



Ecclesbourne Express

*Newsletter of the Ecclesbourne Valley
Railway Association*

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BOUNCE BACK SPECIAL!



The Wirksworth to Duffield Line

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association

(Company No.5257082 - Limited by Guarantee) (Charity No. 1106810)

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N.B. The Summer Edition will be published in July 2021

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

Our deadline date will be **June 15th 2021**

P1: Std 4 No 80080 stands in front of the West Shed at PRCLT *photo © Jake Bonner*

P28: The Christmas Players Group at EVR. *photo courtesy of Wyvernrail*

Letter from the Editors

By the time you read this, we should be back in action and have two mainline steam engines resident with us for the foreseeable future.

We will be welcoming back the large GWR pannier (9466) courtesy of Jonathon Jones-Pratt, for the next five years and the BR Standard 4 Tank (80080) courtesy of the Princess Royal Class Locomotive Trust for an indefinite period that could be as long as 10 years.

This represents a big step forward for the steam team who will be tending the guest engines in addition to our own locos. The resident fleet will shortly include “Cathryn” and “The Duke” as well as our two trusty Barclays.

The Railway is hoping (Covid permitting) to do a special event during the summer whilst plans are afoot for both a Diesel Gala in August and an industrial gala for September. The latter promises even more visiting steam, and of course the Santa trains will be running again in December with our group of players. A Bus rally is planned for July.

The remainder of this year should be interesting with some new events planned and some traditional ones returning.

Hopefully, this will make up for the turmoil and disappointment of last year.

As always, it is a case of “watch this space” since there are no guarantees that the Covid pandemic is over, but we live in hopes.

Please check on our websites for up-to-date information on services and special events that EVR are hoping to run in the coming months.

As always, keep safe and stay well.

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Please check at www.e-v-r.com or www.e-v-r-a.com for up to date information regarding services, times and facilities available, before travelling to the Railway.

COMPANY SECRETARY'S REPORT

Ian Bowley

The good news from the Railway is that by the time you receive this we hope to have re-opened. Let's keep our fingers crossed that we will all enjoy a full and exciting season, unlike 2020.

Christmas seems a while ago now, but I must take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers for making the Santa specials such an incredible success. Without your enthusiastic support it would not have been possible to run these trains.

The other event that took place in January was the Zoom AGM and I would like to thank Lindsey for her hard work in organising this. It was not an ideal situation as only about forty members attended, but it was all we could do in the circumstances. Let us hope that the next AGM will be a traditional face to face meeting.

Unfortunately there is no progress on the steam shed, solar panels or the station building, but once we move out of lockdown we hope to move these projects forward.

By the time you read this the boiler will be back on Cathryn which is great news. See page 7.

We are also all very excited about the Pannier Tank No. 9466 and Standard 4 No. 80080 in action during the coming season.

And lastly, it is good to be able to report that Helen Hills, who recently underwent major surgery, is out of hospital and recovering slowly at home. I extend my very best wishes to both Helen and Eric.

HONORARY TREASURER POSITION

Lindsey Bowley

Do you think you may have the qualifications required to take on this important role? Lindsey Bowley is standing down as Treasurer at the next Annual General Meeting so the Board of Trustees are looking for a replacement.

The key responsibilities are as follows:

- To oversee all financial aspects of the Charity on behalf of the Board of Trustees to ensure both its long term and short term viability.
- To assist the Chair, other responsible officers and the Company Secretary in ensuring that the Board of Trustees fulfils its duties and responsibilities for the proper financial governance of the Charity.
- To report regularly to the Trustees on all financial matters relating to the Charity.
- To keep accurate accounting records and liaise with the Independent Financial Examiners appointed by the membership.
- Payment of invoices etc and deposit of receipts.

Continued on Page 5

- Use the SAGE accounting system to maintain records, prepare and submit the quarterly Vat return, issue sales invoices and carry out bank reconciliations.
- Work with the Independent Financial examiner to prepare Final Accounts for presentation at the AGM and submission to relevant Government departments.

The skills required for this role are good IT skills plus a working knowledge of SAGE accounting, On-Line Banking, MS Excel and MS Word.

Mrs Bowley will be available to train and assist the new Treasurer during a handover period until the year end 31st March 2022 if required.

If you think that you might be able to assist the Charity by taking on this position, please apply to Lindsey Bowley at treasurerevra@outlook.com. Further details are available on request.

STATION BUILDING APPEAL PHASES TWO AND THREE.

As things slowly start to return to normal, it seems a good time to start on the next phase of the station building. However, in order to bring this project to fruition we desperately need additional funding. We ran a very successful appeal for phase one, and at the recent Trustees Meeting it was decided to look at launching a fresh appeal for phases two and three. We do have some funds in reserve which will enable us to make a start, but we are looking to our generous supporters to help us raise sufficient funds to complete this ambitious project. I will be designing a new leaflet that will be sent out with the Summer edition which will give more information, but, in the meantime, if you wish to donate now all contributions would be very welcome. The ways you can give are as follows:

By BACS to Sort Code 30-90-25, Account Number 26058168

By cheque payable to EVRA, sent to me at 164 Cole Lane Borrowash, DERBY DE72 3GP with a note stating how you would like your donation to be used.

By regular giving via Standing Order. Please write to me at the above address or email treasurerevra@outlook.com and I will send a form for you to complete.

By visiting our website www.e-v-r-a.com for details of how to donate on-line or by text.

If you would like further information please contact me by email or by writing to the above address.

Lindsey Bowley, Treasurer & Station Building Appeal Co-Ordinator

Our Grand Prize Draw will be resuming this year. Books of tickets will be included with the Summer magazine.

In the meantime, we are appealing for suitable prizes. If you feel you can help please contact: **The Company Secretary**

Email: datman2@hotmail.co.uk

Tel: 07976 630775

Thank You

HELP NEEDED!

Mike Craft

I have received a number of reports that the artefacts on some of our platforms are looking dilapidated and urgently need some TLC – this excludes Duffield where the group has been active with painting and repairs.

When we set about installing them some 12 – 15 years ago we had around a dozen people repairing and painting them. Now I have just two people, plus help from the gardeners when they are not gardening! The task is endless but we have made a start – so if you are a working volunteer or would like to become one and would like to help, please contact me. You do not have to be an expert in DIY – just willing to help. It would be good to get the platforms back to looking as they should and to receive compliments rather than negative comments!

SALES MATTERS

Pat Craft

Unfortunately, we were unable to open in the run-up to Christmas due to the fact that the shop and museum are combined in the one building – ironically last summer we were able to open because we had the museum. Now, although some sources wrongly reported that museums came under the heading of shops selling non-essential items, we are still unable to open when the railway does in April and will have to wait until May, unless the combined weight of the national and local museums can get the government to do a U-turn. As soon as we know, we will put it on the **EVRA** website. We are well prepared, having spent a lot of time sorting books, DVDs, etc., etc. Our volunteers are keen to return, so fingers crossed.

In sorting out all the donations received since the first lockdown I now have quite a lot of bric-a-brac items and if conditions allow will try to hold another sale later this year to raise money for the Association. If you have been clearing out items such as kitchenware, glassware, garden tools – in fact almost anything, please consider donating them to EVRA. Books on all subjects including railways and other forms of transport and fiction are always welcome.

If you are bringing bric-a-brac or several boxes of books please contact me. (See page 2 for my details.) They will need to be stored away from the shop as the office is not very large.

VOLUNTEERS DAY

Please Note:

The Volunteers' Day which was re-scheduled to a date in April had to be postponed yet again. It is planned to arrange a new date sometime later in the season. Please check website for details.

THE RETURN OF CATHRYN!

Andrew Denham



We were told on Sunday 14th March that Cathryn's boiler was almost ready for departure from Cromford with just one or two little jobs to be completed and then it would be back to Wirksworth to be re-fitted into the waiting frames - at long last! See top picture.



The boiler was returned to us on 16th March and an EVR approved crew turned up to refit it to the frames.

The pictures to the left show the tight fit of the boiler in the frames as is usual with tank engines.

Much effort and swearing later it was actually in place for the first time in five years.



Once the boiler was in the frames and the crane had gone (of course) we discovered that the ashpan needed to be removed.

The retaining bolts were out of alignment with the boiler brackets. The fit was so tight that the ashpan had to be cut in two to remove it in order to return it to Newton's works for some re-engineering on the fixings. Luckily they are only down the road near Cromford.



At long last there is a real prospect of Cathryn finally running again after withdrawal from NCB service in 1977. from Wakefield.

The bottom picture shows the loco when she arrived at Wirksworth.

*photos: top & 2nd top © Bob Gibbens
2nd bottom & bottom © Richard Buckby*

more follows →

Cathryn was designed and built in 1955 by Hudswell Clarke of Leeds. This famous company were building locomotives from the mid 1800s onward. They survived well into the diesel era and made many shunting engines for industrial use. In the mid 1930s they built a number of 1/3rd scale steam outline diesel hydraulic locos some of which survive at Scarborough's North Bay Railway (albeit with later engine and transmissions fitted). Two originals have survived, both built for Billy Butlin 1930s for use in his holiday camps.**

The locomotive was based on the 1915 Port of London Authority design which also proved to be a popular type of locomotive with collieries and later the National Coal Board for moving coal waggons about. The combination of power and short wheelbase was particularly useful where tight radius curves and heavy loads were the norm.

The engine was ordered in 1955 for the NCB to work at the Newmarket Colliery, Stanley Wakefield and remained there apart from maintenance repairs until 1969. She then worked at the St John's and Park Hill collieries at Wakefield until finally being withdrawn in 1977.

There is a "Railway Executive" plate fitted to Cathryn which would suggest that she was permitted to venture onto BR mainlines at some stage in her career, possibly to access exchange sidings.

The Harrison family who also own our two Barclays purchased her and stored her at a Sheffield yard for some years. She spent a time at the now defunct South Yorkshire Preservation Group at Penistone, had a spell at Meadowhall, then was at the Elsecar Heritage Railway for a few years before moving to Wirksworth in 2007. The picture on page 7 does not reveal the true extent of the work that has been required.

**The other survivors are Princess Margaret Rose and Princess Elizabeth, sadly the latter is missing many parts. Both are owned by the PRCLT who also own the full size Princess Margaret Rose and The Duchess of Sutherland. In addition, they have supplied their BR standard 4 Tank 80080 to EVR and also own 80098.

IVATT DIESEL RECREATION SOCIETY

Andrew Hoseason

The last year has not been an easy one for preserved railways and the many groups associated with them. Despite the challenges, we pushed on as best we could, and have made some good progress.

The most visible sign to anyone visiting the workshop at Wirksworth will be the arrival of our EM2 bogies. These were acquired by the EM2 Loco society as spares for their loco, 27000, and purchased by us at the very end of 2018. Since the purchase they have been stored at the Midland Railway, Butterley, at their Swanwick site. Getting them to Wirksworth is an exciting move for us, as it means that all the main parts of 10000 are now in the same place – the chassis, the engine and the bogies. Although the move of the bogies was delayed for a variety of reasons, we took the opportunity to lubricate the many fasteners, and we have now successfully loosened almost all of them. The brush boxes were also removed, as we had a concern that they might damage the motors when the bogies were moved to a suitable place for the crane to get at them.

We wanted to fit the bogies alongside the shed, and with a bit of careful measurement we worked out that they would fit exactly, but only if we moved our 16SVT engine along a couple of feet and turned it by 90 degrees. With the assistance of Steve Foster Cranes and Bowlers transport, the bogies were successfully moved on the 19th of February. We also took the opportunity to put up our second lifting frame while the crane was onsite, and this will soon be used to remove one of the traction motors for assessment.

The other big news this year is that we have purchased not one but two steam heat boilers for 10000. Originally, we purchased a stripped boiler shell that last saw use in Deltic 55019 from a collector in Preston. We also agreed a deal with the Deltic Preservation Society to purchase their complete stock of boiler spares. When the spares arrived, there was a great deal more than we expected, so a few calls were made, and a few weeks ago we agreed the purchase of the boiler shell from 55009. This means that we will have a spare boiler to allow us to do a quick swap when repairs or servicing are required and get the loco back in service much more quickly. The boiler shells should arrive at Wirksworth in May.

A less glamorous, but equally necessary job has also been started – the battery boxes from our class 58 donor loco have been removed and taken to TAS Engineering in Burton upon Trent, where they will be transformed to visually match those on 10000. By lucky coincidence, the class 58 boxes are only a couple of inches longer than the originals, which will save a great deal of expansive fabrication work.

Behind the scenes, we have done a great deal of work on the maintenance manuals for 10000 – not a job we were expecting to do for a few years yet, but a productive way to spend a lockdown. With the help of 30 members of our society, several hundred worksheets were typed up from old, scanned copies into editable word documents. Manuals have also been completed for the engine, boiler, exhausters and the governor, with more to follow soon.

With restrictions continuing to lift, we are hopeful of restarting our working weekends again soon, and we have a lot to do. The aim before the end of the year is to remove the cabs, electrical cubicle and cooler group from our class 58 donor loco, lift the chassis off its bogies and get the class 58 bogies off site. We then have to modify to chassis to fit onto our EM2 bogies, which are virtually identical to those used on the original 10000. To make this possible, our lead engineer, Paul Etherington has spent literally hundreds of his locked down hours working on the design. This will have to be officially approved, but the design is currently being looked at by a couple of industry experts to make sure the approval process goes smoothly when we get to it.

Finally, we are very grateful to Ben Field and his colleagues who put in a great deal of work to get our Caledonian sleeper coach ready for use. The first guests were the actors who worked on the Christmas trains, and going forward it will be used to accommodate volunteers. All the compartments now have heating, air conditioning and hot water, whilst the boiler and microwave in the small kitchen have also been cleaned and put back into service. An excellent job all round.

Once normality returns, we plan to have the workshop open for visitors at all the main events held at the railway, and as many other running days as we can manage. There has been a lot going on, so if you see the door open, come and say hello!

more follows →



The Society's
Caledonian
sleeper car
arrives on a very
wet day at
Wirksworth.

[https://
lms10000.co.uk](https://lms10000.co.uk)

*photo © Ivatt Diesel
Re-creation Society*

HRA PASSES

John Hastings-Thomson

All of the ordered HRA passes have either been sent out or are waiting for applicants at the Railway. If your pass has not arrived, please contact me on:
hastingsthomson@btinternet.com

TALES FROM THE PAST

Transcribed by June Cooke

Transcript of an interview between **Mike Craft** of **EVRA** and **REG BARBER**

Fireman 1959-1969 British Rail 1959 - 1969

Mike Craft: Reg, can you tell me when you started with the Railways?

I started on the Railway in 1959. '58/59. I'm not sure the exact dates I started at 4 Shed Derby as a Cleaner. Then about three month later I was made a Passed Cleaner. My first job was 4 o'clock Sunday morning as a Fireman, as spare, and the first firing duty I had was ten minutes later on Patriot Class 45545 to Aston on the East Stirling Car Train, which was a baptism of fire for any young lad. It was brilliant. After that just a few spare duties for about three month and then I was registered as proper Fireman and I was put in the trip links with a driver called Albert Rowe. Which included Wirksworth and Ripley on the coal and stones trains.

Mike Craft: Reg I understand you used to bring the empty trucks up from Derby area. How many trucks would you bring up at a time?

Normally, we'd come up with 30, 35 trucks from my recollection. We'd bring them into the Yard, run round them and then we would split them into probably two halves. Then push the first lot up the Incline, as far as Cromford Road. We weren't allowed past there with the engine. Brake-pin them down, come back, fetch the rest and then we'd put the brake-van up on a small Incline at the side of the Quarry Incline, so that it could run back onto the back of the train, when we eventually got the train of stone that we'd come up for. Because of the size of the siding there wasn't a lot of room to store empty wagons. So everything was in out as it happened. *More follows* ———>

Mike Craft: So was the engine always at the North end of the train? I mean, did it never sort of pull the trucks back down again ?

You pushed the wagons up and then, what you did, when the empties had all gone up into the quarry with the Quarry engines, you went and stood on the Incline, so far up the Incline, and then the Quarry engines brought the loaded ones down and you stood with full brakes on and they slowly built the train behind you. As they load each lot on it pushed you a little bit farther down the Incline and down onto the branch and you were heading towards Gorse Bank.

Mike Craft: So the engine was on the South side at that stage?

Yes. When you got your load it was normally the Shunter would shout you'd got it. You'd start rolling down the bank, down the branch and he would stop you, he would come on the bend and stop you and then you have to go back and tell the Guard and you'd wait for the bang of the brake-van. Give him a minute to try and hook-on and then you'd go and hope he'd hooked on. If he didn't hook on, Gorse Bank would be telephoned and told you, you hadn't got a complete train. Otherwise, you got to Wirksworth, Duffield minus a Brake Van, which was a bit difficult.

Mike Craft: When you took the train back down the line how many loaded trucks did you have?

When we took the loaded train back down the line we would normally have 30, 35 trucks. They would go to Chaddesden or if they had a derailment or there was a delay at Chaddesden you could leave them at Little Eaton Junction for the Ripley branch. You would drop them there, in the coal siding there then they'd be taken at another day.

Mike Craft: And did you experience any derailments at all?

We came up one day with an 8 Freight because you hear the tale that there was never any 8 Freights up here. I can categorically tell you they did come up here because I fired them up here and we came with an 8 Freight and we was going over the cross-over to get behind the train and we fell off (derailment), basically and we had a little attempt at getting the bogey back on but she wasn't going to wear it. It was in the middle of the points. We thought we were going to damage the points.

Mike Craft: So how did you get it back on?

We had to send for the breakdown crane from Derby, we damped the fire down and went to the Red Lion for two or three pints, which was quite nice and then they sent a taxi with a fresh crew to relieve us and I think they went in the Red Lion. It was a good day for everybody. Word did get round, to drop off the track at Wirksworth, it was quite a picnic, you know.



Two incline stalwarts:
 Black, Hawthorn & Co. No. 266
 (“Holwell No 3”, left)
 and Peckett No.1275
 (“Uppingham”) right,
 at the Middlepeak loading area engine shed in the 1960s.

photo with kind permission of P. R. Binks and Colour-Rail

THE STORY OF THE INCLINE AT WIRKSWORTH Howard Sprenger

In the Summer 2020 edition of *Ecclesbourne Express* (No. 79) it was suggested that the connection between the Wirksworth branch incline and the Cromford and High Peak Railway (C&HPR) was never brought into use because the companies disliked each other... if only it was that simple! There is no question that relations between the Midland Railway (to whom the Wirksworth branch belonged) and the London & North Western Railway (owners of the C&HPR) were less than cordial. The rivalry between the two companies lasted well into the 20th century when they were both part of the London Midland & Scottish Railway, and even into the '50s and '60s under British Railways. Indeed, it was this very rivalry that drove the Midland to build the Wirksworth branch in the first place.

By a twist of history, the two companies had found themselves joint owners of the stretch of railway between Ambergate, Matlock and Rowsley. This was a most unsatisfactory state of affairs for the Midland, as the LNWR's involvement threatened its aspirations to strike north towards Manchester and (ultimately) Scotland.

The Midland's answer was to build the branch to Wirksworth and plan for an extension from there to Rowsley, which would bypass the Matlock line, and give it a route to the north independent of the LNWR. The LNWR, realising that the Midland was serious about building its own route, relinquished its interest in the Matlock line, allowing the Midland to abandon its plans for the Wirksworth to Rowsley route, and denying us a spectacular line of railway that would have tunnelled under Bole Hill and then made its way by a series of viaducts and tunnels through the Derwent valley to just north of Rowsley.

So, now that the Midland had seen off the LNWR from what it saw as its territory, why did it build an incline to the C&HPR? An early scheme to build a railway to Wirksworth had been put forward by the South Derbyshire Railway.

more follows →

Proposed in 1852, this nominally independent line would have run from Duffield to Ashbourne via Shottle, Biggin, Atlow and Sturston. A second line would have left the first at Turnditch to make a junction with the C&HPR at Wirksworth. The interesting thing about this proposal is that it envisaged a junction with the C&HPR by an incline similar to that which was eventually built.

Until 1853, when High Peak Junction was opened on the Ambergate to Rowsley line, the C&HPR had no connection with any other railway at either end, the original "High Peak Junction" being with the Cromford Canal with which it provided a link to the Peak Forest Canal. Had it been built, the South Derbyshire Railway might have provided the only rail connection with the C&HPR at its southern end, and it stood a better chance of gaining Parliamentary approval and attracting investors if it could show potential junctions with other railways.

When the Midland Railway later planned its line to Wirksworth, a link to the C&HPR was probably still viewed as an opportunity to tap LNWR traffic onto its system, even though that traffic already flowed onto the Midland via High Peak Junction; it might also have been viewed as adding to the economic case for building the Wirksworth branch. The branch opened in 1867, and the LNWR announced its intention to withdraw from the Matlock line in February 1870, resulting in the Midland abandoning its plans for a line from Wirksworth to Rowsley. At this stage, the incline had not been built, but the reasons for building it were strong enough for the Midland to go ahead, even though it knew it would soon have the Ambergate to Rowsley line to itself.

The link to Wirksworth would have deposited southbound C&HPR traffic (which probably accounted for the bulk of the traffic coming down from the Peak District) onto the quadruple-track south of the double-track Milford Tunnel, rather than adding to the traffic having to be carried through it, and potentially requiring the expensive widening of the line through the tunnel as the traffic increased. Traffic flows to the north-east would continue to use Sheep Pasture incline to reach the existing junction near Cromford.

In May 1870, the Midland decided to press ahead with the incline, and invited tenders for its construction. Regular reports of its building were submitted to the MR board over the next year, but the last mention was in May 1871, when it was reported that the work was well advanced. There is no further mention of any work in the minutes, no confirmation of the completion of the works and no indication that a physical connection had been made with the C&HPR. However, we do know that some track was laid on the incline as it was discovered when excavations took place for Ravenstor Halt. In October 1871, the Midland took sole possession of the Matlock line, and it seems that the incline was quietly abandoned.

There is no evidence that a physical connection with the C&HPR was ever made, but of course, absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Nevertheless, researchers into the various lines, including the C&HPR, which has had several books written about it, have never found any. The only suggestion that a connection was made comes from the 1880 OS 25-inch plan (surveyed in 1878) which shows two lines running up the incline, the easternmost one (only) curving onto the C&HPR formation to form a junction with Middlepeak Siding, alongside the C&HPR. The other line on the incline is not shown making a connection at all, and crucially, there is no representation of a winding engine which would most certainly have been

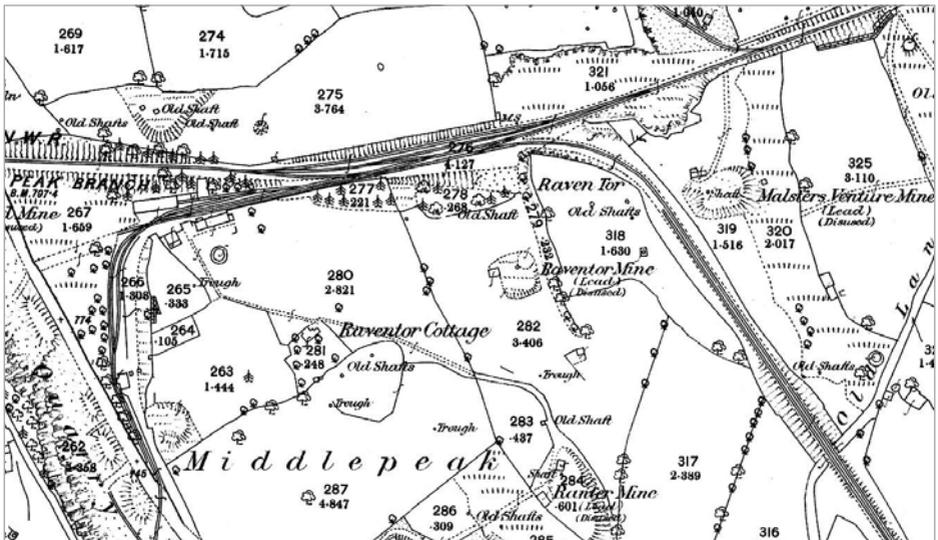
more follows →

needed if the incline were ever to be used. (In his book about the C&HPR, Alan Rimmer says that an engine house was started, but he does not say where this information came from.) It seems that either the connection was (partly) made but never brought into use, or conceivably that the Ordnance Survey included a proposed connection on its map that was never actually built.

Why the Midland lost interest we can only speculate, but the most likely explanation is that the quantity of traffic joining the main line at High Peak Junction from the C&HPR was never very great, and the company elected to delay completing the connection with the C&HPR until it became necessary. After all, the difficult part had been done, the incline had been built and any physical connection could wait until the need arose. Over the years, quarries in the area used the formation to put narrow-gauge lines in to connect with the Wirksworth line, and parts of it were even quarried away. Presumably, there must have been formal arrangements with the Midland Railway to allow the quarries to do this, but further research into the minutes would be needed to ascertain this.

Much of the foregoing is conjecture, and I am always interested to hear alternative suggestions, but for the time-being, the conclusion must be that the connection between the Wirksworth line and the C&HPR was possibly not completed and certainly never used.

The 1880 OS 25-inch plan below shows one of the two lines on the incline connecting with a siding at the foot of Middleton incline. There is no direct connection with the C&HPR running line so any transfer of wagons would have required a good deal of shunting. The connection would have given Hopton Wood Stone Firms' Middlepeak Quarry additional access to the Wirksworth branch, instead of just to the C&HPR.



(See photographs on following page)



This picture was taken in May 1982 at the top of the incline looking towards the Cromford & High Peak Railway which is on the other side of the wall. The indentations of the sleepers were still clearly visible. (Author)

The undated picture below is looking from the C&HPR back towards the top of the incline behind the wall. map & photos kindly supplied by Howard Sprenger



P-WAY REPORT MARCH 2021

Graham Clark

Our winter shutdown has been longer this year, thanks to the virus. Fortunately, we have been able to continue with our track maintenance work this time. Our big project for this winter was to relay a section of track just north of Barnsley Lane. Despite the track being on an embankment here, the problem was poor drainage, fouled ballast and many rotten sleepers. The rails were still serviceable, so we reused them.

The relaying site was well clear of bridges and so the plan was to raise the track above the old ballast. This greatly simplified relaying, as there was no spoil to remove from site. The method of work was to remove the elastic spikes from the old baseplates (this was by far the hardest part of the job), lift the rails to one side with the Komatsu, then remove the old sleepers with the mini digger. The mini digger was then used to plough the old ballast to a level surface and, as far as possible, work the clean ballast to the surface above the ash and dust that was in it. The concrete sleepers were then placed on the smoothed ballast bed and new plastic pads fitted to them. The rails were then lifted back in and clipped up. The concrete sleepers were second hand, but the supplier delivered them complete with new pads, nylons and Pandrol clips. The final stage will be to ballast and pack the track, but we have not got that far yet.

Another task we undertook this period was to lay the new track in the shed extension. This is flat bottom rail on steel sleepers and is now embedded in the new concrete floor.

The other major item on our work schedule is to get 'Tom' working again. Mike Fairburn found a replacement engine for sale and we were able to buy it. The engine is identical to Tom's but was fitted to a large base frame as part of a diesel generator set. This means it has some differences, such as engine mountings and fuel pump. These have to be transferred from the old engine to the new one. When the relaying project is finished, we will get back to this task and, hopefully, get Tom back in service. Meanwhile, Henry gave a helping hand! See below.



photo © Graham Clark

SOME MORE P-WAY NEWS

Richard Buckby

With work continuing on the replacement of track panels in the Barnsley Lane area with concrete sleepers, the line has effectively been isolated south of here for some weeks...

Top: The P-Way team have adopted an innovative system of allowing the Komatsu to insert rails without manual handling and also enabling social distancing.

There was a requirement to rescue two empty 'Dogfish' ballast wagons from Shottle and get them to Wirksworth for filling, plus a Land-rover needed to be taken south for use by the vegetation team. A temporary connection was made between the raised concrete sleepered rails and the existing formation, then a two car DMU was taken carefully over the new section down to Shottle. The DMU was employed as a shunter and a mixed train was assembled with the two ballast wagons plus a brake van in the consist. The Land-Rover was left in the up siding.

Second Top: The rather unusual train described above prepares to head North. DMUs did sometimes haul vans many decades ago but not a sight you will see these days.....

Second Bottom: By 11th March we were getting somewhere and had 7 new panels of track in situ. Just ballasting and tamping now... Easy!

Bottom: Rotting sleepers are still being replaced just North of Barnsley Lane. The really hard part has been getting the elastic spikes out of the old sleepers which have rusted in place over the years and take a lot of persuasion to remove.

photos © Richard Buckby



MINIATURE RAILWAY

Ron Davenport

With Covid19 restrictions expected to be eased over coming months, the Miniature Railway is being prepared for the resumption of services. The hope is to be able to run on almost every occasion this year that the "big" railway is open for business, beginning with the four days starting Thursday 15th to Sunday 18 April. Most of the services will be hauled by our steam locomotive "Wren".

Not surprisingly, for various reasons, progress with developing the line has largely stalled over the Winter period - but not quite. Clearance of lineside vegetation has been carried out by the gardeners and the fencing team (for which we are very grateful) and a limited amount of progress has been made on the turntable under Wash Green bridge (see photo). Other essential work currently under way includes the lifting and packing of the sleepers to improve the alignment and eliminate twists due to settlement of the track bed since we last ran. Once this has been completed, we hope to continue with the extension of the line towards our planned terminus, to be named Hannages Halt, for which several track panels are stacked up in readiness.

During 2020 we carried in excess of one thousand passengers on the Miniature Railway. We will not be completely happy this year until we have comfortably exceeded that figure, despite the late start!

photos © Ron Davenport



Work is taking shape on the turntable at Wash Green.



The Railway may be miniature, but the leaves are full sized! Junior volunteer Kyle Tait attends to the Permanent Way.

NEWS FROM THE PIT

Dave Williams

I hope everyone is buoyed up by the news that trains will be running again from the 15 April. Even better is the news that pannier tank No 9466 returns from its minor overhaul at Tyseley at the end of March and the arrival of the Standard 4 Tank No 80080 from the Princess Royal Class Trust based at Butterley in early April. A sterling effort by Steve Usher to negotiate an initial two year loan of this fine beast means we now have two main line certificated locos in our care. How far we've come in 10 years.

More follows →



***URGENT APPEAL!**
See Below

Top Left: No 9466 at Ecclesbourne Valley Railway.

photo © John Stokes

Top Right: No 80080 steaming through MR-Butterley station

photo © Vera Mansfield

Middle Left & Right: the tank and cab from Barclay No.3 having finally been re-fitted to the frames after its recent boiler overhaul. It now looks like an engine again. Refitting of all the pipework etc. is now underway, albeit hindered by the current Covid restrictions.

photos © Nathan Cooke

Bottom Left: Barclay "Henry Ellison" in working clothes, being employed in shunting duties which it has done without complaint, even though it is in urgent need of a thorough clean! It looks like a proper unloved industrial loco from the old days going about its business.

photo © Nathan Cooke

*** With two Mainline engines to clean, we are in desperate need of cleaning cloths. We use great wads of them at each cleaning and with all the soot and oil around the locos don't stay shiny bright for long. Any non-fluffy, absorbent material is fine. Towelling, linen and cotton are ideal but please No Wool. It just spreads the gunge out, a bit like Izal toilet paper that people over a certain age will recall with fondness (or not)...**

We do not have a dedicated storage point yet, so please contact Dave Williams on 07833-746048 to arrange a drop-off time. The steam team will not be popular if the booking office clerk has to fight through piles of carrier bags stuffed with cloths to get to the office door!

COVID EFFECTS

Editors

We have just heard the sad news that one of our brethren in the Historic Railway Movement has gone into receivership. The Llangollen Railway is closed for the foreseeable future and it may well not be the last one. We just hope that a rescue package can be put in place for this line, similar in some ways to our own, in that it runs in a valley through pretty countryside.

The pandemic has had far reaching effects and we have all felt them, both personally and on a wider scale. Many High Streets are now decimated with the likes of Debenhams vanishing and the Arcadia chain will be just a memory soon.

Fortunately, through imagination and hard work, the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway is surviving, so hopefully we are doing something right.



On the plus side, we have still been getting things done. Here is EVRA's CK getting the once-over on the four carriage jacks in the maintenance shed.

This is the "C" (heavy) exam that involves lifting the body from the bogies to check the chassis and running gear castings etc., and has to be done every five to eight years.

photo © Ben Field

Discerning readers may note a distinct lack of diesel content this time, but the fact is that beyond maintenance, very little has been moving and since the class 08s have gone on holiday, even ballast trains have been steam hauled on occasions or by the trusty DMU—see pages 16 & 17.

On a different note, we usually carry some adverts for local hostelrys. It is currently unclear when they can open partially or fully so here are their contact details. Now you can check when you can get a pint or a bite, inside or out, as and when conditions permit.

The Black Swan, Idridgehay:

<https://www.blackswanidridgehay.com>

email: blackswan.idridgehay@gmail.com Tel: 01773 550694.

The Feather Star, Wirksworth:

<http://www.thefeatherstar.co.uk> No email, no phone number.

The Rising Sun, Middleton By Wirksworth

<https://www.risingsunmiddleton.com>

email: risingsunmiddleton@yahoo.com Tel: 01629 265659.

FROM CHRISTMAS TO BEYOND

Leigh Gration

I think it is fair to say, based on the extensive positive reviews online, that our revamped Christmas experience was a total success. It was the first time we had used steam and compartment stock, but it was the professionalism and co-ordination of the actors (see rear cover) telling the story on board which made the trips magical for the passengers. The atmosphere was fantastic! It was hard work from every department to pull it off, but it was great to see volunteers across the whole railway getting enthused by proceedings.

Of course, it was touch and go until a few days before as the country was in the midst of a worsening Coronavirus pandemic but it was a testament to the design of the experience that they were able to comply with some of the tightest restrictions so they could go ahead. To be able to carry double the number of passengers to the previous year, all in a socially distanced and safe way was a real achievement for everyone and ultimately vital to the continuation of the railway through the lockdown which followed.

Even throughout lockdown, there has been a lot of work taking place in the background. We had planned an Easter spectacular in a similar manner to Christmas, but it became evident that the Government's roadmap was not going to allow it to take place. This has since been reworked into a different theme to take place in August instead. However, at least the roadmap gave the clearest indication yet as to how the year might pan out.

The pandemic has made planning quite difficult but we're looking forward to restarting services on the 15th April. These will be a mixture of steam and diesel services using the popular Bounce Back format which is perfect for social distancing. Hopefully we'll be able to return to a more normal way of working by mid-June though.

We are very much looking forward to this season with two beautiful main line steam locomotives in the fleet, ideas for some exciting on train dining events as well as the return of popular events such as the Classic Bus Rally and Steam in the Valley. Here's to a great year, marking ten years since the line opened from Wirksworth to Duffield. Seems like yesterday!



photo © Ben Field

CHRISTMAS 2020

Who Says Christmas is for
Little Kids?

The big kids on this picture are from left
to right:

Sam Gilham, David Fryer,
Joe Marsden, Pete Edgington,
Arran Crawford, Joe Carver,
John Stokes, Sam Weaver.

(The Eight Musketeers ?)

MK1 SECOND CORRIDOR (SK) 24918 PART 2

James Hallam

Once all the corrosion had been fixed the end was sanded down and filled where required. Anti-corrosive primers and undercoats were applied. See photo bottom left.

During the rebuild the gangway faceplate was removed from the vehicle. It then received a full overhaul, replacing all fixings and studs. Whilst the exterior of the vehicle was coming along nicely, a start was made on the vestibule floor with all the outer edge sections being primed prior to the fitting of the large plywood sheet as can be seen in the photo below right.

Another component removed from the vehicle was one of the bodyside doors. This was refurbished and rebuilt having had the outer skin repaired in several places before re-fitting. See page 23 Top left.

Once all external components were refitted, the coach end was given several coats of BR Maroon depicting the later maroon era in the 1960s and the correct decals were added. See page 23 top right & bottom left.

Attention once again focused on the interior. With the exterior finished, wall & ceiling panels were cut and fitted. The lino was laid and glued down, this then allowed the gangway end door to be fitted and set.

Photo page 23 bottom right shows vestibule interior finished, with ceilings painted and lights fitted. Fire extinguisher, litter bin, and compartment table stowage boot are all re fitted along with all the panels & trims which have been re-varnished.



All photos © James Hallam

more follows →



We feel sure that the EVRA Trustees would like to thank and congratulate James on all the expertise, time and hard work he has spent on this splendid project.

Just the south end to do now James!

(Editors)

WHAT A DIFFERENCE TIME MAKES...

*The Gardeners

After a few years of armchair support and many cups of platform coffee, we decided to volunteer our help to enhance the EVR station area. Our initial intention was to keep Platform One area tidy and look after a few planters, however, we were asked to tackle the bankside and concessionary footpath area.

We battled for a good number of months clearing barrow loads of unwanted vegetation before we could work out a planting plan access route with the resources to hand. During the first year we began to layout the ground plan with plants bought and donated. Wood off cuts became available from the new station build then production started on several planters for seasonal displays around the station and yard. You can see the results in the photos below.

Overall, we think we have done a pretty good job!

We came to be gardeners, however our role seems to have broadened a great deal so we would like to take this opportunity to thank our many new friends for their help to us with our new wider job portfolio.

Plants and plant pots always required please



Starting the job September 2018...



... September 2020!



James & Mick respectively



Platform 1
One of several lovely planters produced by Mick and James.

Photos supplied by James Hinnells

***Mick Russell & James Hinnells**

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Editors

Please note that this is your last chance to renew your membership (due 31st Dec 2020) This will be the last magazine you receive if you don't renew. How could you bear to miss it? There are travel concessions and insurance benefits as well.

It is now **mandatory** to be a member of **EVRA** if you volunteer at the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway for **EVRA** or Wyvern Rail.

Without a valid **EVRA** membership you cannot be rostered for any duty as you cannot be entered onto HOPS. You must also agree to your data being held on HOPS.

Please contact the membership secretary for ways to renew or for any membership issues: membershivevra@outlook.com

THANKS

Editors

A huge vote of thanks is due to all of our contributors as photos and articles have poured in over the last couple of weeks, enabling us to produce another 28 page special. We could not do it without you so please keep the articles flowing in.

We hope that this will lift the spirits of all our readers after the gloom and false starts of the last 12 months or so since the pandemic hit. **Above all, keep safe.**

CLASSIC BUS AND COACH RALLY 4th JULY 2021

If you would like to bring a vehicle to this event, please contact the email address below for more details:

events@wyvernrail.co.uk for more details. We look forward to welcoming you.



Wirksworth Yard but in which year?

Richard Buckby's collection: answer in issue 83



What's happening here!

Answer and source in issue 83

BAGNALL 2746 THE DUKE

Tim Oaks

This locomotive is a member of the Hunslet Engine Company “Austerity” class, the most successful design of industrial locomotive ever built in Britain.

These locomotives were designed for war service in 1942, and saw service in Tunisia, France and Holland as well as in the United Kingdom. The design was very robust, and simplified to minimise use of scarce materials.

After WWII production continued for the National Coal Board and other users. The last one was built in 1964, with a total of 485 produced.

No. 2746 was built in 1944 and saw service in the UK with the Ministry of Defence at a variety of depots before being sold to the National Coal Board where it served at collieries in the Yorkshire Area, including Prince of Wales Colliery and Acton Hall. It saw little use after its final overhaul and was purchased by a private individual in 1983 and taken to the Peak Rail site at Buxton. There it was resold to the Group and restored with the aid of labour from the Manpower Services Scheme. It returned to traffic at Buxton in 1988, and saw frequent use on the line from Darley Dale to Matlock and later to Rowsley until 2001, when it was withdrawn and stored.

In 2010 the locomotive moved to Wirksworth where the overhaul is now under way. The locomotive was in a much better state than we had dared to hope. The wheelsets were assessed and found to be fit for further service without turning in a wheel lathe.

The clearances in the coupling rod bearings and crank pins were still very tight and unworn, the frames and motion were in good condition. The plate thickness of the boiler barrel was virtually “as new”, though the firebox required significant repairs including a new copper tubeplate.

Over the last few years the boiler repairs have been documented in this publication but it looks as though that saga may be drawing to a close soon.



The new front tube plate has now been fitted, the tubes have been expanded and beaded over. The hydraulic test is set for 31st March and the steam test for 8th April.

Rest assured - The Duke *will* return!

Note: some information in this narrative was taken from this website: <https://restoringtheduke.wordpress.com/about/>

Tim alongside “The Duke” at Rowsley before its move to Wirksworth.

photo © Tim Oaks.

DERBYSHIRE OO WAGONS



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ABOUT THE 100 CLUB

Andrew Denham

Cash Prizes are allocated from our quarterly draw. Help **EVRA** to finance exciting new projects. One entry is only £3 per quarter. If you wish, you can increase your number of entries. The prize money for each draw will be 50% of the funds held so the more entries the more there will be to win! See the website for details of how to join: e-v-r-a.com

100 CLUB PRIZE DRAW SPRING 2021

Congratulations to this quarter's lucky winners:

1st Prize No: 109 P. Dungate £78.50

2nd Prize No: 148 D. Styles £46.98

3rd Prize No: 161 B. Hawkins £31.32

All prizes will be made by BACS as far as possible owing to Covid restrictions.

Join us now with a chance to win cash! Prize draws are made every three months.

My details are on page 2.

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