



Ecclesbourne Express

*Newsletter of the Ecclesbourne Valley
Railway Association*

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The Wirksworth to Duffield Line

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association

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

- Company Secretary:** Ian Bowley 164 Cole Lane Borrowash
Derby DE72 3GP Tel: 07976 630775
Email: datman2@hotmail.co.uk
- Treasurer:** Lindsey Bowley 164 Cole Lane Borrowash
Derby DE72 3GP Tel: 07756 011790
Email: treasurerevra@outlook.com
- Other Directors:** Mike Craft Tel: 01629 825213
Email: mikecraft7@btinternet.com
Pat Craft (Marketing) Tel: 01629 825213
Email: mikecraft7@btinternet.com
Andrew Denham Tel: 01623 623985 /07525 701951
Email: trish-and@talktalk.net
Tony Faulkner Tel:07759 909585
Email: tony.a.faulkner@btinternet.com
Ben Field Tel: 07796 155791
Email: benfield96@gmail.com
James Hallam Tel:07415 258768
Email: james.hallam97@yahoo.co.uk
Eric Hills Tel: 07961 938353
Email: eric.hills@hotmail.com
David Williams Tel: 07833 746048
Email: roy-williams4@sky.com
- Editors:** Andrew Denham & Trish Birks
2A Stanley Road Forest Town
Mansfield Notts NG19 0BY
Andrew: 07525 701951 Trish: 07736 968026
- Our NEW email address:** [**editorsEE@talktalk.net**](mailto:editorsEE@talktalk.net)

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



N.B. The Autumn Edition will be published in October 2021

Contributions are welcome by post/email to the editors: [**editorsEE@talktalk.net**](mailto:editorsEE@talktalk.net)
Our deadline date for inclusion will be **Sept 15th 2021**

Page1: 80080 heads north to Wirksworth on the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway 01/05/21

photo © David Hayes

Page 28: 2021 Bus Rally, see p 26. Hold very tight please! Ting ting.

photo © John Stokes

Letter from the Editors

Welcome to the 83rd Edition of the Ecclesbourne Express. It is hard to believe that this is the 10th one we have produced since Spring 2019 (Issue 74). Hopefully we are getting better at it!

Summer is here at last and we have been running since mid-April, albeit with a restricted service. Now the possibility exists to return to "normal" life - whatever that has become, but not until July 19th and then only if all goes well.

Half your editorial team has been driving both our guest locos and they seemed to be performing well and drawing in the public, which is very welcome after the last 15 months of lockdown. However, as told elsewhere 9466 has thrown her toys out of the pram and needs some TLC (Tyesley's Loving Care).

There have been one or two changes in the trustees, with the resignation of one and the full incorporation of two more, however we are still looking for more trustees. If you want to become involved, the nomination papers will be included with the next issue. You do need to be an EVRA member and be both nominated, and seconded by members.

EVRA still need volunteers for all positions, please see in the mag for details.

Meanwhile, keep safe and well.

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.

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HONORARY TREASURER POSITION

Lindsey Bowley

Do you think you may have the qualifications required to take on this important role? I am 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.
- 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.

I 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 me: Lindsey Bowley on treasurerevra@outlook.com. Further details are available on request.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Ian Bowley

Number 3, Brian Harrison is now back in one piece, Joe has even painted inside the coal bunkers, so only hand delivery of coal permitted, sorry no shovels!

Cathryn is also taking shape, the firebars have been made and are now fitted.

Unfortunately, the GWR pannier 9466 has had a problem with an axle bearing overheating, see **NEWS FROM THE PIT** on Page 6.

I have made new doors for the brake van and Mike Ball and I are in the process of fitting them. We will then tidy up the brake van ready to start the steam driving experiences, hopefully in the near future.

more follows →

Network Rail have been to see us regarding the proposed new steam maintenance facility and it was a very positive meeting. Of course they want a large amount of specification for the unit which I and others are compiling. I do ask myself if life will ever be the same again, but I sincerely hope so. Let's hope that next month we get back to something like normality.

SALES MATTERS

Pat Craft

Following Government guidelines, we re-opened the shop in mid-April and in May were able to re-open the Museum. Since then sales have been good and on some days very good, sometimes without any reasonable explanation! The level of donations has been very high – around 2,000 books and probably double that in terms of magazines. I am very grateful to all the shop volunteers (both the greeters and the till operators) for coping with everything and especially the level of donations. As I write this, I know that the office is full after this weekend and there is only enough room to open the door! At least it gives me a workout without paying for the gym!

We have two new volunteers who have helped with a range of tasks as well as being the people behind the till!

As I mentioned last time, we are organising a Bric a Brac sale, over the August Bank Holiday, so 3 days of bargain hunting on 28th, 29th and 30th of August from 10am to 3.30pm each day.

Further donations of Bric a Brac will be gratefully received up till Sunday 22nd August; items such as gardening and other tools, kitchenware, glass ware, records, bicycles, unwanted gifts etc. are particularly useful in raising money for the Association and hence the railway. In addition, we continue to welcome books of all sorts and railway/railway modelling magazines as usual.

100 CLUB PRIZE DRAW SUMMER 2021

Andrew Denham

Congratulations to this quarter's lucky winners:

1st Prize £72.83 No: 176, Mr Tyson-Woodcock

2nd Prize £43.34 No: 240 Mr Skelton

3rd Prize £28.98 No: 130 Mr Lee

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.

AGM NOTICE

The 2021 **EVRA** Annual General Meeting is **provisionally** arranged at

Wirksworth Town Hall, Wirksworth on Saturday 13th November at 2.00pm

RECENT PICTURES

Dave Williams



LMSCA 3rd coach, as seen on 21st June, sits proudly in the construct ready for dining trains following a lengthy re-build.



80080 waits for the "right away" to move the stock from Platform 1 to Platform 2 ready for running the service on the same day as above.

photos © Dave Williams

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. 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

NEWS FROM THE PIT

Dave Williams

Hi to all, we hope you are all enjoying the summer weather, even if it makes it a bit uncomfortable for us crews when we have to spend a day on a very hot footplate.

The good news of the last few days is that at long last we had a visit from a Network Rail representative who has said he can see no reason why we cannot build our new steam shed on the proposed site, adjacent to our current shed. Once we have this in writing we can get the project under way.

The bad news is that, after doing sterling work for the last few weeks, our Pannier 9466 has developed a faulty rear axle box bearing and has been withdrawn from traffic until the problem can be rectified. As this will probably mean the need for a wheel drop facility, which we haven't got, the loco will have to be transported to where there is one.

Luckily we have the use of the Standard 4 tank to see us through the coming weeks, and what a magnificent beastie she is, if you haven't had the chance to ride behind her I urge you to do so. She is the epitome of what a branch line, such as ours, is all about.

Of our two Barclay locos, Henry remains in traffic, but hasn't been used since its foray out in the close season on the works ballast trains. No 3 has slowly been coming together again and by the time of the next magazine edition I hope to report on its first steaming.

Finally I'd like to welcome three new members to our steam dept, Connor Jones, Jonathan Purves and John Hicky. All with varying backgrounds, but all willing to work their way up to being loco crew.



Just to show we are not only a heritage line, the Chiltern Railways Hybrid project, classed as 168, came here for testing earlier this year. Despite the best efforts of our P-way team we could not get the required ORR approval to run at 40MPH in time and it had to go elsewhere for proving. It certainly was a talking point for visitors during our Covid enforced quiet period.

photo© Richard Buckby

WALK THIS WAY...

Trish Birks

During a recent visit to EVR I picked up three interesting leaflets, available in the **EVRA** Shop & Museum at Wirksworth Station:

Each leaflet has a very easy to read map with Distance, Difficulty, Start, Finish, Conveniences and information about parking.

- 1) **WIRKSWORTH 'OPEN ALL HOURS'** This is a walk around the town. It centres upon just a few street with details of many of the old shops. Distance: approx. 650 yards/metres - about 1 hour.
- 2) **WIRKSWORTH 'LIMESTONE WONDERLAND TRAIL'** See fossils from a prehistoric coral lagoon, walk the line of one of the world's earliest railways and much more. Distance: approx. 3.5 miles/5.5km - approximately 3 hours.
- 3) **WIRKSWORTH 'GRITSTONE FARMERS TRAIL'** See wonderful views, grazing livestock , gritstone walls and also medieval and Victorian Farms. Distance approx. 5 miles/8km. Allow 3 hours + a pub stop on the way.

Leaflets are also available at Wirksworth Heritage Centre www.wirksworthheritagecentre.org

GIFT-AID: THE NITTY GRITTY

Andrew Denham

Wading through some of our sister heritage railway websites and other attractions that are run by charitable trusts, I became confused to find that they offer a Gift-Aid price and a lower non-Gift-Aid price on fares and attractions.

Gift-Aid is a means by which a charitable trust can claim back the tax @ 25% that an individual has paid on a donation. For example, in the EVRA shop, if a person donates say 10 books that then sell for £10 total, EVRA get an extra 25% on top via Gift-Aid claimed against the donor's tax, after the item is sold. Great.

However there is a gotcha! Where there is a return for the payment, such as admission to a venue, it is not classed as a donation and that does not apply. The Gift-Aid price has to be at least 10% more than the non-Gift-Aid price for the organisation to claim the 25% tax back on the full amount paid. It is also only applicable to UK taxpayers so if you are a visitor from outside the UK you cannot offer Gift-Aid anyway. You could then choose the lower rate or just accept that the extra 10% is a simple donation. Cheers HMRC for making it so simple!

The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway does not offer two prices as the railway is run as a commercial company. EVRA was set up to support the Railway and is a charitable trust, separate from WyvernRail PLC who have the operating license for the line. There were good historical reasons for this which are beyond the scope of this article.

Having said all that, Gift-Aid is still a vital part of our income at EVRA and it makes a real difference to our finances.

All EVRA staff are volunteers. The EVRA Book Shop and Museum, the steam and diesel drivers, guards, crossing keepers, model railway exhibitors, narrow gauge railway, maintenance crews and most of the station staff are unpaid. They are there because they want to give our visitors the best experience possible.

The Vegetation Control Team attempt to keep nature at bay on the lineside and around the yard. also our gardeners

The P-way team keep the track and sleepers in place and above water in some areas. (And sometimes repair it as fast as the rest of us break it.)

Our Signal and Telegraph team keep our signals working and now are getting to grips with the Shottle signalling system.

Then there are the coach repairers and painters, the cleaning staff and those people who turn up rain or shine to work on the engines, coaches and wagons and the host of other people who make up our railway.

There are also many people that are behind the scenes doing the jobs that are never really noticed until they are not done.

Most of them are volunteers. **How about joining us?** www.e-v-r-a.com

THE ORIGINS OF GWR 9466

An Outside Report

As told briefly in issue 80 p12, this engine was built in 1951 to a Hawksworth design by Robert Stephenson and Hawthorns Ltd. Sadly, at the time, diesel shunters were coming to the fore and the 94xx locos had a fairly short working life with 9466 being committed to Barry Scrapyard in the summer of 1964 after just 13 years. This class was a development of the 5700 class.

The 5700 class was synonymous with the GWR, with 829 built between 1929 and 1950 and the most numerous locomotive of one type ever to be built in Britain. In turn, they were traceable to a saddle-tank design, class 645, by George Armstrong that originated in 1873. All but eight of the 645s were rebuilt from around 1917 with the Belpair type firebox which necessitated pannier tanks as well. They were incorporated into the later 1500 class which were built with the Belpair box and pannier tanks from the start.

All the above classes stayed with simple slide valves and Stephenson's valve gear. Some were fitted with heating and vacuum brakes, others with steam brakes only.

The Belpair firebox is common on GWR and LMS engines. It has a flat top and square cross-section that gives a larger heating surface area and so a greater steaming rate compared to the round top boilers found on other locos. The increased volume above the firebox crown also reduces the tendency for water carry-over known as "priming". They are readily recognisable as the part in front of the cab is flat with square sides rather than round for the length of the firebox.

After William Stanier departed for the LMS, Frederick Hawksworth became assistant Chief Mechanical Engineer to the GWR, but as Charles Collett was reluctant to give up that post he only became CME in 1941 when Collett retired aged 70. The 94xx was designed by Hawksworth and went into production in 1947.

Hawksworth was the last GWR CME and by 1948 the GWR was no more. 10 of the 94xx locos were built at Swindon with the remaining 200 built by outside contractors for the newly formed British Railways. The Swindon built engines were superheated, but as they were generally intended for heavy shunting and banking duties, this was dropped on the BR built locos as it showed very little or no change in economy for this kind of work.

It is no co-incidence that William Stanier's LMS designs incorporate many of the GWR ideas. In 1931 when he was the GWR works manager, Stanier was poached by Sir Josiah Stamp, then chairman of the LMS railway, to become their CME.

Many of the GWR features also carried over into the BR standard designs of Robert Riddles as he was a former LMS man after Stanier and Ivatt.

More follows —→



Lubrication is a bit rudimentary on most steam locos. Below the axle is a pad that looks like it is made from a traditional mop head folded back on itself. This is fixed to a horizontal spring and sits in an oil bath. The spring pushes the "mop" against the axle and wicks oil onto the surfaces, thus providing the lubrication film needed. As speeds are relatively low, the system mostly works well, but water and grit getting in soon wears the white metal away. Water causes issues as the lubrication film is destroyed. Once it starts, the process can be quite rapid.

If you thought that changing a wheel bearing on your car was a pain in the nether regions just try this:-

Most steam locos have solid axles. In the case of 9466, all the valve eccentrics and big ends are on the centre axle, so, thankfully, they do not have to come off to get to the rear axle to service the bearings. However, the springs have to be released or removed and then the entire loco has to be lifted (approx. 60 tons of it) to clear the wheels (4'7" diameter) or a special hydraulic lift is used to lower the single faulty axle complete with bearing assembly into a pit (known as a Wheel Drop).

The axle box is then stripped. The bearing is white metal over a cast brass or bronze housing. All the old white metal has to be melted out, and using a special box, new white metal is cast onto the cleaned bearing housing. It is a bit like soldering on a large scale. White metal can include tin, lead, zinc, and bismuth. The alloys used in white metal bearings are also called Babbitt metals. The beauty of it is that being soft, it can absorb small particles that would scratch or score plain brass or bronze bearings and steel axles. Once re-metalled, the bearing surface is first machined then scraped by hand until the axle and box fit each other like a glove. This technique was used in vehicle engines in most pre-WW2 designs. Split shells were a relatively modern thing and never practical on steam locos.

Then it is a matter of putting it back together - just like that!

Later large BR standard locos (but not 80080) had roller bearings which did not suffer from water and dirt ingress in the same way and were grease lubricated.

TALES FROM THE PAST

Transcribed by June Cooke

Transcript of an interview between **Pat Craft** of **EVRA** and **Pam Hill speaking about her husband Harry Hill** Fireman 1959-1969 British Rail 1959 - 1969

Pat Craft: So if you could just tell me how you came to Duffield and about your husband, where he'd worked before and what he did when he was here?

Pam Hill: I met my husband just after he came out of the Navy and he had worked as a Booking Clerk at Stoke station for many years. Eventually, he decided that he would like to be a Stationmaster. So he took the exam, passed and was one of the youngest, if not the youngest Stationmaster at 26. We were married then and we got our first house which was Heanor, Heanor Station House. It was a Goods Station.

more follows →

In 1954 he was told that he would be moving here to Duffield and so we moved into the Station House and he started work here. I have to say it wasn't a very good start because within the first week he had some gentleman jump in front of a train on the Mainline. But Harry carried on with the job and did very well.

He got first prizes for Best Kept Station and Best Kept Station Garden. He built up the station and the gardens with a little help from friends. When we left it, it was a beautiful station. I didn't do an awful lot at Duffield Station, only an odd bit of weeding or something you know, if Harry was stuck and there wasn't anyone to help him. There were gardens all over the Station. The middle platform that had two gardens on it and of course it had a W H Smith stall on it in those times. And all along where you go over, onto the bridge now where you go over to the station all along there was all garden it was really beautiful but things change as they do. We were here until 1960. The first time I saw it when we came back to Duffield in 1970, I just wept. I mean, there is just nothing there now, as there was and it really was a nice station.

Harry would be based at Duffield station, he would not have needed to go up the branch not unless something happened. I mean people used to say to us, 'Don't the trains bother you?' The answer was no they didn't because you got so used to them. The only time they bothered you was if you didn't hear them, you knew that certain trains would be coming through at certain times and if they didn't come; 'ah what's happened!' It was that sort of business.

A lot of people used to come with pigeons, baskets of pigeons and they used to put them on the bridge over the line because there were four platforms then, I beg your pardon, three platforms and they used to put them on the bridge then Harry, his helper, one of the Porters or even me sometimes would go. And what you would do, they would be in a pile and you'd open the little doors and then stand back and of course, they'd all fly away. They all went home, most of them did anyway. We used to get the odd one who would stop on the station or we had the odd one on the Station House roof. And I know one of them Harry caught and he rang the owner because they'd all got the rings on with the number on and he rang the owner and the owner said 'I don't want him back. You might as well keep him or stuff him or something', because if he's going to do that he never will be a racer, you see.

My Mother used to do rag rugs in those days, she gave us one and I didn't want it. So we put it in the waiting room and of course, we always had a fire in the waiting room apart from midsummer, of course and everybody thought it marvelous you know, this rug, in front of the fire and you could go and sit in there while you waited for the train. It went down very well when we were here I must admit.

We had a very good time here, Duffield was a village then with all facilities as little villages were. We did very well here and as I say we were loathe to leave but we had to. We were here until 1960 and then he was transferred again to a place called

More follows —→

Blisworth, near Northampton and we lived there for three years and then we moved to Tring Station in Hertfordshire, three weeks after the Great Train Robbery. When Harry left the Railway Company we were at Tring.

BR STANDARD 80080

Editors



80080 climbs the gradient near Shottle on 2nd May but was it 1961 or 2021?

One of our visiting steam engines is a BR Standard class 4 Tank, built at Brighton in 1954 to design by Robert (Robin) Riddles, although the class can be traced back to the LMS Fairburn 2-6-4T, which in turn was developed from the 1927 designed LMS 2-6-4Ts. A total of 155 BR 4MT

tanks engines were constructed: 130 at Brighton, 15 at Derby and 10 at Doncaster.

80080 started her working life on the London Tilbury & Southend line from 1954 until 1962. When that line was electrified, she moved to Croes Newydd and spent the rest of her working life in Wales.

Like so many of the BR standards, she was scrapped after a relatively low mileage and time scale. In 1965 she was banished to the now famous Barry Island scrapyard of Dai Woodham. Dai was a practical man. Cutting up scrap wagons was more financially rewarding than doing those big steam engines, and so quite unintentionally he was responsible for the preservation of around 200 engines that BR had sent for scrap as part of their modernisation plan. 80080 was saved along with 80098 by two businessmen who took her to Matlock in 1980 then moved her to the Midland Railway Centre at Butterley and began the process of re-building her in 1983. She returned to steam in 1987 and completed 37,000 miles before the next overhaul in 1997. She is now in care of the PRCLT at Butterley.

80080 became the first steam engine to work a normal stopping passenger service on the mainline for over a quarter of a century in March 1993. She worked for over a week on the Settle and Carlisle line from Carlisle to Kirkby Stephen and back and also returned to the famous Cambrian network in 1992 for a spell.

In 1998 she ran a couple of tours from Derby to Matlock with 11 coaches in the rake whilst sister loco 80098 did the "Dawlish Donkey" Exeter to Newton Abbot and Exeter to Plymouth runs in 2000.

Of course the picture is from 2021. 80080 never ran historically on the Wirksworth branch, but it could be almost any rural line in Britain just before the death of steam, and in May 1961, the editor (who is driving) would only have been 8 years old!

THE WAY WE WERE

Richard Buckby



This view from February 2005 shows how we coped without all the mechanical devices that we have now available when installing track in the yard. Muscle power sufficed and if you did not have a crane, we used what we did have - logs from clearing the line of its 8.5 mile forest!

Sawn up tree trunks acted as rollers as we prepare to move the next rail on to the incline track. John Bentley and Vince Ware, both no longer with us, are poised with crow bars to exercise ageing muscles.



The view left dated August 2005 taken from Cemetery Lane bridge might look familiar but a lot has changed.

The 'dust dock' in the distance was still there, we had not yet taken it down and used the steelwork to build the maintenance shed.

Most of the locos visible have gone to other homes, as has the Parry People Mover and its planned successor.

The track up the incline had just been re-laid and ballasted, platform 3 had just been built and platform 2 was a distant dream!



See what other changes you can spot.....

Even in the early days of the project to re-open the line we started to get unusual vehicles visiting for testing and possible development. In August 2005 we had the 'Parry People Mover' vehicle with us. This used energy stored on a flywheel to progress along the line. It had previously been operating along the dockside in Bristol and the plan was for us to possibly use it on the incline and then test its advanced successor vehicle. However.

most of the time it was with us its main motive power was provided by human traction. A more modern version is now in use on the Stourbridge Town branch line which is claimed to be the shortest in Europe at 0.8 miles. Passengers no longer need to push.....



Car drivers on the M1 near Meadowhall had been puzzled for some years by the sight of three rather abandoned looking locos visible below. They had been collected over the years by a chap who wanted to save them from scrapping. He had no track to run them on and they even had trees growing through them.

The owner died suddenly and his family had the problem of disposing of them.

We were contacted and offered them on long term loan so we took them on as a preservation project and a group here dubbed 'The Dream Steam Team' have over the years restored them. In October 2005 they arrived in our yard. No. 3 (front) was ex-Ferrybridge power station, Yorkshire, and was the first to be steamed here. It is now named 'Brian Harrison' after the gentleman who saved it. The rear loco worked at a tar works in Rotherham and is now named Henry Ellison after their chief chemist.

All photos © Richard Buckby

DERBY LIGHTWEIGHT PROGRESS

Norman Ashfield

Rewiring of the trailer car cab is still work in progress, and some of the instruments are away for recalibration. In the passenger interior, many of the large tasks are now complete, but the seat frame handles are currently away for the chromium to be plated.

We've been working on the actual restoration for 25+ years now, [I'm a new boy, only just joined in 1999!] and it would be wonderful one day, before we are too old, to watch the twin run down in service to Duffield and back.



photo © Ben Field

I remember it was a chilly damp Saturday in February 2019 when I decided to visit the railway with a friend using a Groupon voucher which had been gathering dust since Christmas. Neither of us had ever heard of the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway before but the deal on Groupon looked very tempting. Typically, I hadn't done any research into the place I was going to and it wasn't until we arrived at the station, that we saw an imposing marquee engulfing the platform. It quickly dawned on us that there must be some sort of special event going on.

Curiosity got the better of us. We exchanged our voucher for our tickets and ventured into the marquee to see what the buzz was about. We were greeted by an enthusiastic individual, who I now know to be Eric Hills, we were shown displays and information about all of the different areas of the railway. I was particularly intrigued by the catering stand, being a professional chef. I hadn't arrived with the intention of becoming a volunteer but the art of persuasion was perfected that day.

With our hands stuffed full of information, we made our way to the train. It was one of the large fleet of what I now know to be DMUs. We took a return trip down the line. It was a very enjoyable journey. Even in February the countryside view was great.

Upon returning to Wirksworth, we ventured back over to Platform 1 and I was invited for a cab ride on board a diesel shunter. Wow, what an experience - imagination well and truly captured! The driver of the shunting locomotive that day has now turned out to be a good friend of mine, in Jack Marshall. Disembarking and quite impressed, we were offered a tour round the yard by the Commercial Manager. We were amazed at the scale of the site and the activities taking place. I filled in the paperwork and signed up immediately!

After a few weeks of induction, I began to take a very keen interest in the diesel locomotives. The mechanics, noises and power fascinate me. In some ways, it was a welcome change from the day job managing a warehouse canteen kitchen at the time. I was tasked with washing the Class 73 bodywork on my first day, not too glamorous, but I was captivated by all of the electrical components inside.

A few weeks later, a locomotive was going down the line on a test run. Head honcho of the Diesel Department, Oliver, invited me to ride in the cab. It struck me how friendly and welcoming everybody is around the railway and it is in part due to this that I continued with my volunteering.

Over the coming months, I quickly gained knowledge of the locomotives and made many friends around the railway. I was very lucky enough to have the opportunity to develop my skills and train to be a Drivers Assistant. Obviously, this takes quite a bit of training and it took a little while to gain the knowledge and experience to pass the required exams but it was a proud achievement when I did.

I found the first Coronavirus lockdown particularly frustrating as I was desperate to get back to the railway which I loved. However, when I did get to go back, little did I know that it was going to take a twist! I was informed that the Catering Manager was to retire and I was persuaded, in about five seconds flat, to supervise the Café at Wirksworth at weekends as the railway restarted with it's COVID-secure services. This was to be alongside my new job as a Kitchen Manager in a school. It led to

more follows —————>

extremely long hours and no time off but I can't deny, I really enjoyed it! I had been dreaming of serving food to customers on a moving train, which I was able to make a reality in the summer. It was like my same old job but in an amazing new environment.

Before I knew it, I found myself on board a rather unusual train; The Train Through Christmas Countryside. Thankfully, a lot of it coincided with the school holidays. I had the unenviable task of baking around 4,000 cookies and mixing up about 100kg of hot chocolate. That ear-worm of a song got a bit grating but it was amazing to see everybody having such a good time after such a difficult year. It was backed up by unbelievable reviews online and I was really proud.

Prior to opening in April 2021, a decision had to be made. It wasn't practical for me to continue to supervise the Café and continue with my school job as it was too much work with the railway due to be operating more. Did I dare to dream? Yes I did! I was offered the job at the railway full time tasked with taking the catering to a whole new level. I couldn't say 'yes' quickly enough! A bold move though, leaving my job at the school which I hadn't been in too long for a new adventure.

We've had a busy season so far and with the dining trains in the stunningly restored LMS coach starting later in the year it will get even busier. If you've ever been curious about what it is like to serve on a moving train, let me know as I would love your assistance. Don't worry I'll show you how! ...Funny how things work out.



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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: www.e-v-r-a.com or contact me. See page 2.

This has been quite a busy three months, really. The reduced train service due to Covid meant that we had more track access time, but we also had more to do. The first part of this period saw us (nearly!) finishing off the first part of the relaying near Barnsley Lane. Lack of diesel motive power even saw us using Henry Ellison to work the ballast trains.

We had re-laid most of the section, but two panels remained to be done when we had to give up the track possession just before Easter. As the new track had been lifted considerably higher than it was before, we had to put a ramp into the last panel of the existing track to join up the rails. This involved plenty of ballasting and packing the whole panel using the Robel tampers. A detailed level survey was then done over the 'ramp' to check that locos (like the 4MT) would be able to traverse it without problem. Nevertheless, the dramatic change in track levels meant that we had to impose a 5mph TSR on this length. Hopefully, this will be removed after we relay the final two panels in June.

Most readers will be aware that Porterbrook brought a Turbostar (actually numbered as a class 168) to our line for testing. We had been working on getting the test site between Ildridgehay and Shottle ready for this for over a year. This work came to its conclusion in May when we completed the tamping of the track and installed datum posts in the cess to monitor any movement. As part of this, Hylton Holt painted cant and chainage labels on the sleepers every ½ chain over the whole site. We now have a piece of first class track aligned for running at 40 mph. It was just a shame that we didn't manage to get the approval of the ORR in time for Porterbrook's schedule, so the 40 mph running did not happen. However, we have another test client who wants to run over this site at 40mph when their kit is ready.

The big item on our work schedule was still to get 'Tom' working again. As described last time, we managed to get a replacement engine of the same design and have been gradually getting it ready for installation. The installation has now happened, and we finally ironed out a couple of faults, one electrical and one pneumatic, that prevented the engine running for more than 30 seconds. Tom took its first movement powered by the new engine as I write this. We plan to use Tom as the p-way loco until L Z Breeze is fixed (our next big project!), then Tom can go into 'works' for a few weeks for a much needed repaint to complete its refurb.

Of course, regular work still goes on. This includes fishplate oiling and track patrols, plus a new Saturday team led by Tim Oaks who have been carrying out much needed track maintenance around the yard at Wirksworth.

As always, we welcome new volunteers to our friendly teams. We meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays with Mike Fairburn and Saturdays at Wirksworth with Tim Oaks.

Email Mike Fairburn on: mikefairburn57@live.co.uk

Email Tim Oaks on: sleepermonster@yahoo.com

MORE P-WAY NEWS

Tim Oaks

We have had some useful sessions greasing slide chairs and changing rotten sleepers in the loco sidings area.

I have managed to get hold of a couple of duff jacks on eBay to assist with this work and hope to be arranging a summer/ autumn programme with Mike Fairburn shortly.

If anyone is interested in getting involved please contact me:

sleepermonster@yahoo.com

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

There will be an intensive working **P-Way Week**, beginning Monday 4th October 2021 to install the turnout for the new carriage siding, and other related projects. The final details have yet to be worked out: it may be that preparation work will begin on the previous weekend. The turnout switches will be North of the shed access road, the crossing will be to the South. It follows that there will be a lot of digging, and access to the shed will be severely disrupted while this work is going on. More information will be published on social media in due course, all offers of help will be gratefully received.

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MATLOCK HALL LEYS PARK LOCO

Editor



The Hall Leys Park loco is depicted here on 21st June 1969 at Matlock in a photo by the late J.W. Sutherland.

The engine, which the author remembers riding behind as a young boy, is now in the care of the same group that own 80080, the PRCLT at the West Shed, Butterley after her rescue from a scrapyard (though definitely not Barry Island)!

© Image by kind permission of Manchester Locomotive Society

There was a sister loco "Lady Joyce" that operated on a second track at Matlock Bath. "Lady Joyce" later ran at Thoresby Hall near Ollerton, Notts for some time before the hall closed owing to subsidence, but subsequently went to the Newby Hall railway near Ripon. Now much altered to appear like a Royal Scot replica it is still in service after a five year overhaul ending in 2016, that had been funded by the builder's daughter, Joyce.

Yet another engine was built that eventually got exported to the U.S.A. after a spell in Bognor Regis. This engine's whereabouts are presently unknown. All were built by Stan Battison of Ilkeston, a local engineer, to an unusual 9½" gauge.

40 STEPS

Vegetation Control Team

Mick Kingsley

As can be seen from the the photos, today, 14th June, has seen the completion of the 40 steps project, where no trackside security existed before we have now solved that problem, hopefully.



photos © Mick Kingsley

TOM'S HEART TRANSPLANT

Richard Buckby



Our intrepid P-Way team are seen here shoe-horning the replacement Rolls-Royce diesel engine into our hard-working shunter known as Tom. The original power plant had the last rites read earlier this year when water was found in the oil and subsequent investigation showed that the engine was either scrap or needed an extensive (for which read expensive) re-build. Us older folks may recall the comic seaside post card joke about piston broke, but that really was the case with Tom.

Fortunately a pre-owned engine was found complete with a 3 phase alternator that had been used as a generating set in Poole. At the time of writing, the rest of the plant is sitting in the yard waiting to be sold or scrapped, but after much modification, many cups of tea, and maybe some swearing, the engine finally fitted and worked. Tom lives once more!

photos© Richard Buckby

ARTICLES LIFTED FROM EARLY EDITIONS OF OUR MAGAZINE

With the kind permission of Neil Ferguson Lee & Howard Sprenger, both of whom have been our editors in the past.

We have been lucky enough to have been given copies of the first 5 editions of the newsletter. It develop rapidly from 2 pages to 12 pages as work around the site progressed. In this and following issues there will be interesting/quirky bits for you to enjoy. The following comes from **Edition 5 Winter 2001:-**

Plants and Other Wild Life of the Wirksworth Branch

Pat Craft

"In Summer 2001, at the request of WyvernRail, a survey of the trees, shrubs and other plants was made along the line from Cromford Road to Ildridgehay, especially on the track and trackside area where most clearance is occurring. In some places, the embankments and cutting sides have not been visited because they are wooded, and will be better seen next Spring.

more follows —————→

The lists are divided up so that the locations correspond with recognisable features such as bridges, crossings, changes from embankment to cutting, and so on. The lists will be added to in future years by surveys earlier in the year, and by visiting the areas not covered completely. They will be extended to Duffield in 2002.

Over 250 different plants were noted, and although most of them might be expected, there were some surprises including broad-leaved helleborine, greater burnet saxifrage, burnet saxifrage and Solomon's seal, which are all uncommon in this part of Derbyshire. Some species which are more widespread in the county, such as the shrubs dogwood and guelder rose were only found in one place on the line, whilst others such as southern marsh orchid and spotted orchid, occur in reasonable numbers in the station yard. Giant horsetail occurs in several places along the track.

The line is a very important site in Derbyshire for glow-worms, with records in almost every 1km square between Duffield and Wirksworth. Nationally, the glow-worm is declining as suitable habitat disappears. Disused railways provide ideal habitat and advice is being formulated to minimise damage to the colonies during the restoration. Other animals include amphibians, birds from sparrowhawks to wrens, mammals such as wood mice and bank voles, and speckled wood and ringlet butterflies (as well as the more common red admirals, small tortoiseshells and meadow browns).

In addition to plants and animals, notes were made of good examples of habitats such as the colourful old meadows that were once common in the valley, and which are now largely confined to the railway line. Such areas provide habitats for wildlife such as butterflies and other insects, but will also provide an attractive scene for passengers. Judging by the BBC "Railway Roundabout" video from the 1960s, the line was much more open in the past, but is also obvious both from the flora and the age of the trees that several of the wooded sections were in existence during the operation of the railway. Ideally, these should be retained as features. In the case of the grassland it is important that it is cut and raked each year (or at least in alternate years) to retain it. It is also important that the wooded areas are properly managed such as the coppicing of hazel, which will let light in, reduce overhanging branches and could even provide a modest income in time.

A detailed report will be made to WyvernRail and the EVRA Executive Committee, and in addition to the species lists and maps of the sensitive areas, there will also be details of appropriate management for grassland, woodland and wetland, and sections of hedgerow suitable for laying. Key sections for species and habitats have been marked in yellow on the line to show the few locations where care is needed. The suggested management will go hand in hand with the restoration of the line, its maintenance and its functioning, but will enhance the railway for volunteers, visitors and wildlife alike."

THE REST OF 2021

Editors

What a time of change we have been through over the last 15 months! Lockdown; release; lockdown again; partial release and now that the 21st June has become the 19th July, there is no guarantee that restrictions will be lifted fully by then.

We will be running the DMU services again from 1st July with spaced seating. Still no full trains but at least some trains in addition to our compartment carriage trains.

The recently outshopped LMSCA third open has been added to the rake of coaches for our dining trains, and this has increased our capacity considerably in preparation for the dining service which is due to start in late July.

Class 14 "Teddy Bear" has been performing well doing sterling service on the mid-week trains whilst the visiting steam locos have covered most weekends since we re-opened.

Our Pannier 9466 has developed an issue that will involve a partial strip down to replace a faulty bearing. It has returned to Tyseley Locomotive Works for this work as we do not have the necessary facilities at EVR to remove the wheels concerned. By the time that you read this it may well have been done and have come back again. The process is described elsewhere in the magazine for those with a technical turn of mind.

80080 continues to work well, and since it is just out of refit it should remain in good fettle for some time to come as it is worked relatively lightly on our line at 25 MPH with 5 coaches. The details of this engine are also featured elsewhere in the magazine.

Whilst the immediate future is still uncertain, we have managed to stay operational at a time when many other heritage lines have been in suspended animation. Some have ceased to operate altogether, which is a great shame to us like minded individuals who feel that heritage railways need support and need to exist for future generations. We just heard that the Llangollen line has been saved by its charity arm and will be running again very soon.

What will eventually happen when the environmental lobby finally ban burning coal, diesel and any other hydrocarbons remains to be seen. Can anyone envisage re-charging electrically powered heavy lorries or touring buses at a truck stop? Where will all the power come from if solar and wind cannot provide enough? Burning coal or gas to drive steam turbines?

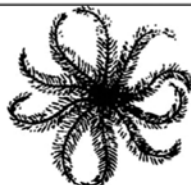
Maybe showman's engines are due a revival..... Just a thought!

VOLUNTEERS' DAY 2021 HAS NOW BEEN CANCELLED.

But, we still need volunteers, so please call our team on 01629 823076 to be put in contact with our Volunteer Services Manager.



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DOWN THE YARD

Tim Oaks

Colin Davies and I have been de-rusting and priming the foot-plates on The Duke, ready for the return of the boiler.

At the moment, the only other news I have is that all work on the pressure vessel is complete; work on the smokebox continues.

In the shed, the latest Gresley carriage is starting to look carriage-like again now that the roof hoops have been replaced; I know it isn't directly our business, but it is good to see.

I've been out with the new timetable leaflets; a series of excursions covered all the suitable sites I could find on or near the road from Buxton down to Ashbourne, across to Wirksworth, back up the A6 to Buxton, across the middle through Monyash and a brief foray down towards Duffield via the Tannenbaum Campsite and other locations.

The general impression I got was that the site operators were very glad to get at least some leaflets from someone; the reaction from the visitors remains to be assessed; they seemed to be zonked out in the last stages of exhaustion - all the campsites were laid out in a very similar fashion, row after row: car, caravan barbecue, car, caravan etc, all laid back in chairs, reading and drinking red wine.

The warmest welcome I got was probably at Shallow Grange Farm at Brierlow Bar just down the road from me; they have just re-opened. The proprietor said they'd travelled on our line twice and look forward to coming again soon and would recommend it to their guests. Nevertheless, while we have a head start on most local attractions, I get the feeling that our business is not to be taken for granted. Neil has a fresh supply of leaflets; do you know somewhere they can be put to good use?

Meanwhile, below is a circular sent to some of our regular wagon clients.

'Our latest "Will Hay" wagon has arrived, a five plank Southern Railway of Northern Ireland coal wagon, and you will see the details below.; The new wagons are £15 each, or £42 for three, for those who wish to make up the rake as seen in the film. UK Postage and Packing, £4-00 for up four.

We accept payment by Paypal which is preferred; Cheques should be payable to T.J. Oaks at 13 Trenchard Drive, Buxton Derbyshire SK17 9JY. We often have a small stock at Wirksworth on Saturdays in the summer if you are visiting the railway.

Email contact sleepermonster@yahoo.com



BUS RALLY 2021

John Stokes/Editors



The
'Inbetweenie':
1947
Leyland Titan

The oldest: 1946 AEC Regent
above and right photos © Andrew Denham



The newest: 2005 Dennis Javelin



A brace of Leylands!
Leyland Leopard (L) & Leyland Tiger (R)

above photos © John Stokes

The day dawned bright and sunny, but quickly turned a bit gloomy. However, despite the weather forecast, the rain mainly stayed away until later in the afternoon, by which time we had collected a varied group representative of 14 post war public transport vehicles ranging from a 1946 AEC Regal single deck bus through to a 2005 Dennis Javelin Coach.

A number of buses gave rides from Wirksworth station to Cowers Lane then on toward Ashbourne with a spectacular hill climb through Turnditch and around Carsington Water before returning to Wirksworth via Middleton. This in itself is no mean feat as the turn into Coldwell Street is a hairpin left at the Red Lion.

The editors enjoyed the above tour in the 1947 Barton Leyland Titan and what a joy to hear a bus driver double de-clutching down the gears - from the days before CAV and other semi and fully automatic gearboxes were the norm.

The whole event was well attended and the bus rides were very popular.

The rear cover depicts the 1960 AEC Routemaster awaiting passengers with the Mercedes 709D next in line.

EVRA's Annual Prize Draw Tickets

The tickets will be found enclosed with postal copies of the magazine, whilst on-line readers will get theirs in the post too.

Please help by selling as many as you can. It is a useful source of income for the Trust. When you have sold out (!) please contact the EVRA secretary for replenishment or collect some more from the EVRA shop.



Siesta in the sun in a plastic hat/bag...

Editors' collection



Richard Buckby's Collection

Pic 1 (left)

Q. In the previous issue we asked which year the photo of Wirksworth Yard was taken? **A.** In August 1952

Pic 2 (right)

Q. We asked what was happening here? **A.** A cow on the line. Sorry, we know no more - including Richard. Can anyone help? Were you there?

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