas, but if burning the plastic is used to displace burning of fossil fuel, which also produces CO₂, it is at least partially off-set.

At Wirksworth Station our waste is collected by Peak Waste, who proudly display “No Waste to Land Fill” on their lorries. I was intrigued by this and found out from their web-site that, after separating out all the recyclable and compostable material, they bale up the rest and send it to Amsterdam where it is burnt in a top of the range incinerator to produce electricity and provide heating for the city. So the rubbish, including contaminated plastic from our operations powers the trams on the streets of Amsterdam: I rather like that, but why not the streets of Derby?

So please do not ignore litter: make sure that you do not drop any yourself, and pick up any you do find and put in the nearest bin. Heritage railways tend to gather junk, but we pride ourselves on the fact that every vehicle we have has a future. We can boast that we are a junk free railway, lets try and be a litter free one too.

EVR TIMETABLE: September - October 2018.

For further details see website, www.e-v-r.com or printed timetable.

Day Rover Fares are: Adults £14, Concessions £13; Children £7.00; Families (2+3) £37.
Special Event Fares may be higher.

Wirksworth to Duffield, Trains between Wirksworth and Duffield will operate on Tuesdays, Thursday, Saturdays, Sundays in September and Thursday / Friday 25th-26th October. There will be no Thursday service on 4th, 11th & 18th October. On many days the services will be provided by Heritage DMU's. **All Tuesday services will be hauled by Diesel Locomotives.** Please check the timetable or website for further details. **Steam hauled Incline Services, for which there is a small additional charge, will run weekends 8th-9th September and 13th-14th October.**

Special Events.

8th September: "Cider with Rosie" with Folk Group "Keltish." Steam hauled Wirksworth to Duffield and return. Tickets via www.evra.org.uk or from the EVRA Shop on Platform One, Wirksworth Station. Tickets £19 including first drink. Only available in advance. Departs Wirksworth 7.00pm.

29th September. Guided walk: Ecclesbourne Way. Enjoy a guided walk along the beautiful 11 mile Ecclesbourne Way from Wirksworth to Duffield and ride the train back. £10 including rail fare. Leave Wirksworth Station at 9.30am. Pre-booked only at www.e-v-r.com or at Wirksworth Booking Office.

13th-14th October Wirksworth Model Railway Exhibition. The return of this popular Exhibition after a year off. Town Hall and Memorial Hall Wirksworth.

October 13th. Tunes and Chips Evening Land Cruise. Evening Land Cruise with live music on the train and Fish and Chips at Duffield. Advanced booking only.

Full details at www.e-v-r.com or phone 01629 823076

**Two New EVRA Vacancies:
Association Secretary.
Minutes Secretary.**

Please contact Mike Craft for further details.

