



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))

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Our Summer Edition (Issue 91) will be published in July 2023.

We welcome contributions by post/email to the editors please:
The **DEADLINE DATE** for inclusion will be: **Thursday 15th June 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: Martin Miller, founder of EVR *photo supplied by Bev Miller*

Back Cover: Some of the earliest members of EVRA *photo supplied by Pat Craft*

Sorry! but this time there is a change to our usual format.

We have had a major change of structure at **EVRA** since the last magazine.

Lindsey Bowley has resigned as treasurer, which was her stated intention at the last AGM in November 2023. The association would like to express their thanks for her work as treasurer.

The appointed replacement, you may recall, was Steve Orchard, and he was duly co-opted as treasurer and trustee by the members.

In the meantime, Steve's wife was found to have a serious health issue and as a result Steve rescinded his position until the situation regarding his wife was clarified.

Happily, Anne (Steve's wife) now has a care plan in place that releases Steve to perform his duties as treasurer and he has agreed to pick up the situation where Lindsey has left off.

This does mean that we have to call an **Extraordinary General Meeting** in order to: **Elect Steve Orchard as a full trustee and treasurer for EVRA.**

The board urge you to vote for the above proposal, either in person at the **EGM** scheduled for **Friday 19th May 2023** at **Wirksworth Town Hall at 700pm**, by a postal vote, or by giving your vote to the chair. We will, of course, publish the results on line at e-v-r-a.com and in the next magazine.

There are big changes afoot, both at **EVRA** and at WyvernRail, and we hope to be on the brink of a new alliance with the PLC to bring a better experience for our visitors and to enhance our standing as a charity that supports the railway it was set up to promote.

The necessary voting forms are included with this magazine or, attached for e-mail recipients who need to print, complete and return to the address on the form please.

Please use your voice to allow us to proceed with the projects we have in hand for the coming year by accepting Steve Orchard as our new treasurer.

PLEASE NOTE: that, at the time of writing, EVR has suffered a landslip just north of Duffield. Please check at e-v-r.com day to day to see which services are running.

No trains will be running into Duffield Station until further notice.

OBITUARIES

MARTIN MILLER

Mike Craft

Martin started work as a junior clerk at Chaddesden yard, Derby, not far from his childhood home in Borrowash, subsequently progressing to senior management posts in British Rail and then Sealink. He moved to the heritage railway sector, as Operations Manager of the Bluebell Railway, for 4 years in the early 1990's followed by a year as the manager at Crich Tramway Museum

His move to WyvernRail plc as Managing Director involved many aspects of developing the railway, including the basic restoration, managing MyTestTrack on a daily basis, which brought in much needed money, the share issue with the target reached in record time, negotiating with RailTrack and then NetworkRail, opening up the EVR in feasible stages until the final Dash to Duffield, achieved in record time and much, much more. Many of the major steps forward were completed in stages, large and small, and Martin managed to keep all the balls in the air and present positive spin!

Much of this was achieved whilst a volunteer with the Citizens Advice Bureau (which gave him some valuable knowledge and useful skills) and as a crossing keeper at Peak Rail. His ability to deal with volunteers, landowners, the various local government departments, utilities, etc. coupled with his knowledge from his previous work helped those of us learn as we worked about the intricacies of running a heritage railway. Many of EVRA's early projects, the interpretation boards and trail, the original Museum, the bookshop, the narrow gauge, miniature railway and model railway display were designed to help entertain visitors at Wirksworth Station, before the full passenger services were running, meeting his vision that the EVR became a place to visit during the early years.

He accepted, perhaps regretfully, that once EVR was up and running some of the fun had gone out of it, but he continued for several more years, accepting that additional workload of keeping the paying public happy and safe, whilst still maintaining the infrastructure, other income streams and the volunteer base as well as looking to the future development of what could be offered.

DAVID GRATTON

Mike Craft

David was John Gratton's younger brother, (see picture on the back cover) and before we were up and running had already demonstrated his interest in the EVR by becoming a member of EVRA – his membership number was 16! Although his health was not good, he could be found helping John by chopping up logs, from the trees cut down on the line and transported back to Wirksworth. He continued to help with the logs and any other work he could do sitting down, including sanding wood, removing rust from metal etc..

Even after he stopped volunteering he could often be seen on his mobility scooter, in Wirksworth Yard, coming to check what was happening!

more follows →

BOB DIXON

Mike Craft

Bob was also an early member and once he had retired, would come up to Wirksworth from his home in Ashford, Kent and stay in the EVRA caravan on the ballast dock for several weeks at a time, helping the p-way team and anyone else who needed assistance. He sometimes came more than once a year and did so for nine or ten years. He remembered us in his will and in early January we received a delivery of his books and papers. He also supported the Kent & East Sussex railway.

JOHN BALL

Richard Buckby



Sad to see the news of John's passing, my daughters will miss him too as they were cadets with the St. John Ambulance and I used to ferry them to the meetings in Belper where John taught First Aid.

John was also effectively the EVR's first station master at our platform in Duffield long before we ran trains down there, as we placed a cabin there to show passing walkers we had ambitions to re-open the line. John used to chat to passers-by and hand out our first publicity leaflets.

It was a bit of a lonely vigil but he kept the cabin immaculate. I cannot remember the date when I took this picture but you can see that the old colour light signal was still there and the car mender's yard was still in situ. John later of course became part of the train crew. His cheery face will be much missed.

KENNETH TAIT

Editors

Although Kenneth wasn't a member, both his Father and Grandson are. Our thoughts are with his family at this sad time

SALES MATTERS

Pat Craft

As I mentioned in the last issue, we had a large number of items to process already but just before Christmas we received over 200 books and in early January saw new donations totalling over 400 items. In addition, we had to clear both the small and large storage containers, as the latter was leaking badly and we transferred the building materials from there into the small one.

All the books, DVDs, magazines etc. were taken to the shop and there was little space apart from pathways between all the boxes. Since then a dedicated team of volunteers have gift-aided and priced them, re-arranged shelves and storage for duplicates, reduced prices of existing stock (where necessary), and somehow found space for the new books on the shelves (not an easy job!). In the two more recent donations we received many books we had not seen before and now have a good stock of Middleton Books, some of the other popular series and a number of special, collectable books.

more follows →

We hope that you will find something of interest when you visit the shop this coming year after all this effort. The reduced price books contain much of interest, and the shelves are now labelled more clearly and sections/categories have been refined further. Even last year, we received many compliments about how easy it was to find books on specific topics – we hope that it is even easier now. I am very grateful to all the volunteers who have helped with the process, each taking on a role or roles but helping everyone else when necessary.

In addition, we have attended the New Mills Modellers Model Railway Exhibition (two days) and one day shows at Heanor and Belper, which have swelled our income by **£2975** and e-bay has contributed a useful sum, with our sellers gathering quite a following.

P-way report March 2023

Graham Clark

This period has been dominated by our renewals project. We had planned to relay 11 panels of track near footpath F4, finish the re-ballasting and re-laying at the pig farm bridge and attend to a couple of other sites. However, things conspired to slow us down and we have only managed to finish the F4 site (and that is not actually finished yet as I write this in mid March). We have been hampered somewhat by the logistics of this project. We set up a base at Hazelwood where we could receive ballast supplies and where we could meet to travel to site. It would have been ideal if we could have moved our mess cabin here from Barnsley Lane, but unfortunately we no longer have the means to move it. We used to pick it up with the Komatsu and put it on the sturgeon. However, the Komatsu is no longer able to lift more than 1 tonne, and the MH5 does not have the reach to be able to place the cabin over the raised end of the sturgeon. We have plans to buy a trailer for the MH5 which will allow us to move it, but this is held up for lack of funds.

The other problem with logistics is the lack of a works train. Since the Gorsey Bank crossing accident in January last year, we have been unable to operate unbraked trains.

We are still awaiting an update to the rule book (and completion of the guards' training which started over a year ago) before we will be able to operate the train again. In the meantime, thanks to heroic efforts by Ben, Rob and Shaun, we have got automatic brakes working on a number of our engineering vehicles. The challenge here is that these wagons are a mix of air and vacuum braked, with none of them dual braked, so we have to have two separate trains. We don't have a braked brake van to use as a mess van, but the EVRA one is vacuum piped, so we have piped around it with an air pipe so it can be part of both trains. The mix of brake types has also caused logistical problems as, for a time, we had no working air braked loco.

Despite these problems, we got on with the relaying and it was going quite well until the MH5 refused to start one day. The problem was traced to the electrics, in particular the circuit that powers the stop solenoid. Diesel engines don't have spark plugs and ignition circuits and would run until the fuel ran out unless a stop mechanism was fitted. On the MH5 this mechanism is a solenoid that must be energised to allow the fuel to flow. The wiring to this solenoid (and a number of other items) had chafed through in many places

more follows →

where it rubbed against harder surfaces and there were many bare wires. This meant that a partial rewire was necessary and had to be done on site. Thanks to Joe and John for doing this.

The lifting and slewing machine struggles to lift the heavy concrete sleepers track when it is covered in ballast, but we found that working in conjunction with jacks the lift could be done. We are lifting the track to a smooth gradient which is referenced to pegs in the cess every 8 sleepers. We even had difficulties here as the sheep from the adjacent field came onto the line and scratched themselves against the pegs, pushing them over!

Having overcome the logistical difficulties, the lifting and packing worked very well using the tamping head. This is a really useful piece of kit. We can ballast, lift and pack 2 or even 3 panels a day with this. The hard part now is shovelling the ballast to where the tamping tines need it. The dogfish drops the ballast in the four foot and on the shoulders and it needs pushing out. We could do with a shark brake van for this, I gather we used to have one but got rid of it!

At the time of writing, we still have 3 panels of track to lift and pack and we need to run in some more ballast in a couple of areas and lift them further. We also have to regulate the rail joint gaps as there is a 50mm gap in one place. This job cannot be done until the rails warm up (it is 0 degrees and snowing as I write this).

As you can see, the work of the p-way team is always varied and challenging. New volunteers are always welcome. We meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays with Mike Fairburn.

Email: mikefairburn57@live.co.uk



The P-Way team in action
with the
rejuvenated slewing
machine.

photo © Graham Clark

See pages 10 - 14 for more news from the p-way team - and a big thank you for the amazing work they do for our railway.

Eds

INTER-RAIL PASS REBRANDED AS HRA PRIVILEGE

John Hastings-Thomson.

HRA Privilege passes entitles the bearer to free or discounted travel on most Heritage Railways in the UK.

The cost is £35 which should easily be recouped in a couple visits to participating railways for you and one other person. The HRA also supports Heritage Railways and their volunteers, so it is a way of supporting them.

The InterRail Card will henceforth be called **HRA Privilege**. Please refer to the latest HRA Newsletter for general details. (Copy on display in the Mess Room at Wirksworth, if you don't visit Wirksworth regularly please email me for a copy: hastingsthomson@btinternet.com).

There are major changes to the ordering system, in that individuals will now be able to order cards for themselves, allowing potential card holders to order (and pay for) their cards online. If you cannot order online, please contact me and I will sort it out for you.

The new system is now at <https://www.hra.uk.com/> If you go to the menu (3 bars) on the home page, HRA Privilege is the second item.

The system will work as follows:

1. Customers ordering card directly online simply enter their own names and email address, select the organisation at which they work (and the required payment details of course).
2. Ordering a card will trigger an email to that organization's InterRail Coordinator (me), who will be required to contact the interrail@hra.uk.com mailbox confirming, or not, that the applicant is a volunteer/member of staff in the organization. **This continues to be a vital part of the system as cards will not be available to the general public and only someone local can know who an organisation's volunteers/staff are.**
3. The HRA will then collate orders/emails from each organization and produce cards at regular intervals (probably every 2 weeks).
4. Printed cards would then be posted in batches to me for onward distribution (This would therefore provide an additional check for validity of volunteer/staff status; and also keeps HRA p&p costs down).
5. I will contact (using the email addresses on the orders) each card holder to arrange collection of their card from me.

Notes: Cards are only available to volunteers/staff and **names will be checked** by me.

Anyone not confirmed to be a volunteer/staff would be entitled to a refund of any payment made (less an admin fee to discourage chancers), and that would be handled by the HRA staff **not by myself or EVRA.**

Hope that is all understandable but if you have any queries, please contact me on the email address above.



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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
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FOCUS ON P-WAY

Mike Fairburn

Late Dec 2022

A small team made a start on the renewal of the defective panel of track in the access to the steam shed over the 18th 19th Dec. On Tuesday 20th, excavation of the flooded works for bottom ballasting started, carrying over to the 21st.

Whilst excavation was proceeding, the lifted materials were stripped down and usable parts stacked (Midland Railway chairs). The defective rail is shown in the pictures, with boot placed under to emphasise corrosion, breakage just to the right.

Excavation to bottom of ballast, was completed prior starting of placement of bottom ballast. A large cross drain has been excavated just in front of the shed to collect run off from the yard, this will require the excavation of a catch pit and transfer drain at some point in the future.

To add to the problems, a sink hole has appeared in Road 1. Informative feedback from the camera survey team has indicated that the sinkhole leads into a tributary of the main culvert. The size of the culvert was estimated at around 300mm square. Based on this, possible options for repair of the sinkhole would reasonably include excavation and insertion of either a concrete or plastic section of pipe. When we had sufficient people, we carried out some manual excavation to investigate. The structure of the culvert can be seen in the pictures, and the reason for the 'collapse' is a very Heath Robinson arrangement of lumps of stone and a too small piece of steel plate to cover an opening in the roof of the culvert. The culvert does not require reconstruction, it will only require a suitable repair topped by an access manhole, this can now be designed and installed and following re spacing sleepers, the track can be brought back into use.

Jan 2023

Activity focused on Wirksworth and renewal of the panel of track giving access to the steam shed. The track panel installation was completed and it is now suitable for the passage of rail vehicles. Once settled by some vehicle movements, the panel will be ballasted and tamped. It is intended to fill to rail top level with clean ballast resulting in through drainage and an avoidance of puddling and water run of into the shed.

Work continued to complete the renewal of track in the entrance to the steam shed. Ballast was dropped from one of the Dogfish wagons and shovelled into place. Some adjustment to levels was made by jacking, then the ballast was tamped with the Robel hand tampers. With the wagon empty, the maintenance team now have access to deal with the jammed centre door, a facility which is vital to the ballasting of track renewed following sleeper replacement.

It remains to carry out some further work on the rail joints at the North end of the re-laid panel and to tamp inside the rails before flooding the panel with ballast to rail head level.

Whilst the sleepers were being placed, two of our number set about cleaning out around the opening of 'the sink hole' in Road 1. The evidence supports the suggestion that the opening is an existing access point that was crudely covered over when track

more follows —→

re-alignment has taken place many years ago, in BR or LMS days. It will serve our requirements to construct a suitable chamber and lid over the access which will potentially enable man access to this branch culvert under the site. There is considerable spoil that has fallen into the water course in the past. This needs to be removed and will be a slow and difficult job.

The refurbished track slewing machine was viewed and the practicalities discussed with the team. It was considered possible to move the machine then load it to a trolley to enable removal from the shed, pending reference to Joe Halford-Marsden regarding an observed problem with the machine's engine.

The loaded works train was taken to the location near Derby Road 3 bridge. Removal of two lengths of rail was quickly accomplished by removal of the Pandrol fixing clips and fishplates then the rails were lifted into the 4ft for storage.

This site was selected for utilisation by test customers, for a number of reasons including; the good quality of the formation, the sleeper and fixing arrangements, concrete and Pandrol, and in the particular vicinity, the previous cutting of rails, originally done to facilitate turning to displace side worn gauge face of the rails, but now enabling the substitution of selected lengths for the particular needs of our test customers.

Poor weather conditions during the day with intermittent rain meant that the availability of the brake van as staff amenity was much appreciated. With the rails in place and fishplates fitted, the works train was taken back to Wirksworth and the Komatsu back to Hazelwood in anticipation of deployment on flail clearance of the lineside on Monday the 16th Feb.

The joints to the closure rails needed attention to improve rail head profile matching and this was provided for by the rostering of works train operation on Thursday. Thursday was originally planned to allow for any unforeseen circumstance involving procurement, in the event none was required. Use was made of the Landrover to access the site to deal with fishplate shim insertion.

Sub zero temperatures later in January made groundworks more difficult and time consuming than is otherwise the case. The team initially met at Wirksworth to assess the preparation of the works train then went on by car to Hazelwood. Upon arrival of the works train, the Takeuchi was hastily unloaded and the worst and most obvious rutting of the access road and loading area flattened in preparation for receipt of Type1 materials to surface and improve the access road. The Takeuchi was loaded back onto the train and despatched to the worksite where it was again unloaded, then tracked to the work area. Sleepers were lifted from the formation and stacked, the formation levelled and a start made on laying out concrete sleepers.

Work resumed on laying out sleepers. This was hampered by the freezing of the sleepers to the ground, necessitating some baring and tugging to free them, then rolling each of them over and hacking of the frosted divots of soil and ballast stuck to the lower faces.

continued on page 13 →



All above: Fitting and cutting test rails.



Frozen!!



Removal of slurry and levelling at steam shed.



Looking Better!



Hand ballasting at the shed



Hand excavation for drainage

more follows —→



TL Swamp after removing rails at steam shed.

TR State of rails removed

BL Hand slewing the new track

BR Swinging 60' rail lengths

The balance of sleepers were set out, the rails lifted into place and all Pandrol clips pulled in. 20 tonnes of Type 1 material was received to enable improvements to the access road. This receipt both proved the feasibility of getting 8 wheeled lorries in and out of the location, and confirmed an assessment that around 40 tonnes of stone can be held at this location at a time. Some 400 tonnes of stone is required to ballast the section being re-laid and in order to minimise time wasted with train movements, the receipt and loading to Dogfish hoppers here, is essential.

With panel 9 having already had all elastic spikes pulled out, it was ready for lifting out the rails. However, with sub zero temperatures again, the MH5 air system was frozen, so not immediately available for lifting, it was past 11:00 before lifting could commence.

Meantime, excavation for drainage improvements got moving, an initial trial hole soon located the piped boundary drain and its location and size has given further clues to the layout of the original drainage system in this area. A new concrete section catch pit will be constructed next to the East boundary fence that will serve to give maintenance access to the original clay piping, and a new cross track drain will give extra capacity to help route run off water from the East side of the valley away from the track.

The clay pipe of the original boundary drain is just visible on the left side of the picture overleaf. Many, many years of silt deposit in the ditch above the piped drain rendered it virtually useless a long time ago. Restoration of effective drainage is vital to protect against flooding and prevent inundation and damage to the relayed track.

The pipe sits on a bed of clay which must be excavated to enable the bottom of the catch pit to be slid under the pipe.

more follows →



The concrete sections are then assembled, cutting where necessary to mate to the existing pipe. A new 300mm diameter pipe will pass under the track and discharge into the existing ditch, which is ready for dredging again, having collected around 400mm of silt and vegetation since it was last dredged around 4 years ago.

The formation of panel 9 was scraped and levelled and a start was made on laying out sleepers, again time was spent hacking of frost attached material before they could be laid out.

Editors' note: The above covers just over one month of the P-way team's activities. It gives some idea of the work that the venerable team achieve.

We are sure that the WyvernRail PLC and EVRA owe them a huge debt of gratitude for their persistence, for their work and the sometimes horrible working conditions that they endure to keep the Railway running.

Issue 91 will have more P-Way News

The Catch Pit, see page13

All photos © Mike Fairburn



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





Since my last report, several things have happened.

Firstly, Barclay Loco Henry Ellison has returned from its successful loan to the Cambrian railway at Oswestry. Its 10 year ticket has now expired and it has been sidelined while a decision is made on whether to overhaul the boiler or not.

Barclay loco No3 Brian Harrison has had a successful trial steam test, and is awaiting an imminent 'in steam' testing by the boiler inspector so that it can return to traffic.

Standard 4 tank 80080 has had various parts removed to rectify minor faults that occurred during last season. In the cab, the steam brake has been removed along with the water gauges to correct minor steam and water leaks. Both injector water valves have been dismantled to have the cones reground to stop water leaking past them when turned off.



All the superheater elements have been removed as it had become obvious that there was a leak in at least one of them.

Subsequent pressure testing found two elements with leaks, they have been to the Midland Railway West Shed for rewelding.

With all the superheaters all the tubes have been brushed clean. By the time you read this we hope to have the loco back together ready for steam testing.



The line into the current steam shed has been repaired and partly re-ballasted. It can be used with care but some more ballast is required and spoil removal needed before it gets back to the way it was before.

Regards to all.

Dave Williams Running Foreman Steam Dept.

Top: Superheater elements are long! Fitting being done inside the maintenance shed.

Above: Middle: They are fitted inside the smokebox to the superheater header.

Bottom: All in place, ready for steam testing.

DERBY LIGHTWEIGHT TWIN PROGRESS

Norman Ashfield

Since the last update our small team has made good progress on the power car without it all being obvious to the eye. A lot has been achieved under the car on cleaning and testing air cylinders, valves and pipes, plus wiring. The drawgear was attended to and its housing welded. In the car, refitting the ceiling was completed and new linoleum laid throughout; the guard's compartment does not require it. The sliding vents have been disassembled and years of soot and grime cleaned off, as the aluminium frames are rubbed with wire wool. Attending to the bodywork, all the doors, built of a metal skin with timber support on the inside, needed repair and refurbishment [a lengthy process] and one side of the car has been completed. The fuel tanks are being renovated, with sediment and even ballast being emptied out.



Door skin refitted and polished



all photos © Norman Ashfield

Sliding vents before and after [with labels for reassembly]



Door inner frame after timber repair

DIESEL LOCO WINTER MAINTENANCE

Oliver Hodgkinson

The winter is usually quiet for the diesel department but with the track re-lay happening at Hazelwood the diesel locos are in high demand on the works trains. With that being said, all the locomotives have still had chance to be examined and any outstanding minor jobs from last season have been attended to.

Class 47 D1842 was stopped at the beginning of the year as it had developed a coolant leak. After pressure testing the system, the leak was found to be a split 4" hose on the cooler group, this was replaced and the coolant system was once again watertight. The locomotive also received a replacement battery as the old one had seen better days.

Class 31 31601 has been out of traffic since November 2022 waiting for a replacement battery, at the end of February the battery was delivered and has been fitted. The cold weather really does find your tired batteries! The loco was given an 'A exam' post battery change and no other faults were found, it's now back in traffic.

Class 73 73001 has been with us since August 2022 and proven to be a useful and

more follows →

popular loco. As I write this, the loco is currently sat out of traffic waiting for the compressor to be removed and inspected as, during a day out to Hazelwood, it was noticed that the low-pressure safety valve was blowing off. On most other locomotives the compressors are mounted inside and are easily accessible but on class 73's, they're mounted on the underframe, making dismantling the cylinder head very difficult. So, the decision has been made to remove it. Hopefully in the next couple of weeks it will be repaired and we will see its return to service.

Class 73 73210 has been having cosmetic work completed on it since 2021, this includes roof repairs, bodywork, repaint, cab refurbishment and interior repaint. So far the major repairs on the roof have been completed and a start will be made on the bodywork soon. Cab No.2 interior refurb is on its way to completion with cab No.1 following behind and the electrical room repaint is nearing completion too. Hopefully some more milestones will be passed this year!

(Chris Bailey) D9537. After successfully operating on the train through Christmas Countryside season, D9537 was stopped for work to its left leading side rod and gradient pin. The rod was removed, and a repair undertaken to stop the gradient pin rotating and the rod oil pit had a stubborn restrictor and debris removed. The rod was refitted and the loco pressed into service on works trains. Eric is going on his holidays to the sunny North Norfolk Railway from June until end of September.

(Chris Bailey) D9537 Work continues apace on the power unit overhaul off site, to a point now that the engine is ready to come back to Wirsworth for the rebuild to continue.

On site, engine components continue to be cleaned up and painted in readiness for refitting. The locomotive's vacuum exhauster is currently going through a clean-up and rebuild process to make it ready for refitting to the locomotive. Hopefully the coming longer and warmer days will see items refitted and the engine rebuild completed. The locomotive will then still need a C exam before being run in and tested.



Left:

Class 73 73001

during it's A exam
in January 2023.

Photo

©

Oliver

Hodgkinson

The Loss of a Friend – Martin Miller

Mike Craft

Some of you are probably already aware of the passing of Martin Miller and those of you who knew him will have your own memories and many have expressed them on the railway's e-mail conference.

To me, Martin was more than the first Managing Director of WyvernRail and an EVRA volunteer. We first met in the mid-1990's when on a fairly regular basis we met in the Malt Shovel on a Friday evening, him with his Famous Grouse and me with a pint of Pedigree. He would often say it is probably time to go but had we had one for the road or one for no reason at all? And we would and then leave!

In late October 2000 in the Malt Shovel he asked whether I had a chainsaw certificate (which both Pat and I had), because he wondered whether I would help to clear a few trees at Wirksworth and so I turned up with a few friends and the Wirksworth eight was formed. Three years later we reached Duffield – I had not realised how far Wirksworth stretched!

In the early days of clearing the line, Martin would join us, driving us in the people carrier and later using Faraday and he would help us clearing away the branches, logs etc., He had two claims to fame among the, by now much larger, clearance team – he would regularly manage to put the fire out and he took great delight in throwing aerosols, which he had collected from the lineside, onto the fire as we all ducked as they exploded - he grinned widely like a child with a firework!

Pat and I enjoyed many a social evening over food and wine with Martin and Bev in each other's houses and so the friendship developed beyond just the railway.

Humorous anecdotes aside and there are many more from those early days before it became a passenger line, we must all agree that the EVR would not be here today if it had not been for Martin's sheer doggedness and hard work in establishing it as a going concern.

Martin was not religious but wherever he is I hope he has a glass of Famous Grouse in front of him.

from the editors

The last issue had page reference issues in the text owing to a lot of last minute re-arranging of the content a day before the magazine went to the printer.

Apologies to James Hallam whose article on the MK1 Coach re-build had the wrong page references to the pictures, and thanks to one of our readers for pointing the following errors out.

“Captions page 13, our class 14 referred to is, I believe, D9537 not D9531.

Page 15: 3rd Paragraph 'The 71' presumably refers to 73001 a '73'. A 71 is a straight electric loco, the only one is at the NRM.”

EVRA has launched an appeal for Henry Ellison's boiler re-build.

Please see the website: e-v-r-a.com

Poor old Duke has had to go outside into the winter weather to make space for 80080 in the shed. However, the Std 4 had to be ready for the resumption of services and needs must. We fabricated some shutters for the cab and made the best use of the opportunity to fit the saddle tank, so, The Duke now looks like a locomotive again.



It took two attempts to refit the tank as we first tried to lower it into place without removing the cab roof. Despite our best efforts it just wouldn't quite fit, but by such a small margin that we didn't feel inclined to give up until the driver's hours ran out. We loosened off the cab roof and brought in the Hiab lorry from Punchard's once again. Once the roof was off, the tank went down at the first attempt. For future reference, the tank weighs about 4 1/2 tons.



Since then, the tank has been bolted down and work continues on the fittings and the cab.

We had tried to get a copper replacement steam pipe but 4" copper pipe has been so difficult to obtain that we opted for steel. The old pipe was suspiciously easy to lift, it turned out to be very thin, split and worn beyond repair, but still useful as a guide to make a template for the new steel ones.

The Big Lift! *photos © Tim Oaks*



New and Old Steam Pipes

photo © Tony Joyce

The new steam pipes have been collected from Newtons of Cromford and are a very a neat job. We have one for use and one for a spare; the steel stock pipe was long enough to make a pair and the extra cost was relatively small so we will have one on the shelf for the future. We have also obtained the studs and nuts and bolts to secure the pipe in place. I am hoping to pick up a pair of Penberthy vacuum ejectors in the near future, these are part of a larger batch ordered through Ribble Steam Railway which have already got as far as Preston. Once they arrive we will have to have a serious think about the final design of the braking system.

REBUILDING A BR MK1 COACH PART 2

James Hallam

Following on from Part 1 of this series (EE89), where the structure and skin work was completed, this article focuses on the gangway faceplate overhaul and the fitting of the pass-com equipment.

The gangway overhaul involves the renewal of all faceplate studs, general cleaning and painting, repair of the clamping strips and finally renewal of bushes for the top spring damper brackets.



Studs usually break away from the rear of the gangway faceplate due to corrosion build-up; the few that are remaining get ground flush. They are then drilled out to allow an M8 thread to be cut, which is for the replacement (metric) studs (originals are imperial).

The bellow clamping strips, which are attached to the faceplate via the studs mentioned above, are often wasted at the bottom. The ones fitted to the TSO were repaired by removing the corroded section and welding new strips to the bottom.

The rest of the face plate is needle gunned to remove years of dirt, grime and old paint. Surface corrosion is removed with a wire cup brush,. Once clean. the gangway is primed and glossed.

The final stage on the face plate repair is to press 4 new bushes into the brackets at the very top which secure the spring dampers.



With the gangway faceplate overhauled, the coach needs the associated wood fitted to the end. This comprises of 5 pieces of 40mm thick machined hardwood, which is secured to the coach using M10 Studs.



Our next job involves fitting the passenger communication (aka pass-com) apparatus; this system enables the passengers to apply the train brakes in an emergency situation.

more follows →



A chain runs the length of the coach on one side and as far as the toilet on the other side. When this is pulled it rotates rods and linkages on the end of the coach which open the brake pipe with a cam `.

Three plates require welding into position, these have the fixings on which hold the pass-com valve, chain links and rods. The 2 outer plates are located using the existing holes in the body end, whilst the valve plate is 6" to the right of the outer plate.

Part 3 in the next edition of the EE (91)

all photos © James Hallam

MARTIN MILLER'S MEMORIAL TRAIN, FRIDAY 31ST MARCH 2023



Class 47 D1842 headed the memorial train for Martin Miller, seen here at Warkworth prior to joining the train.

As EVR has suffered a landslip just North of Duffield, the journey was limited to running to Shottle then running round in the loop there. The original intention was to run the full line, which Martin was able to see completed from a dream back in 1996 when the light railway order was first granted.

Nevertheless, the day was enjoyed by many of his old friends and family, and your editors who were on the train. It was nice to see many familiar faces from the railway past and present and

to meet other people as well. About 125 people joined the train. The headboard quoted one of Martin's favourite end of the day statements "You've all done very well." This was said many times as the line progressed from jungle to operational.

Thanks must go to Martin's widow Beverley who not only organised the memorial train but also put on a splendid buffet in the Apollo bar afterwards.

Famous Grouse Scotch Whisky, as you may have read elsewhere in this issue, was Martin's favourite tippie. On this day it was on tap - or at least on the bar to help yourself.

A big thank you to Bev for the day, and let's think that Martin could appreciate it as well.

Martin S Miller R.I.P.

THE 1ST EAST MIDLANDS
LARGE SCALE
!!!! **MODEL RAILWAY SHOW** !!!!



Featuring O Gauge, Gauge 1,
G Gauge and 16mm Scale



Held over two venues, **The Maltings and
The Memorial Hall, Wirksworth, Derbyshire**

Saturday 8th & Sunday 9th July 2023

Saturday 10am-4pm Sunday 10am-3.30pm

Parking available at Wirksworth Station, DE4 4FB

Combined Admission (per day) covering both venues:

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100 CLUB PRIZE DRAW

Andrew Denham

1st Prize: £ 88.43 No 179 Mr T-W

2nd Prize: £ 53.05 No 195 Mr GC

3rd Prize: £ 35.37 No 241 Mr MR

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.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2023

FIRST East Midlands Large Scale Model Railway Show

8th and 9th July 2023

Following on from the success of last October's Wirksworth Model Railway Exhibition, we have decided to organise a large scale show. These are classed as O gauge and upwards and include 16mm, G gauge, Gauge 1 and Gauge 3. These gauges are becoming very popular but there are only a limited number of shows around the country.

As there isn't any such show in the East Midlands, we have decided to hold one in Wirksworth in July. Due to the size of these models, it has only been possible to use the Memorial Hall and the Maltings (formerly the Parish Rooms). It is hoped to arrange for some small steam engines to be operating outside the Memorial Hall. WyvernRail plc has agreed to run an early train, collecting passengers from Duffield before the normal service starts. The event is being sponsored by Peco and already has raised a lot of interest. We hope to see you there!

(see advert on facing page)

Mike Craft

A Taste of Fawley Towers

Saturday 29th April & 9th September 2023

Annual Bus Rally at Wirksworth Station

2nd July 2023

(see e-v-r.com for more details)

18th Wirksworth Model Railway Exhibition

Saturday 30th September 2023 & Sunday 1st October 2023

(More details in the Summer Issue)

BRICA- A- BRAC SALE

ANNOUNCEMENT:

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

Some of our earlier members: L to R Standing: Dave Mee, Martin Miller, Ian Shaw, Phil Tarry John Gratton, David Gratton. Seated: Joe Ruddock and Mike Craft. Mike is the only one still with EVR.

