

Ecclesbourne Express

Newsletter of the Ecclesbourne Valley
Railway Association

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The Wirksworth to Duffield Line

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association

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Next Edition will be published in January 2018 – Contributions welcome by email or post to John Hastings-Thomson, see above, by **Friday January 5th 2018**.

Front Cover – Iris and Jinty at Wirksworth during Photo Charter 23.8.2017 – *David Williams*.

Back Cover – Class 26 and Class 33 at Wash Green during the August Diesel Gala – *Ian Stafford.*



NEWS UPDATE - Mike Craft

How quickly this summer has gone. The running of the Jinty has brought a considerable number of passengers, many of them new to the railway. We are grateful to all the train crews on both the Jinty and the incline. The EVRA bar/buffet in the SO was operational every weekend and on some special event days.

It has been found that when the crossing gates are manned at Gorsey Bank it knocks 10 minutes off travelling time, otherwise they are operated by people travelling on the train. We have been looking into "look alike" signal boxes for Gorsey Bank and Idridgehay crossings, having put down concrete bases and providing a temporary shed at Gorsey Bank this summer. We hope to finalise this before Christmas and have them installed for next season. However, this means that the railway will need volunteers to operate the gates next year.

By early August Cider with Rosie was almost full and in the end we turned people away. Both that evening and the Real Ale and Jazz night were great successes; we shall be repeating similar evenings next year.

I have heard whispers that some EVRA members feel that we have not spent the legacy wisely. Everything we have done as Trustees has been done in conjunction with the WyvernRail Board, in some cases purchasing equipment and materials which they required. The general feeling is that it has advanced EVR by at least 5 years.

Work on the base of the Station building has commenced with the removal of the Model Railway container and the demolition of the weighbridge. Following this the concrete base will be completed by the middle of November. The total length of the contract, 25 weeks, means that we are unable to complete it before next season, so the erection of the building will start in October 2018.

Some, limited work has begun on the BSK; steam heating pipes have been installed, the underside has been sand blasted and the sides painted. Steam pipes have been replaced in the TSO and Marmoleum has been laid. The outside was sand blasted and initial coats of paint have been applied. Work on the CK has continued as rotten floors and leaking windows have been discovered after over 3 years in service.

Please don't forget the AGM on Saturday 4th November at 2pm at the Red Lion in Wirksworth; it is an opportunity to question the Trustees about present and future plans.

The income from the Draw was just under £2,000 and we are grateful to you all for buying and selling tickets, Over £450 worth of tickets were sold on the train at weekends. The draw was held on 2nd October and the full list of winners will appear in the Winter Express.

Mary Birch has moved away to Hampshire back to her roots and her vitality and knowledge will be sadly missed. With her late husband Rod, Mary operated the narrow gauge railway, helped with the renovation of the steam engines, helped with Santa trains from the very first ones, ran our stall at Chapel en le Frith Model Railway Exhibition and they were vital to our own Model Railway Exhibition.

SALES MATTERS - Pat Craft

As a result of the building works, the Shop and the Information Room will move in the first week of November and then move back again in time to open for Christmas sales. To lighten the load there will be a half price sale of all second-hand books (Transport and other non-fiction and fiction)on Saturday and Sunday 28th and 29th October with other bargains too. Donations of books etc. will still be welcome (please contact me first) but I would ask that no magazines are donated until the New Year.

We now have car stickers with EVRA's logo on sale again after quite a while. They are available in the shop at £1.10 each or by post (cheque made payable to EVRA) with a sae. I will bring some to the AGM along with the anniversary mug and any remaining special prints of Idridgehay.

The shop sales have continued to remain buoyant, helped by the numbers travelling on the Jinty, but mid-week takings have been up too, so the new timetable has been of great help.

A further two volunteers for the shop have come forward and are already on the rota! Without the dedication of the volunteers who have coped with another full timetable of 5 days a week we would not be able to run the shop. However, without all the donated goods there would be nothing to sell, so thanks are due to all those who help in the shop and those who bring books and other items for us to sell.

A GROUND BREAKING PROJECT - Geoff Clark.

In the last issue there was an artist's impression of the proposed new Wirksworth Station Building. Since then planning has continued and work started on the concrete base in late September. The model railway container has been moved, the old weighbridge is no more and the information room will be moved shortly. The new building will bring most of our facilities together in one place rather than spread out all over the site. It will include a 64 seat cafe, the main booking hall, EVRA shop, toilets, Museum, information room and model railway. There will be a canopy on both sides of the building. The building will be in the Midland Railway Style, a wooden building on a brick base. The inside will be laid out to allow easy wheelchair access and to make it as energy efficient as possible.

Using the Duffield Station project as inspiration we believe that we can use the fund raising lessons learnt to tackle the challenge of raising a much larger sum of money. We can again point to the inadequacies of the present scattered temporary accommodation on the Wirksworth site and the pressing need for much higher quality visitor facilities. The total cost of this building will be around £500,000 pounds. A real challenge, but other

heritage railways are raising similar sums to provide the quality facilities expected by our visitors.

There are many ways to contribute to the project, a flyer is included with this issue seeking donations. It has a gift aid form on the back. If you are a tax payer it will increase your donation by 25%! Other ways of donating Include "Just Giving," "Easyfundraising," "Crowd Funding," and "Gift Aid." Full details can be found on the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Website: www.e-v-r.com. We will soon be launching a scheme for regular giving.

We need to explore as many fund raising avenues as possible so that we can open this new building as soon as possible. Ideally we would like to have it open for business in time for the 2019 Season. This building will make a big difference to the comfort of our visitors so please support us as much as you can. If you have other ideas for fund raising please contact me, see p 2. Every little bit helps! We proved that with the Duffield project!

WYVERN RAIL UPDATE-Mike Evans.

As we approach the end of the operating season I am pleased to report that passenger numbers and receipts have broken all records but as a Management Team we are still learning. Two train running has proved an added attraction, so the project to build Shottle Signal Box has become a priority.

The increase in visitor numbers especially on Gala Days has made the realisation that a new station building is essential, especially in regard to the toilets which are inadequate. The same applies to the Pullman Buffet which struggles to cope with large numbers and the coaches are slowly deteriorating.

The timetable for next year will hopefully be very similar to 2017 but steam will handle the Tuesday tea train, but only per three services. Sundays in the summer will be steam hauled and Saturdays will be diesel hauled.

The Railway has moved forward with the help of EVRA's financial assistance in many departments and all the purchase made on my shopping list have been essential items required to keep the railway running especially as we near the completion of The Transport and Works Act Order, when all the bridges and the tunnel become our responsibility.

OCTOBER MUSE - Vince Morris.

At the end of this article there is a little homily with which I am sure that a lot of you are familiar, but it deserves repeating to those who know it and introducing to those who do not. As we get bigger, and busier, we must ensure that nothing falls down between the cracks of our various departments. We are a Railway that has a reputation for getting things done, as evidenced by the remarkable progress we have made over the last decade; the breadth and depth of our expertise, tempered by our ability to be realistic in our aims. However, although we are a very friendly, peace loving lot, there

have been occasional skirmishes between different groups about who does, or did, what. Equipment sometimes goes walk about, only to turn up in someone else's hands, and the consequence is, rather than sharing a valuable resource, plotting by the "rightful" owner to conceal it from all others. Of course this is very rare...of course... and the co-operation between the teams is great: look at the efforts by the DMU lads to restore the Barry Bubble for the PW team; the effort of various teams to marshal a demonstration freight train for EVRA's photo-charter, the tremendous team effort to organise and operate two train working; the 8F group assisting the Dream Steam Team and vice versa and of course the buffet team being everywhere. We all need each other to make the whole work. It is a spirit of purpose that is lacking on some heritage railways but clearly visible at the more successful ones. It is hopefully what sets us apart from the ordinary tourist attraction and it must enhance our reputation as the place to be.

And the reason for my musing on this subject? Soon the new Wirksworth Station building will leave the drawing board and start to appear in glorious 3D on the old dust dock site. Part WyvernRail, part EVRA, it will be ALL Ecclesbourne Valley Railway. Despite it being bigger and better than anything we have had before, space will still be at a premium and I am sure that some people will feel that the allocation to various activities is wrong, but all must accept what is available and not become tribal over the facilities. Although designed by Somebody it will be for the benefit of Everybody, so Nobody should feel left out. And if Anybody disagrees I suggest that they start from the beginning again. Which brings me back to my homily: it is about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done, and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did. Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that Everybody would not do it.

It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY VISIT 16TH - 17TH SEPTEMBER Tim Oaks.

I would like to express my thanks to everyone who helped to prepare for the Birmingham University visit over the weekend of 16/17th September. I was present on the Friday before the event when Mike Fairburn arranged for the removal of spent ballast and muck from the two panels dismantled on No.1 siding during the week and dumping of stone from the station site on the trackbed. Further along up to 39 sleepers were identified for changing and Mike and the PW team had brought round the chaired sleepers which had been stored on the loading dock after removing the gauntleted track there.

On Saturday the students were divided into teams for the initial tasks - digging out sleepers, cleaning chairs, carrying in chaired sleepers. A water pipe which crossed the track was buried at a lower level. Another team carried out a deep dig at the back of the shed and filled in the uneven ground all along the side of the shed with spoil, thereby removing a potential trip hazard. Hylton Holt drove a short works train, consisting of the small green diesel and the Rudd wagon for the students to fill with

many tons of spent ballast. It was mostly mud and limestone dust and very heavy going. Rails were rolled into the chairs on the first panel during the afternoon. Behind the shed the short rails and sleepers were made ready. By mid-afternoon the students had started to gell as teams and they worked very hard until 5pm, followed by a curry evening in the buffet coaches provided by Eric Hills and staff.

On Sunday Hylton was on site bright and early and took the Rudd and a brake van full of students up the incline to unload the spoil from Saturday. Unfortunately it took them about 2 1/2 hours to unload, so it wasn't practical to ask them to fill it again. I suspect none of them were used to either heavy shovelling or working at height on the deck of a wagon.

Meanwhile Prof Schmid and his sub-team assembled their short panel in the neat new hole at the back of the maintenance shed, with ballast barrowed down from the car park. It needs a little more, and fishplate holes drilling and two pairs of special plates (the FB/BH joint is just fly plated at present), but the gap is filled!

The first two panels were re-assembled on loading dock sleepers and just about all of the voids had stone loosely shovelled into them. Roughly 17 sleepers were changed. Some of the rest were dug out ready for changing and there were piles of loose muck which had to be left for attention by the weekday gang as we had run out of time. A few barrow loads of loco ash down the side of the shed would improve the surface.

The students were pulled off the job at 12-30 on the Sunday to catch their train home, Tony and I attended to the last few keys during the afternoon, by which time I simply couldn't face another shovelful and we went home.

ECCLESBOURNE WAY - John Hastings-Thomson.

First of all many thanks for all the feedback received by the railway and at the Ecclesbourne Way Website. We are aware that there were teething problems with the way marking but the whole route was way marked by the 10th September. It is however still advisable to take a map. This is a serious walk and you do need to be suitably equipped. Navigation over Hilltop does require care as there are few places to put way marks. It is the policy of the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust not to put way markers on trees and we are exploring other places to put them.

As part of next year's EVR Programme of events I will be leading two guided walks on the Way one in each direction. The first one is pencilled in for Easter Monday 2nd April. Further details will be in the 2018 Timetable.

In the meantime if you have any comments or feedback please go to the Ecclesbourne Way Website: www.ecclesbourneway.org.uk.

OCTOBER 100 CLUB DRAW RESULTS – Andrew Denham.

1st prize £81.00 to Mrs O Atwell of Camberley, Surrey. 2nd prize £48.60 to Mr M.G Kingsley of Ripley, Derbyshire 3rd prize £32.40 to Allison Gill of Worthing West Sussex.

Thanks to all who contributed.



Steam and Diesel pass at Shottle for the for the first time - Jinty meets 26 August Bank Holiday Monday - Oliver Hodgkinson.

Period shot at Dufffield during photo Charter 23.8.2017





Cathryn ready for her boiler, well nearly! - Bob Gibbens

Works starts on foundation for new Wirksworth Station Building 26.9.2017.



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PERMANENT WAY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2017 - Tony Watt

The Permanent Way team have had a summer of unremarkable, routine work. We have been spot resleepering along the 'Duffield Straight' from milepost 134 to F2, which is a busy footpath crossing on the edge of Duffield. Morning and evening this is in constant use as a route for local schoolchildren. Heading in the up direction from this point takes us toward the area north of the tunnel, where more drastic corrective actions are planned.

When the re-sleepering was concluded, we followed up jacking and packing the dipped joints, to try and improve the ride for passengers. Then the remaining sleepers were packed to fill any voids. This activity was not as routine as previously, since we were using our newly acquired hand-held powered tampers. They're very thirsty on petrol, but are much more effective than shovel packing, and much less arduous.

Our other acquisition, the pressurised grease dispenser, has also had extensive use. The fishplates have been greased from milepost 134, all the way to the buffer stop in Duffield. Having completed that length, the team returned to Idridgehay, greasing the plates from bridge 11 (Old Lane), through Idridgehay Station, and nearly as far as Jebbs Lane bridge. This shows that the work rate with the new technique is much greater than that for manual application by brush.

The coming months are likely to follow the same pattern, but at different locations. The mess room container has been moved to Hazelwood, so we will work our way northward from there.

JINTY EULOGY - Dave Williams.

Well the season is over and 47406, the Jinty, has gone back to the GCR to be dispatched onto its next hire. It doesn't seem two minutes since we were excitingly awaiting its arrival at the EVR, and now It's all over until next year. 'Tempis Fugit' as they say.

I'd like to say a "big thank you" to all the people who helped to make the stay of the Jinty such a success, whether you were crewing, or helping to maintain and clean the locos, True, there were initial teething problems, but this was only to be expected. The logistics of turning out two locomotives almost simultaneously every weekend, when you've only got one steam shed and one pit, turned into quite a slick operation in the end. The same could be said of disposing

Were there any downsides? Well the loco leaking the water out of the boiler through the clacks all the time which was a pain and the terms and conditions of its contract to us were not to everybody's liking, but that's all I'm going to say on the matter. In the end I feel that the benefits outweighed the disadvantages and a lot of good experiences were had by all concerned, not least by some of the GCR crews who said that they really enjoyed their turns along the EVR and would like to return again in the future. Roll on next year!!!

CATHRYN UPDATE - Bob Gibbens.

Once Cathryn was put back on its wheels and the tanks refitted earlier this year, the casual observer may have thought that not much has happening, however lots of smaller and not so small jobs have been completed during that period.

The boiler is still away at Newtons and is likely to be there for another couple of months while they wait for a competent welder to complete the copper inner firebox. Sadly there is a shortage of welders in the country capable of welding C107 copper. The new smoke box has had a trail fitting and has now been returned to Newtons to be fitted to the boiler. Most of the main copper pipes attached to the loco have also gone to Newtons for softening.

The coupling and connection rods have been fitted along with the crossheads and slide bars. Re-aligning the crossheads and slide bars has been very time consuming following the fitting of new brass slippers.

All the brake gear has been refitted, the main brake cross shaft was fitted with new brass bushes made in house and new brake blocks sourced. One job on the brake gear required inter-departmental cooperation: the straitening of the leading cross beam. This is a 4 inch square steel bar about 5 foot long which had been bent by a previous derailment. We unsuccessfully tried using heat and sledge hammers, so we put the job to one side thinking the beam would have to go away until it was suggested that the Permanent Way Team's "Jim Crow" might do the job. It did the job perfectly!

All the motion and valves have been refitted leaving the valve covers to be replaced when we are sure the valves are operating correctly. Each cover weighs over 56 lbs and has to be put on the studs by someone who is small and strong because of their position under the loco.

The original lubricators were used on the Barclays to overcome hot box problems. As a result both of the Barclays became "good runners." However we had to source another lubricator for Cathryn. It has been repositioned on the loco as the NCB had placed the lubricator over the slide bars and attached the operating arm to the valve spindle, which is not a good idea. A new linkage has had to be made connecting the lubricator to the crosshead and all the connections re-piped.

Our Machining facility deserves a mention. Without them the project expenditure in time and money would have been much higher. They are currently machining new cylinder cock castings which were missing from the loco when it arrived. All members are welcome to pop in on Tuesdays to ask further questions and have a natter.

BAGNALL 2746 THE DUKE - Tim Oaks.

After a lot of careful scraping, the big end bearings were ready to fit. The first of the connecting rods had been assembled on the driving axle; the loco needs moving back about ten feet to fit the second. Mick Clarke has cast and machined a new set of piston packings using whitemetal left over from the slipper blocks, we may need a second set. The packings are soft metal rings ending with a conical wedge section which fit over the piston rod and are compressed into place with a bolted cover to give a steam tight fit. The piston rods were chromium plated when the locomotive was first restored at Buxton over thirty years ago and fortunately this has stood the test of time; there is a risk in this process in that if the plating is not well done, the chrome peels off and chews up the packings.

Simon has completely rebuilt the vacuum ejector and brake application valve, both of which were horribly worn internally. John is building up the rear coupling hook with weld to restore the working clearances.

At Loughborough, David Wright has been very busy; he has just finished installing a new CNC machine which will make firebox stays in-house. Around 75% of the stay holes in the firebox sides have been tapped for new stays, and the remains of the crown stays in the outer wrapper are being shelled out. The copper tube plate has been smoothed out, which means using little hammers to remove the dents left by the big ones. The blank for the foundation ring is about to go away for water jet cutting.

Van No. 2 has had the new timber undercoated and is looking much smarter.

SUCCESSFUL SUMMER - Leigh Gration.

It has been our busiest August ever this year, with steam on the first weekend and during the Bank Holiday weekend. The Bank Holiday weekend itself was very good, with steam on Saturday and Sunday being supplemented by a diesel locomotive on Monday as we operated two trains. It was the first time steam and diesel locomotive hauled services had passed each other on this line. We make decisions about timetabling based on previous years and the experiences we have gained and I think it is fair to say we didn't quite get it right on the Saturday of the Bank Holiday weekend as there were 200 people on a train with only 171 seats. We shall try and correct this next year!

I think the biggest draw in August, which catapulted it into our best ever month by some distance, was the visit of 'McRat' Class 26 D5343 from the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire. We know that this class of diesel locomotive didn't run in this area but it is no secret that they have a large following from the 'baby Sulzer' fans. The

locomotive did sterling service for us, operating 16 days in total. Some of the fans came every single day! The 1160hp diesel engine sounded fantastic throbbing through the valley and it was most pleasing that the owners were more than happy for us to crew the locomotive ourselves.

The Diesel Gala weekend was fantastic as the Class 26 running alongside 33103 and 31206 provided a great spectacle indeed. It was most pleasing to see the ticket queue at Duffield Booking Office stretch down the path and up on to the main line footbridge on the Saturday morning too as visitors piled off the Matlock service. The Saturday also culminated in a bit of a tradition for us, a Fish and Chips special featuring all three locomotives with the Class 26 powering up the hill on the way back.

Plans are already in motion for a couple of exciting diesel visitors for next year to continue the precedent that has already been set with these events. We are now also feeling more comfortable operating Diesel Weekends as we have a great crew, which in turn may allow us to be more adventurous in our timetable on these days. Quirky and interesting events certainly whet the appetites of enthusiasts!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Dear Sir.

In reply to Jack Enright's letter in issue 67, I must conclude that he is right in putting Bagshawe's garage at Brierlow Bar rather than Brierley Bar, even if for no other reason than that I cannot find a place called Brierley Bar on the map! According to a local resident the Bagshawe brothers, who were joiners and wheelwrights by trade, set up the garage when one of them was sacked by his employer (Mr Brittain at Chelmorton) for being a few minutes late. The garage closed in 1981 and the site was taken over in 2000 as the premises of the Bookstore-Brierlow Bar. As Jack said, the original building appears to be still in use. Last year the name was changed to High Peak Bookstore and Café. Can anyone comment on its use, if any, between 1981 and 2000?

I probably committed a typo when I wrote the original article (apologies), but it is just possible that the error was in the original paperwork. We shall have to wait until the records re-appear from storage pending the development of the new museum in the new Wirksworth Station building: there will be a lot of sorting required before then!

Thank you Jack for your eagle eyes and putting the record straight.

Vince Morris.

EVR TIMETABLE: October - December 2017.For further details see website or printed timetable.

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

Wirksworth to Duffield, Trains between Wirksworth and Duffield will operate on Saturdays, Sundays and Tuesdays in October plus Thursday 26th & Friday 27th. In November trains will run on Tuesdays and Saturdays. In December Santa Trains as below, and trains will run 30th -31st December and January 1st before closing until mid- February. All services will be DMU's. Please check the timetable or website for further details. **There are no more services on the incline this year.**

SANTA TRAINS December 2017.

Santa Trains will run on Saturdays and Sundays; 9th/10th; 16th /17th; 23rd/24th at 10.00; 12.30 & 15.00 (No 15.00 train Sunday 24th. Tuesday 19th & Wednesday 20th) they will run at 10.00 & 12.30. Thursday 21st & Friday 22nd they will run at 10.00; 12.30 & 15.00. Fares are Adults £15, Children £13 & Infant 0-12moths £5. All children including infants receive a present. Adults receive a welcome drink and a mince pie.

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