



Ecclesbourne Express

*Newsletter of the Ecclesbourne Valley
Railway Association*

Issue No. 91

£2.50

SUMMER EXTRA! 2023



The Wirksworth to Duffield Line

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association

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

Point of Contact Mike Craft Tel: 01629 825213
Honeysuckle Cottage, 35 Rise End,
Middleton-by-Wirksworth,
Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 4LS
mikecraft7@btinternet.com

Treasurer Steve Orchard Tel: 07855 848760
Email: *steve.orchard@e-v-r.com*

Other Directors: Mike Craft Tel: 01629 825213
Pat Craft (Marketing) Tel: 01629 825213
Email: *mikecraft7@btinternet.com*
Andrew Denham Tel: 01623 623985/07525 701951
Email: *trish-and@talktalk.net*
Ben Field Tel: 07796 155791
Email: *ben.field@e-v-r.com*
James Hallam Tel:07415 258768
Email: *james.hallam97@yahoo.co.uk*
Eric Hills Tel: 07961 938353
Email: *eric.hills@hotmail.com*
Dave Williams Tel: 07833 746048
Email: *roy-williams4@sky.com*

EE Editors: Andrew Denham & Trish Birks
2a Stanley Road, Forest Town
Mansfield Notts NG19 0BY
01623 623985/07525 701951
editorsEE@talktalk.net

Email address:

Membership Secretary: Nathan Cooke 101 Belper Lane
Belper Derbyshire DE56 2UH
membershipevra@outlook.com

Website: www.e-v-r-a.com **Web Master:** Nathan Cooke



Our Autumn Edition (Issue 92) will be published in October 2023.

We welcome contributions by post/email to the editors please:

The **DEADLINE DATE** for inclusion will be: **FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER 2023**

NB A REMINDER WILL BE SENT 7 DAYS PRIOR TO THE ABOVE DATE.

PLEASE REPLY TO: editorsEE@talktalk.net

We cannot emphasise enough the importance of the deadline date.

Front Cover: Gleaming, 80080 passes through Idridgehay Station. photo © Alan Weaver

Back Cover: Refurbished Children's play area almost ready! photo © Andrew Denham

Letter from the editors

We have had the sad news of the death of two colleagues. Our commiserations go to their families, see Obituaries on p4.

The miniature railway has suffered buckled rails and the weeds have gone mad! The whole line has almost vanished under a sea of green, and, try as they may, the VCT are struggling to keep pace with nature again!

Even your editors have been busy trying to clear some of the vegetation on the narrow gauge and the incline. A slow process with either a flame gun or a brush cutter! Unfortunately, the MH5 mounted flail cannot get down to sleeper level without serious damage, and so it is a case of hand clearing before the weed killer truck can get to work.

We now have a suitable vehicle for passenger work on the incline and as No3 has passed the boiler man's scrutiny, we are hoping to reinstate the ever popular brake van rides up the only operational incline in the UK of 1 in 27 for both driver experience candidates and the public.

As more and more avenues open for the railway, we are in need of volunteers - the railways' life blood! If you can do a bit of grass cutting, tree lopping, engine painting, shovelling ballast (or coal), or a thousand other jobs that we need help with, please contact anyone on page 2 and we will be happy to direct you to the correct person.

We have re-opened to Duffield after the disastrous land slip that stopped us for the first few weeks of running. A temporary fix has been installed thanks to EVRA, but the on-going repair will cost in the region of six figures! A frightening amount of money. As ever we are appealing for funds for this work.

80080 carries on her sterling work with dining trains available most weekends and of course the Faulty Towers show is back in September.

CONTENTS

Page

Obituaries	4
Station Building appeal	5
Annual Prize Draw	5
Sales Matters	6
New OO & N Gauge Wagons	6
Narrow Gauge Return	7
Children's Play Area	7
Safety Valves	8
LMS 3rd Open Report	9
News From The Pit	10
Cathryn Update	11
EVRA Bookshop & Museum	13
New Loco Shed Facility	14
Update From EVRA Board	16
Summer's Here	16
A School Visit	17
The Duke Update	17
On Guard	18
Tales From The Past	20
100 Club Results	21
P-Way Report	22
Derby Lightweight Report	23
BR MK1 Coach Rebuild Pt 3	24
10000 Society Report	25
Diary Dates	27

Up-to-date information is on the e-v-r.com website.

OBITURIES

TREVOR BAGSHAW

Eric Boulton



Trevor Bagshaw passed away on 2nd June. He was a regular at the EVR for many years, always reliable and a highly respected and valued member of the Duffield Booking Office Team. He often covered the evening services until his illness last winter and was regarded as a friend by many of us.

Photo of Trevor taken on a cab ride in 2015

JIM ABBOTT

Adele Abbott

Jim left school in 1964 and went to the Railway Training School where he trained to be a fitter. This was not what he wanted - he was determined to become an engine driver. He pestered and pestered until Derby 4 Shed gave in and he started in September 1965 as a cleaner on steam. The head of the training school told him he'd be out of work soon - Dr Beeching's cuts were impacting the railway at the time.

Jim was amused 40 years later, when as a driver instructor, he looked out of his classroom window and saw the bulldozer knocking down the head's office. He became a passed cleaner and a second man at Derby working with older drivers. He said it was like having a good day out with his grandad. He worked on steam and diesels at this time, as well as the APT.

There were no vacancies for drivers at Derby, so the family moved to Hitchin, Hertfordshire where he became a driver at the tender age of 26. He passed everything with flying colours - the instructor at Kings Cross said he was the best student he'd ever had.

He spent 12 happy years at Hitchin, driving diesels and electric trains. Mostly from Cambridge to London, sometimes via the Hertford loop, and a lot of freight work. Hitchin often helped recover broken trains and he told of a Norwich driver (rather an elderly chap!) telling him what the fireman needed to know. Jim had long hair at the time and his mate was getting the tea, bay city roller scarf tied round his wrist. Jim said "I'm the driver" to the Norwich man who was disgusted, saying "a hippy and a bay city roller - bits of ***** kids driving trains!"

He kept the option open to return to Derby and in 1987 he came back. He was still young but had 12 years experience as a driver. He worked to Leeds, Sheffield, London, Bristol, Newcastle - all over the place, still lots of freight work making every day different.

In the late 80s and early 90s there were quite a few steam specials which he often fired. These included the 1989 special 45596 Bahamas to celebrate 150 years since the railway arrived at Derby.

more follows →



Around this time he became a driver instructor, initially 'on the road' but later mainly in the classroom.

He retired in 2006, aged 57, and had a great time with his family. Travelling (mainly by train) was a big part of that retirement. He joined EVR, working steam and diesels until Covid in 2020. His second Covid injection left him quite weak and he didn't feel up to a day's work any more. He seemed to be getting better and he and Adele, his wife, were planning holidays and days out when sadly he died on June 11th 2023. He visited the EVR the week before his death and had a long chat with Leigh. Jim was a true loco man, he was knowledgeable and unassuming. He loved railways, their impact on history and the men who worked on the footplate.

He will be sorely missed by all who knew him. Eds.

WIRKSWORTH STATION BUILDING APPEAL **Pat and Mike Craft**

The opening of the Museum and shop as the first phase of the new station building in autumn 2019 and the toilet block in summer 2020 was followed by two fallow years in terms of fund raising due to Covid. Now we are starting to raise money for the next phase – the café/restaurant and are talking with Sam Weaver, catering manager and WyvernRail directors so that the designs can be finalised. Whilst we still need a lease for the whole building from WyvernRail before we can start work, this summer has seen us resume collections on trains (which were the main form of fundraising when we were able to open during 2020, 2021 and 2022) and produce a new leaflet, which with collection envelopes has been placed on trains, in the bar, booking offices etc, and are beginning to raise both awareness and funds.

If anyone is willing to help with train collections, placing collecting boxes etc., please contact Pat in the first instance. (Details on Page 2)

ANNUAL PRIZE DRAW **Pat & Mike Craft**

We have been granted a licence to run another Prize Draw for the Building Appeal and we have enclosed 2 books of tickets with this copy of the Express and we would be grateful for your help by buying or selling them. The prizes are attractive - 1st prize £400 cash, 2nd prize £150 cash, 3rd prize £100 in High Street vouchers, and 4th prize £50 cash. The 5th prize is a steam locomotive footplate ride with numerous other prizes to be won. We sell many prize draw books through the shop and on the trains, but can always supply you with more to sell locally.

Please note that if you do not wish to receive draw tickets please let Mike Craft know by e-mail and we will ensure that you do not get them in the future. (Details on page 2.)

SALES MATTERS

Pat Craft

We remain grateful to all those who donate books of all types, jigsaws, DVDs, railwayana, model railway items, transport photos and prints/paintings. It is always interesting, if a little daunting, to enter the office after a busy weekend to discover what there is in the bags and boxes of donations. There are often items of uniform for new guards who are training on the EVR. Some of the volunteers are sourcing new items for us which can be personalised for the EVR and which are then more saleable. Others come in to help restock and help stocktake, tidy and help with pricing and Gift Aid - otherwise we would never be on top of it all. The shop is currently the main source of regular income for the Association and it is important to present an attractive, welcoming shop for visitors to the railway.

If you would like to be part of all this, in the backroom with the sort of tasks mentioned above or behind the counter, selling things and meeting people as the face of the Association, your help would be very welcome. There is no regular commitment required but please contact me so we can meet and have a chat about what you would like to do to help us. (Details page 2.)

NEW OO AND N GAUGE WAGONS

Pat Craft

EVRA is working with Malcs Models of Ilkeston to produce two new Wirksworth Quarries wagons.

The OO gauge wagon which is being made by Rapido costs £32.95 and is due early in 2024. The N gauge by PECO costs £18.50 and the date for delivery is yet to be announced. Delivery by post will cost £5 or they will be available for collection from the shop to those who have pre-ordered.

By the time that you read this they will be available to order through the **EVRA** website: e-v-r-a.com via Pay Pal.

Alternatively, please send a cheque, made payable to **EVRA** with the details of the wagon which you require, payment for postage (if needed) plus your name, address and e-mail address to:

Pat Craft, Honeysuckle Cottage, 35, Rise End, Middleton, Matlock DE4 4LS or call at the shop at Wirksworth Station (open when trains are running), fill in a form and pay by cash/cheque or card.



THE NARROW GAUGE RETURNS

Editors



The first day of the narrow gauge running was in the middle of 2009. See left.

When you are reading this, it should be back running again with new sleepers fitted and the station area cleared of lots of vegetation that grew during Covid when we could not work at the railway.

If you fancy to drive this lovely little loco please contact Mike Craft in the first instance. (See p 2.)

NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY

Mike Craft

How many people (over 16 years of age) would like to start driving a small diesel engine travelling at 5 mph?

With the help of volunteers from the Permanent Way team and others, we will shortly have completed rebuilding the 2' narrow gauge railway, first opened in 2009. We are desperately short of drivers and guards. It isn't rocket science and you would be bringing joy to lots of families. If you are interested, please e-mail me – who knows you could end up driving a large diesel engine one day. (My e-mail address is inside the front cover.)

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

Mike Craft

Late last year, we realised that the play train in the children's play area, which was made of wood, had gone rotten and was unsafe. We removed it and it helped to start the fire in the steam engine! The Trustees decided to replace it with a new one, together with a new picnic table and bench, all manufactured from re-cycled plastic, making them much more durable. The child-friendly bark has also been replaced over the whole area with 3 tons of new bark. This required a lot of barrowing up the slope by one just one volunteer, Andy Stocks, to whom we are very grateful.
(See rear cover for pictures.)

With the help of the volunteer gardening team we have created a sensory garden next to the play area for the blind or partially sighted. The whole site will re-open in July.

Railway Holidays Wirksworth



The Glenorchy Centre offers affordable self-catering accommodation for up to 26 people in the picturesque Derbyshire market town of Wirksworth. It is ideal for families or small groups, with a well-equipped kitchen, dining area, large hall, stage and four bedroom areas.

This Grade II Listed building is located in a conservation area along a quiet cobbled street, with easy access to parking facilities.

CONTACT DETAILS

near to Ecclesbourne Valley Railway

Glenorchy Centre. West Derbyshire United Reformed Church
Coldwell Street Wirksworth Derbyshire DE4 4FB.

Tel: (01629) 824323 Email: secretary@glenorchycentre.org.uk

Member of the Independent Hostels UK

SAFETY VALVES

Joe Carver



A photo of the safety valves after they were collected from LMS Ltd at Loughborough.

Safety valves for No.3 are the two on the left, the two on the right are Cathryn's.

Photo © Joe Carver

The Annual EVR Bus Rally took place on 2nd July but it was too late to get any pictures into this issue. There will be a report in the next EE (92)
Editors.

PROGRESS ON LMS THIRD OPEN 27162

David Tillett

Since the second lockdown ended, the volunteers of the LMS Carriage Association, ably assisted by several EVRA volunteers, have steadily progressed with the restoration of the Third Open LMS coach, number 27162.

Progress has ranged from fitting out the inside panelling and window surrounds: replacing the blind boxes with curtain pelmets, fitting-out the wiring for the proposed electrical systems, building the internal door partitions & former toilet cubicles, along with much painting and varnishing to bring the best out of the sapele wood paneling.

On the progress list is the development of the steam heating pipework, which needs routing both inside and underneath the coach. There have been a number of fittings that have needed to be sourced, or made, in order to complete this. Plumbing for the water supply to the toilet header tank has been organised at the appropriate end of the coach. The tell tale for the emergency brake has been installed, but in non-working mode.

Contract work for the refurbishment and replacement of various components of the bogie and brakes has been undertaken in order for them to be serviceable in regular use.

Attention is now turning to the internal fit-out for the coach, with the first mock up of the rebuilt 2+1 aside seating arrangement now under construction. The internal layout is being changed to this format as it is more useful and appropriate for a dining coach. Other, non-original features are also being adjusted to suit the intended purpose. Naturally, the tables will also need to be re-formatted as well.

The target is to try to have this coach finished and running for the 2024 season. That is a tall order for a very small group of individuals. Work is carried out on a Tuesday and Saturday, so if you read this and feel inspired to come along to help meet the target, you will be more than welcome. If you are interested, but are unsure that you have the skills, we can train you to do what is needed.

David Tillett LMS Carriage Association



Top L Seat Mock up

Centre Interior

Top R Heating Pipes

2nd Row L North End Vestibule

2nd Row R South End New Pipe Work

All photos supplied by David Tillett

NEWS FROM THE PIT

Dave Williams

Isn't it amazing how things can change through a chance remark !! The ban on us using a brake van on the incline unless it had its own vacuum cylinder and braking system has led to months of fruitless searching around the country for such a vehicle to loan, hire, beg or steal. Then, as I said, a chance remark to a railway colleague, led to another colleague who indeed had a vacuum fitted brake van which he was willing to let us have on loan, free of charge providing we maintained it for the loan period. So a big welcome to the GWR Toad brake van and a big thank you to its owner James Francis Beck for letting us have the use of it.

As the Toad van arrived, the same haulier took away Hudswell Clarke 0-6-0T 'Cathryn' to Peak Rail for final restoration and long term hire as detailed in Issue 90.

It's been mooted that a future combined ticket between us, Peak Rail and one or two other local heritage attractions might be available, enabling someone to travel behind several locos, including Cathryn, in one day.

Our resident Standard 4 tank 80080 has passed its annual boiler exam and continues to do sterling work on our main line.

Hooray!! We are now running to Duffield again following the land slip which closed the line for several weeks between Shottle and Duffield. I had the honour of crewing the first public train back to Duffield last week.

Barclay No 3 'Brian Harrison' has passed its annual boiler test following the refitting of the refurbished safety valves.

Dave Williams Running Foreman Steam Dept.



'Cathryn' departs and 'Toad' arrives *Photos © Dave Williams*

We welcomed Cathryn, an Ex NCB Hudswell Clarke loco to our collection in 2007 and she joined the two Barclay locos we were already looking after.

She belongs to the same Harrison family as the Barclays and all three are on extended loan to EVRA to repair, recondition and use as we see fit.

For some years prior to moving to Wirksworth, Cathryn languished at the now defunct Elsecar Heritage Railway where no progress was made toward restoration and, since we were making a good job of No.3, we were asked if we would get her sorted out. We said "Yes please" and she came to Wirksworth.

Once on site, the Dream Steam Team assessed the state of the loco, ably led by Bob Gibbens who became the leading light in all our steam restoration projects. We then set to, and over a number of years dismantled the whole engine as cash and time would allow.

The general condition of the engine was not too bad in that at least it had not been robbed of the usual brass or bronze fittings, having been in private storage for a number of years.

The boiler was a different matter. After some 60+ years of neglect it was in a sorry state and needed a lengthy and expensive repair. We have covered some of this in earlier issues and so we will not bore you with all the minutiae of the work done. Suffice it to say that the expected 6-month repair took a little over 4 years, as there were many complications along the way, not least of which was finding a suitably qualified person to weld the copper inner firebox. The other problem was that the copper sheet we had bought was stolen from the Great Central Railway's premises and had to be replaced. Not a quick job since it has to come from China, which is the only source of the suitable high arsenic content metal that has to be used. The boiler rebuild was done at Israel Newton's yard in Cromford, which is just down the road. Local repair – great we can pop down whenever to see progress.

Unfortunately, the company was bought out by another engineering firm who considered boiler work to be a minor priority, and we were waiting even longer for our precious big kettle.

Eventually, we had the boiler back and after a lot of cursing and swearing it went into the frames, but then we had to modify the ashpan considerably to make it fit.

Whilst the boiler was getting sorted, lots of TLC went on the rest of the loco. The frames were painted, bearings checked, the existing braking system re-furbished and all the other 10% of the jobs that take 90% of the time to do.

As we intended her to be used for passenger work, we had to find or manufacture a

more follows... —————>

vacuum braking system, as this is mandatory for passenger work and that was proving to be a problem. The original loco was intended to shuffle wagons about and they don't get the same privileges as passengers – just a steam brake on the engine.

The braking components are, of course, no longer made, so we had to find a suitable unit to repair or re-manufacture. Wheels within wheels turned, and eventually we obtained a suitable ejector (to create vacuum for the brakes) and a brake control assembly. Then there was vacuum and heating pipe-work to get sorted.

There were more complications to come inevitably, however, eventually the engine was reasonably complete but still required finishing, and like so many more projects, the devil is in the detail.

Our Steam team are not getting any younger! Family crises and commitments have meant that some of the team have retired from active duty, others have left for different hobbies (probably less energetic) and some have simply moved area.

EVRA made the decision to allow the loco to go to Peak Rail where it will be finished and will run on the Peak Rail line for some years. We still retain control of the loco and have full access to her. Maybe you can go and see her there, running once again.

Over the years, we have had the help of many volunteers and EVRA remain eternally grateful to all of them. The list below is far from complete but here are just a few of the DST who helped her make it this far.

Bob Gibbens, Paul Margetson, Mike Ball, Malcolm Lake, Rod & Mary Birch, Peter Chambers, Alan Walker, Nathan Cooke, Ian Bell, Ian Bowley, Stuart Barton, Matt Higham.



The Top picture is of Henry Ellison undergoing an early steam test. Many of those same people worked on Cathryn as well. The bottom left picture shows Cathryn in the throws of preparation for painting, whilst the one below right shows her about to depart for Peak Rail.



EVRA's Bookshop & Museum is a major source of information, books, magazines and other items of railway interest for enthusiasts. At any one time, the shop has a large, varied and locally unrivalled stock of competitively priced second-hand books for sale, covering all aspects of railway history, engineering, signalling, operations, and modelling. Further, the book stock changes from day to day as newly acquired books are added to the shelves. This gives an element of surprise for people looking for a particular book title or books on a specific subject. Thus, regular visits to the shop are advisable to keep abreast of the books for sale.

All of the second-hand books are donated to EVRA by its supporters and their friends and relatives. Many books are gift-aided which enables EVRA to obtain additional money from the tax levy, which is currently 25 pence for every pound spent.

The bookshop is staffed exclusively by volunteers: consequently, all of the financial surplus can be, and is, devoted to supporting the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway. In particular, we are raising funds to complete the building of the new station building, which will be of traditional Midland Railway design. The current bookshop & museum and the toilet block are just two modules of the proposed building, which, inter alia, will also incorporate a café, offices, a booking hall and archive storage facilities.

In addition to railway books per se, EVRA's shop also sells books on other forms of transport as well as novels, jig saw puzzles, maps, children's gifts and novelties (including snakes for putting in granny's bed!), stationary and other items (e.g. pens, totems and badges). The shop also stocks a smaller amount of such collectable items as railwayana and modellers' requisites.

A range of newly published books is also on sale, especially books dealing with railway routes and topics in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Wirksworth.

The bookshop shares an attractive new building with EVRA's excellent museum where mementoes, documents, recordings and other items recalling the days of the Midland Railway/LMSR and the workings of the Wirksworth Branch may be studied.

In short, EVRA's Bookshop & Museum serves greatly to enhance the visitor experience of the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway.

The bookshop & museum is open on all days when trains are running from just before the departure of the first train until the last train has left.

Photos © John Gabb



WIRKSWORTH PROPOSED LOCO SHED DEVELOPMENT

To the south of the Maintenance Facility

Chris Nesbitt

For a couple of years the railway has been considering the development and enhancement of the railway's steam locomotive servicing, maintenance and repair facilities. Year-on-year the use of steam traction is expanding as the passenger numbers and associated revenue generated far outweigh anything achieved from diesel or multiple unit operations.

Initially the railway considered extending and developing the existing site at Wirksworth, to become a two-road facility, with external ash and preparation pit sufficiently deep and long to service a typical mainline sized locomotive. Ground surveys made in the area confirmed (very conclusively) that the bed rock is very close to the surface. However, with such hardness came the logistical challenge of methods to construct a new pit. Discussions with those that constructed the existing facility and pit concluded that the hardness of the local ground conditions may warrant the use of explosives as an efficient means of breaking out the ground. Preliminary track designs were prepared by Mick Thomas and it was not impossible but a challenge to set out new trackwork to achieve the desired maintenance facility in the space available, particularly as the railway's road loading/unloading siding in the car park was deemed immovable and couldn't be compromised by the construction of the new steam shed. Another complication is that the land remains owned by Network Rail and leased to WyvernRail, and whilst engagement was made with Network Rail to enter into discussions to build new structures on their land, this was becoming an anchor against progress.

Earlier in 2023 a sub-group was formed between EVRA and WyvernRail to establish the art of the possible and evaluate alternative options for enhancing maintenance facilities at Wirksworth. Several steam, diesel and carriage & wagon volunteers had expressed the most expeditious way to achieve this outcome to look into the feasibility of extending the existing maintenance facility southwards to create a separate 'running' shed across all three existing tracks that would benefit steam, diesel and carriage maintenance for the railway. The services of Mick Thomas were again called upon and during April several Saturdays were spent walking the site to understand through measurement and gauging what could be achieved.

The sub-group established some key requirements for the proposed enhanced maintenance facility; there should be two pits constructed – one for 'dirty' ashing out and other works that would be external to the new shed, and a separate 'cleaner' pit built within the shed. Steel portal frame building structures are typically constructed in bays of 20ft length, so the aim would be to establish if sufficient space was available to construct an 80ft extension; this would be enough to provide storage for a typical mainline steam or diesel locomotive and carriage (e.g. an ex LMS 5MT or 8F measures in at around 64ft, and a Mk1 coach at around 68ft). With an 80ft extension to the shed, a 60ft internal pit can be constructed, which whilst shorter than these vehicles, would be longer than anything we presently have, and would allow enhanced access to maintenance of traction and rolling stock on the railway. For the length of the shed extension, it's proposed to

Cont'd

have a lower-level annex of approx. 10ft wide incorporated to the east-side adjacent to the Ravenstor incline that can be used for workshop facilities and also separated welfare facility for volunteers and staff that regularly work in the maintenance facility, including a suitable toilet.

To achieve the shed extension a number of initial enabling projects are required. Firstly, work is now underway to complete approved designs for the outside ash pit that will be located on Road 3 (easterly, adjacent to Ravenstor incline) of approx. 70ft length. This first step is needed to ensure the railway can continue to provide ash facilities as the shed extension works would take the existing pit out of use. The railway's diesel fuel tanks, fuelling pad and waste oil tank will also need to move as the extension encompasses the space they currently occupy. The identified alternative location will be in the fork between the car park and steam shed sidings, currently occupied by a deteriorating storage container. Moving the fuelling facility here will help fuel deliveries to the site as the lorry will not need to cross the yard tracks. EVRA are progressing designs and construction costs for both of these projects and it is hoped that construction work will take place during summer/early autumn of this year.

With the enabling works completed, attention will turn to developing a construction plan for the shed extension itself. The existing external pit will be demolished as the middle track is around 18in out of alignment with the shed, so Mick Thomas has designed a slight reverse curve required in this track to align with the current point work, and providing sufficient straight track alignment to achieve the 60ft internal maintenance pit. The access line to Platform 3 and the Ravenstor line is currently protected by a double trap. To help anticipated movements of locomotives on/off Road 3 it will be necessary to convert the traps into a point with the installation of a crossing and associated long timbers, and thereafter approximately 100ft of new siding constructed between the Ravenstor line and Road 5 siding to act as a head shunt facility without the need to transfer on/off the Ravenstor line.

There is much work still to be finalised; however it is agreed that the development of the additional maintenance facility offers the railway the best possible opportunity; it's also sufficiently far away from our neighbours to minimise and reduce impact from smoke and noise, whereas the original plans would have placed the new shed facility at the bottom of their gardens.

With the shed extension, an additional three undercover spaces become available for servicing and maintenance – allowing the existing shed to be used for restoration and heavy repairs e.g. use of lifting jacks, welding, painting etc. The existing roller shutter doors will be retained to segregate the two parts of the same building.

It is hoped that grant funding can be secured to help support the construction of the shed extension and associated works necessary to help the railway support a suitable fleet of mainline-sized steam locomotives. Work is underway to commence funding applications to support this project.

See the following page for an update.

UPDATE FROM THE EVRA BOARD

At present, EVRA is concentrating on the early steps towards achieving the loco shed and a 10' container has been bought for the Vegetation Clearance team to replace theirs at Wirksworth. By the time that you are reading this it should have been delivered to Hazelwood. This frees up their container, enabling the contents of an adjacent one, where the fuel tanks will go, to be transferred to the old VCT one and the container scrapped.

Quotes have been sought for the construction of the new oil bund. Once designed, EVRA will obtain quotes for the construction of the ash pit and the loco shed, which will be the basis for grant applications to help fund the work.

SUMMER'S HERE. PHEW!

Leigh Gratton

It is no secret that the closure of Duffield Station has had quite a large detrimental effect on the passenger numbers and costs for the whole season. Whilst April was acceptably busy due to the various pre-booked events which we had such as Dinosaurs at Easter, Twin Peaks Gala and A Taste of Fawltly Towers, May was completely the opposite with passenger numbers well down on last year.

The Dinosaur Experiences at Easter was a new venture for us which generated a lot of interest at a time when most businesses are plying for trade. The dinosaurs were quite impressive, some twenty foot long with animatronic features but fundamentally operated by a puppeteer inside. Unfortunately, the Bank Holiday Monday was somewhat of a washout but thankfully the new platform shelter came into its own and the trains were very busy due to the pre-bookings we had.

Despite the Duffield issue, the Twin Peaks Joint Diesel Gala with Peak Rail was a roaring success. The Saturday was particularly busy with well loaded trains which is impressive considering there were five trains to be riding on across the two venues plus the connecting buses. The Sunday was less well attended which follows a normal diesel gala pattern. If the event is to be repeated then a Friday and Saturday event may be worth a shot. We will also be able to rework the heritage buses a little too as extra time was allowed for traffic in Matlock due to the flood defence work which was possibly over cautious, meaning they ran early and didn't do as many return trips as they could have done. A two-day ticket is a possibility as it was commented that the event was so big that doing everything all in one day was a challenge for the enthusiast!

As I write this, we have just completed the first weekend since the re-opening of the line through to Duffield and what a relief it was! There were a good amount of advance bookings for the weekend but in addition there were plenty of customers enjoying the Day Rover facility. Perhaps there was pent-up demand with customers waiting until they could do the full line before returning.

Booking levels heading into peak season are fantastic and the catering team in particular are going to be very busy. Many of the steam days see one dining service per return journey for the first time!. Thankfully the line has reopened just in time!

A SCHOOL VISIT

Peter Binks

As part of the WyvernRail policy of reaching out to our community a number of schools have had a ride on the railway. On Monday 19th June, 48 children from Cromford C of E school travelled to Shottle and back.

Neil Ferguson-Lee, Chairman of WyvernRail, said "we are delighted to welcome local children onto our railway as the history and experience of travelling on the line from Wirksworth in a heritage train is so important in developing their knowledge and appreciation of how railway travel used to be."

Liz Foster, head teacher at Cromford C of E School said, "We are delighted to have been invited by the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway to give our children the experience of travelling on this local heritage railway. It fits in very well with the school's curriculum that includes providing knowledge and experience of our local community. Many of the children had never been on a train before and they were all very excited as they travelled along the line."



(All children photographed with parental approval)

BAGNALL 2746 THE DUKE

Tim Oaks

The Penberthy vacuum ejectors have now arrived, together with a non return drain valve and a spare fire hole door mouthpiece casting. One of the other items we were short of was a vacuum brake application valve, and it was suggested that a DMU brake valve would do the job. Sometimes I call on Pete and Andrew Briddon in their lair in the sidings at Darley Dale on the way home.

They have a very large and varying fleet of diesel shunters, sometimes for restoration, sometimes for overhaul for industry. I asked if they knew where one would be found - "on the footplate of that loco over there", so we came to an agreement on the spot. More recently, the LMSCA (see page very generously donated a selection of offcuts of 2" piping and LMSCA have supplied a set of pipe fittings, so we ought to be able to make some serious progress

We have received two new 00 gauge wagons: T.Smith & Sons, Darley Dale, and from Rapido, a 6 wheel brake van in the colours of the Southern Railway of Northern Ireland to add to our Buggleskell items, £42-00, the detail on this van is amazing, including a complete set of brake gear underneath.

GUARD: dictionary definition - to watch over in order to protect or control, a person who keeps watch - assigned to protect property and to control access or movements.

EVR found themselves with me on their hands just before I took early retirement in 2021. I had worked on the railway in signalling for a good few years and was keen to join a heritage railway when I had the flexibility of time to do so. My friend Phil Brentnall (also a guard) suggested I visit when he was on duty as third man. I did, and it instantly struck me what a friendly place EVR is - also it's only 35 minutes from my home close by Mansfield.

Phil took me under his wing and suggested I shadowed him doing his third man duties. So I did, and after about 3 months of regular duties under the eye of the rostered guard, I was 'passed out' as travelling/static crossing keeper. So with a PTS and a shunting course under my belt, it was suggested I made myself available for guard training.

At this point John Jarman entered my life. I had done a couple of third man duties with him (and others) and having an 'enquiring mind' was always asking them questions beyond my third man pay grade.

It was back in spring of 2022, that I and two others met John for Day One of our 'Guard Training' induction. There was certainly more to this than meets the eye.

I learned about different couplings, vacuum systems, dispatch methods, route knowledge, buzzer codes for the DMU, calling an engine onto the train, (sometimes one at each end!), communications with the driver and others, shunting procedures, checking the stock at the start of the day and securing it at the end of the day, the list seemed endless. Taking the on-line rule book tests into account, it can be quite a sharp learning curve. Since I was free midweek, I certainly found that helped in training opportunities, generally leaving the weekends free for those still at work who maybe only had weekends to commit to training.

On July 9th 2022, about 3 months after I began training, I met John at Wirksworth for my final assessment! He followed me round like an airport sniffer dog and by early afternoon I had successfully got the train to Duffield and back in one piece. A conversation ensued about my performance - I was 'signed off' as a guard! He presented me with my badges and promptly went home - leaving me to 'get on with it' for the next two services. That's when the reality of what you've done hits you!

It's a great public-facing job, and although my duties take priority, I always make an effort to talk and interact with passengers – especially their dogs! Often they like their picture taken with this smart looking chap in his uniform and cap (although I'm not convinced it suits me). My own uniform is not original, and is a 'worn-once' three piece suit bought for £15 off e-bay! With some silver LMS buttons (supplied free by the lovely folk in our shop) and the addition of a pocket watch and whistle on silver chains, there's no doubt it adds to the heritage atmosphere of our railway. The cap was the expensive bit !

It's quite true that no two services are the same! Departing before the catering team had loaded the gravy on board required an emergency stop at Wirksworth; letting a lad hold the green flag out of the window at Duffield, and dropping it onto the tracks (to be retrieved by a bemused fireman); and being chatted-up by a wine filled granny on a dining train who liked men in uniform are just some memories that still make me smile months later.

more follows →

At the end of the day, if I can make our customers visit memorable in some way, while maintaining a safe and on-time journey, then I guess I've done my bit to attract them back, and will hope they will encourage their friends and family to our railway in the future.

If anyone is attracted to guarding on our lovely railway, have a word with the duty guard that day – or seek out John Jarman for an informal chat about training courses and availability.

Please contact John Jarman on: johnjarman2502@gmail.com



John the Diesel Guard



John the Steam Guard



Black Swan

Idridgehay

Food Served

Tuesday to Saturday

Midday to 8.30 pm

Sunday Midday to 4.00pm

Wirksworth Road, Idridgehay, Belper

DE56 2SG

01773 550694

email: blackswan.idridgehay@gmail.com

www.blackswanidridgehay.com



The Rising Sun

Rise End, Middleton, Matlock, DE4 4LS

Tel: 01629 258658 Mob: 07902 918410

email: rising_sun_middleton@yahoo.com

www.rising_sun_middleton.com

Good Beer, Good Food &

a Warm Welcome

**Home cooked traditional English pub food,
done well.**

Food Served:

Weekdays 12.00 – 2.30 & 5.00–8.00pm

Weekends 12.00–8.00pm

Edited extract from an interview by Mike Craft 19th August 2005 with

Tony Allsop speaking about his Father

TED ALLSOP - Guard then Shunter between 1928 –1979

Mike Craft: I understand Tony that your father worked for the Railway roughly what period was that?

My father started in 1928 as a messenger at Derby Station round the offices around Derby area. Eventually he became a Guard based at Chaddesden working a number of routes but one of which was the Wirksworth branch near Duffield. I have vague memories of going up the Wirksworth branch, sometimes, well at least once, on the footplate and several times in the guards van. Whichever way I went it was always cold, it was always dark and it was always very, very bumpy.

In 1954, he left Derby as a guard and went to work at Ambergate on the sidings as a shunter. After that closed, he went to the bottom of the High Peak Incline. I don't know what his job was there but later he moved to the top of the Incline, as what they called a Hanger-on, which was basically tying the chains round the continuous rope to hold the wagons, which was lowered down the Incline. On one occasion he omitted to fasten the first wagon on, which when the second wagon started going down pushed the first one over the Incline. And not being attached, it sort of picked up speed quite rapidly. He chased after it but hadn't a hope of catching it. Apparently the gentleman who was operating the catch pit at the bottom of the Incline heard the warning bells and left the vicinity rather rapidly. The wagon itself embedded itself in the catch pit at the bottom of the Incline, which I believe is still there. It was empty when it got there. When it started out it was full of limestone dust and when looking up the Incline, after it had impacted with the catch pit it was just like Christmas, the whole area, the tree, the fields were white just as if it had been snowing.

When the High Peak line closed he moved to Wirksworth as a head shunter. I believe there was approximately four in total, Shunters working there. He stayed there until his retirement in 1979.

Tony Allsop said : There is a story about a lighting standard, an old gas lamp that used to be on the Station at Wirksworth that might be interesting in so much as when it was due for removal it was declared redundant. He purchased it from British Rail, as it was then, for the princely sum of two pounds and five shillings. That was the easy part. The hard part was getting it to where we lived at Crich. From what I was told, about three or four of them tried to dig it out and they said the further we dug the further it went into the ground. Eventually, they gave up trying to get it out until a certain person with a JCB happened by, who just linked a rope around it and lifted it clean out of the ground and

more follows →

laid it down for him. Then he'd got to get it from Wirksworth to Crich. These lamps weighed quite a lot. It takes four to six people to lift them up by hand. Fortunately, he'd ordered a load of gravel for the Lane where we used to live at Crich, which was very rough, very narrow and very bendy. So the JCB driver placed this street lamp on top of the gravel and the lorry brought it up to Crich.

Well the lorry then backed down the Lane but, unfortunately, the Lane had got a bend in it, a sharp left-hand bend, but the lorry was too big to go round it. So he had to tip it there. About 30 tons of gravel with a gas street lighting column stuck on top of it. Then me Dad had to get it down from there to the house, which was about another 150 yards. So, he thought about it, dug a hole out where the lamp was to go, then went up the lane and at the bottom of the lamp he put a pair of pram wheels and he went to the other end with a sack-truck and lifted the other end and, being downhill, it then started to roll. By the time he reached the bottom where it was to go he was running with this sack-truck. But fortunately he guided it just right and the bottom went straight into the hole. The pram wheels I never did know where they ended up. But all he had to do then was tie a rope over the top, throw it over the top of the house, go round the back and pull until there was no more resistance and when he walked round the front of the house the lamp was stood up in the hole!

***Note from the Editors:-** This story completes a series of 8 articles given to us by June Cooke in answer to an appeal for content when we took over editing the magazine. Along the way we have learnt much about some folk who worked on our railway and we thank June very much for her contributions to the magazine.*

100 CLUB PRIZE DRAW

Andrew Denham

1st Prize: £ 78.98 No 196 MB

2nd Prize: £ 47.39 No 127 CA

3rd Prize: £ 35.37 No 169 SH

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

As always, please check on the website: e-v-r.com for up-to-date information regarding services, times and facilities before travelling to Ecclesbourne Valley Railway.

Thank you

The railway has suffered infrastructure problems this year, and our first train to Duffield of the year ran on the day I am writing this in June. This was mainly due to the landslip, but the line was closed south of Shottle for a few weeks while we carried out emergency sleeper changing. I will attempt to explain how we got into this situation.

When we took over the line some people thought that having all the track in place was an advantage: It was a mixed blessing. According to the ex-BR infrastructure database, most of our sleepers were laid between 1952 and 1960. Some have been replaced since EVR took over the line but there are approximately 6½ miles of the original timber sleepered track. That is 572 track panels or 13728 sleepers. Network Rail reckon on the life of a softwood timber sleeper to be around 30-35 years, so all of ours are beyond their life now. A large number were replaced in the 'Dash for Duffield', but that was over 12 years ago. If we were in a steady state situation, we would need to replace 13728/35 = 392 sleepers each year. We are not in that place, however. To understand why, we need to look at our methods of work. Prior to 2020 we worked from a base at Shottle, taking the tools and materials to site with the works train which was hauled by 'Tom' and driven by one of the p-way team (another member acting as guard). This enabled us to get to site fairly quickly (although Tom is limited to 10mph the train was based at the midpoint of the line) and get straight to work. We changed over 250 sleepers per year this way, the limitation being how many we could afford to buy.

In October 2020 Tom's engine failed. There are no arrangements for maintenance of the works train so it was down to the p-way team to organise a repair. This we did, and after diverting our resources from p-way maintenance to diesel engine repair for several months we were able to get Tom running again by June 2021. Track maintenance resumed only to stop again in September 2021 when an inspection of Tom's wheel profiles showed them to be out of specification. Shed space was needed to lift the loco and get the wheels out and this was not available until early 2022. In the meantime, we were told that Tom was not to be used on the works train and a main line loco would be provided instead. The problem is that main line locos take at least half an hour to prepare and have to be manned by suitably qualified drivers (they also cost money to hire). We have very few volunteers qualified to drive main line locos who are available midweek and we could only get a loco on one or two days, at best. These factors reduced the work time at site to about a third of our former time.

In January 2022 the works train suffered a low adhesion incident and ran through the gates at Gorsey Bank. The consequent ORR ban on unfitted trains and the lack of progress by Wyvern Rail in adapting the rule book to allow this, stopped all p-way work for 6 weeks and continues to limit us to this day.

We have been able to do some work using the road rail Landrovers for transport, but these can only take 4 or 5 people to site and tools have to be loaded and unloaded at the start and end of each shift. This restricted method of work has meant that sleeper changing, which is demanding in terms of equipment and materials needed, has not taken place to any significant extent for nearly 3 years. It is unsurprising therefore, that the condition of the line deteriorated to the point where it was beyond the state allowed by our standard and had to be closed south of Shottle. An appeal for help was issued and some volunteers came forward to operate additional works trains to distribute sleepers and, thanks to some herculean efforts by the team in trying conditions of heat, we

more follows —→

managed to change 120 of the 350 defective sleepers between Shottle and Duffield in less than 3 weeks to bring the track condition within the limits of our standard and allow trains to run to Duffield for the first time in over 7 months. Our standard calls for many of the remaining defective sleepers to be changed within 1 month of their discovery.

For the future a new way of working is required if we are to achieve the 350 sleepers a year plus all the other pway tasks. Note that for the last 3 years none of the major track relaying projects have been completed as lack of a works train means scrap material is still on site. The last two years has also seen a failure to meet the planned size of relay. If we do not resolve the works train problems, the railway will suffer increasing speed restrictions and even closure of sections as the track becomes unsafe for traffic. And I have not even mentioned the question of facilities for the maintenance of the works train vehicles and plant!

Despite these problems, track maintenance goes on – we still have 230 sleepers to change between Shottle and Duffield and many more between Ildridgehay and Wirksworth. We always welcome new members to the team. P-way work is a great form of exercise in the fresh air with a friendly bunch of people. Please contact me (grahamwclarkuk@gmail.com) or Dave Newby if you are interested in joining us.

DERBY LIGHTWEIGHT TWIN PROGRESS

Norman Ashfield

Restoration of the Derby power car continues. Every one of the slam doors has now been repaired and rebuilt, fits well and is safe, with all the door interiors finished to a high standard. More sliding vents have been cleaned, while many require their perished rubber draught excluders replacing; like the doors, a slow task. Vinyl panels in the saloons are being replaced but the roller blinds fitted behind them, after 19 years of non-use, have required renovation and their peeling-apart tabs stitched together again. Unfortunately cleaning the fuel tanks of years of muck has revealed that the base of no.2 tank is wasted away, will leak and almost certainly requires complete replacement, so we are trying to raise funds to cover this unwanted expense. The trailer car still receives detail attention; its cab wiring has been worked upon, and covers fitted to the new upholstery to protect it from the ravages of the sun.



Top L Blind restoration

Top R Covers to protect the upholstery

Bottom L Dave gets his feet wet again!

All photos © Norman Ashfield 2023

REBUILDING A BR MK1 COACH PART 3

James Hallam

Following on from Part 2 of this series (EE90), where the gangway faceplates and pass-com equipment was fitted. In this issue we will look at how bodyside doors are repaired.



Out of the six doors that were fitted to the coach when it arrived, only two were in a suitable condition to be rebuilt. Four spare doors were sourced from a donor coach, which were suitable candidates for rebuilding. Once we had selected the doors, new door skins were ordered from South Devon Railway Engineering.

With all the parts needed now in stock, we commenced the long task of rebuilding all six doors. The new door skins were treated with anti-corrosive and a coat of gloss to protect the inside skin.

Next, all door cards, boots and vertical trims were removed; followed by the droplight and lazy tongues.



Hinges are drilled off, and then door locks and handle removed. The original door skin was drilled and prised away from the wooden frame.

The door frame was inspected and repaired accordingly by splicing in new sections of wood or replacing them as required.



Whilst the frame was being repaired; the items stripped from the door were replaced for new, whilst others were cleaned and repainted ready for fitting once the frame is completed.

Many of the items that normally corrode and disintegrate, such as the stiffening bar, drip tray and the vertical angle sections have been replaced. These have been remanufactured in galvanised steel to aid longevity and solve many corrosion issues.

Once all the door components are complete, the door is ready to be reassembled. The Stiffening bar and the vertical angle sections are screwed on using new fastenings before the new door skin can be fitted and screwed into place with new brass wood screws.



With the new skin fitted, holes for the hinges, door lock and

rose plate can be drilled into the skin. The edges around the droplight are stitch welded to the vertical angle sections before being sealed.

The exterior faces of the doors are then protected with a couple of coats of anti-corrosive paint, followed by grey undercoat and a protective coat of BR Maroon.



Door metal and wooden frames re-united.



New outer skins fitted.



Ready for internal parts to be re-fitted.

All photos © James Hallam 2023

IVATT DIESEL RECREATION SOCIETY

Andrew Hoseason

At the end of May all of the wheelsets of our bogies were tested with an Ultrasonic examination. The good news is that all passed and this is a great relief as it dramatically reduces the amount of cash we would have to raise to deal with any faults.

Safety lines and fences have been fitted to the chassis, currently upside down on our Sturgeon wagon. Wooden walkways have also been fitted. This will enable our volunteers to work safely on the chassis. A tarpaulin has also been fitted over the safety fences and across the working area

We have stripped the brake system on a bogie, cleaned all parts and reassembled them.

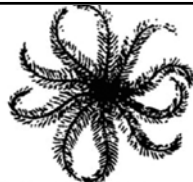
The electrical cubicle has been stripped, cleaned and is now being prepared for painting. Individual components are being evaluated.



*photo supplied by
Andrew Hoseason*



The Red Lion



THE FEATHER STAR

**THE FEATHER STAR
is now within the
RED LION Hotel, Wirksworth.**

Inside bar now open
Ample seating in our sun trap outside space
13 keg lines – 5 cask ales – 4 real ciders – wine list & tea and coffee

UMAMI bar menu to eat in the Feather Star
or take-aways Wednesday – Sunday

Ensuite bedrooms

Accommodation

07944 932665 (Red Lion)

07931 424117 (Feather Star)



Mitchell's
Artisan Butchery

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

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

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



IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2023

A Taste of Faulty Towers

9th September 2023

**18TH WIRKSWORTH
MODEL**

RAILWAY EXHIBITION

Saturday 30th September 2023

Sunday 1st October 2023

Please note the earlier than usual dates.

This will be held in all three venues in central Wirksworth. Car parking at the Station will be free and on Saturday there will be an early train to Duffield to bring travellers by the national rail network to Wirksworth. There will be a timetabled bus service from the car park to the town centre – to avoid the steep climb up to Wirksworth. Details of the layouts and traders will be available on the EVRA website in mid to late July.

BRIC - A - BRAC SALE

PLEASE NOTE: due to a variety of circumstances, we will **NOT** be holding a sale over August Bank Holiday this Summer.

Annual General Meeting

25th NOVEMBER 2023 at The Maltings, Wirksworth at 2pm.

More details in the next issue, Oct 2023

