



80151 drifts south from Caseford Bridge with pre-grouping carriages—Photo: Dave Bowles

The Bluebell Times

A Newsletter for Bluebell Railway Members, Staff and Supporters

June 2021

IN THIS ISSUE

For the third time in less than a year, the Railway has once again re-opened from a period of enforced lock down, and our trains are running once more. There are though still restrictions on how we operate, and the details of the planned further loosening of lockdown in June is still awaited. So at the moment we have a cautious eye on the future, but rebuilding the railway into a sustainable business remains vital. We have been lucky to obtain some income this year from weddings and from film contracts, in addition to running public trains. Over the last 15 months a combination of generous support by our supporters and Government and Lottery Grants has provided a financial lifeline to the railway, but those are exceptional responses to an exceptional situation: business as usual has to mean a sustainable railway – whether you count that in financial, staffing or equipment and infrastructure terms.

One key part of our business sustainability is the operation of our premium 'Golden Arrow' Dining Train. Here the link between maintenance and business sustainability is to the fore: you can't run such a train without the exquisite Pullman carriages that form it. The train requires a combination of passenger seating, kitchen, scullery and brake van portions, and allowance has to be made that some vehicles will not be available at any point in time due to routine maintenance. The ideal fleet therefore requires multiple carriages, with redundancy in the critical kitchen (and brake) carriages – no kitchen, no dinner. How we get to that sustainable position is outlined on page 8.

So that is our challenge: building a sustainable railway for the next six decades. Please continue to support the railway in any way you can – through tickets, donations, volunteering, membership or just recommending us to your friends and followers.

Tom James, Editor

<i>Events for July</i>	2
<i>Society Matters</i>	3
<i>Along the Commercial Road</i>	4
<i>Edmondson Tickets</i>	4
<i>Bluebell Railway Gifts & Models</i>	5
<i>60(th) Cushions</i>	6
<i>Bluebell Railway Goods Division</i>	6
<i>Around and About</i>	7
<i>Sustaining Our Wonderful Pullman Train</i>	8
<i>A Winter's Tale – Feedback</i> ...	11
<i>Tales from the Shed: Part Three</i>	13
<i>Bluebell Railway Museum – 10 Years On</i>	15
<i>On This Day, 11 June</i>	16
<i>Tail Lamp</i>	19

Events for July

By Ruth Rowatt, Marketing and Communications Manager

At the time of writing this, the commercial team at the railway are holding our breaths and crossing everything as we wait for the Government announcement regarding the potential lifting of Covid-19 restrictions on 21st June. We will then know for sure what kind of tickets we can put up for sale to ensure we can operate our planned events safely and within regulations. A flurry of activity will follow, so please keep an eye on social media and the website for release dates. You can also Subscribe to our email Newsletter to receive the latest news, marketing and ticket alerts straight to your email inbox. The link can be found on the 'book tickets' page on www.bluebell-railway.com

We are really looking forward to running events again and have an exciting schedule planned which includes some old favourites, plus something new! Here's what we have to look forward to in July:

ROAD MEETS RAIL

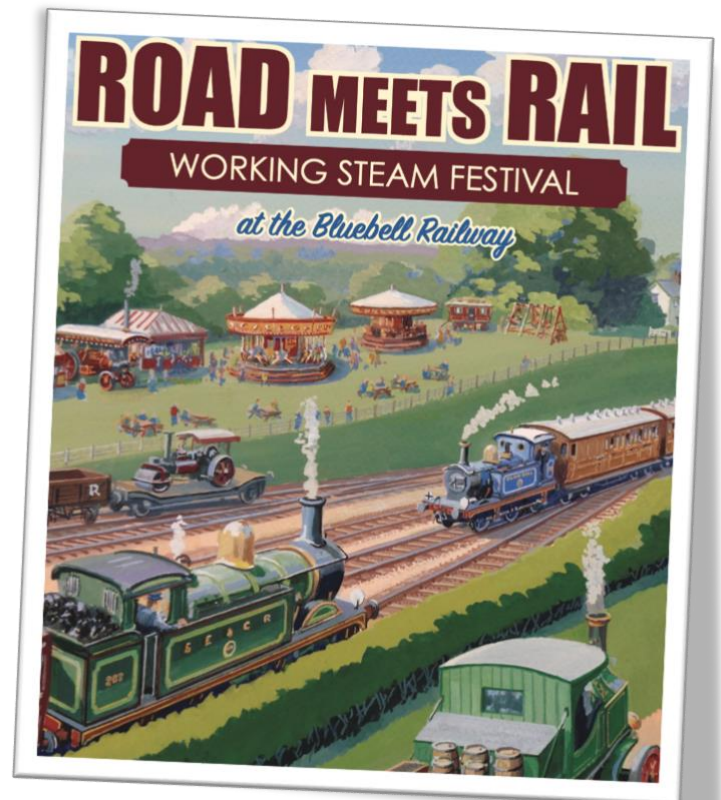
Working Steam Festival

17–18 July 2021

The first event of 2021, our traditional steam fair returns! Featuring working traction engines - come and see what these powerful giants were actually designed for.

Step back in time for a weekend of steam powered demonstrations and vintage fairground fun. Traction engines, road rollers, steam wagons, showman's engines, crane engines and more - bringing Horsted Keynes station to life with recreations of a bygone age.

We bring road steam and rail steam together for a weekend of enjoyment and interest, suitable for all ages! See how road building, wood sawing, timber haulage and lifting were carried out in the early 1900s. Experience fairground rides powered by a Showman's engine. Watch as deliveries are made to the station by steam wagon, traction engine



and pantehnicon. Steam hauled passenger trains will be passing through the station and a goods train will be shunting in and out amid the activity!

Enjoy an ice cream or hog roast in the paddock or visit the beer tent to sample some popular Sussex ales.

Flat caps optional!

And if you fancy dressing up for the event, feel free to don some 1920's gear and immerse yourself fully in the vintage atmosphere of the weekend. We'll be keeping an eye out for the best outfits...

On the Saturday, visitors to the event will be able to extend their day long into the warm summer evening and enjoy live classic rock at Horsted Keynes, provided by Sussex band, The Magpies. The bar will be open and for those with train travel tickets, a late service will operate to get people back to East Grinstead and Sheffield Park.

Both travel and event only [tickets](#) will be available, so bring the whole family for a fantastically steam-filled day out!

MODEL RAILWAY WEEKEND

31 July – 1 August 2021

Join us at the Bluebell Railway for our [Model Railway Weekend](#). This firm favourite is back for 2021. Come and see a variety of layouts across the railway and experience unique access to non-public areas such as the Maintenance Shed and Locomotive Workshop at Sheffield Park Station and the Carriage and Wagon Workshop at Horsted Keynes Station.

Have you ever attended a model railway exhibition before? Well expect an array of tiny worlds, all expertly modelled and brought to life by the steam and diesel locomotives that wind their way along the tracks. It takes patience, time and skill to bring these fascinating layouts to life. Well worth a visit!

We have a great selection of Model Railways featuring including N gauge, O gauge, double O gauge and gauge 1 layouts from across the country.

To complement our displays, we also have several trade stands offering a variety of modelling products including engines, rolling stock, and local produce. Don't forget you can also visit our railway shop where we have a great selection of products available from beginners sets to full layouts.

During this event, we are running a busy steam hauled service from Sheffield Park to East Grinstead Stations across the weekend.

A selection of ticket types will be available soon.

I look forward to seeing you there

Society Matters

By Gavin Bennett, BRPS General Secretary

BRPS EGM & AGM

A reminder that the Society EGM and AGM is booked for Saturday 2nd October commencing at 7pm at the Burgess Hill Academy. The formal notice calling for nominations and a bundle of documents will be landing on your doormats shortly. This year, we are seeking nominations for a Society Chairman, Treasurer, FIVE Trustees and a Society nominated Trust Governor. The closing date for all nominations and motions for the meetings is 7th August.

LONG SERVICE AWARDS 2021

At each Annual General Meeting of the Society, it recognises long service as a volunteer to the railway by awarding certificates to those who have achieved 10 or more years service. Certificates and badges are awarded to those members who have accumulated a total of 25, 40 or 50 years' service. In 2019, we introduced new certificates to those members who had achieved a remarkable 60 years service.

The Society does not keep records of when people started volunteering and so we rely on the person concerned and/or their manager to tell us.

Following the changes introduced in 2018, the names AND duties of those due to receive Long Service Awards will be published in the AGM document. Those submitting their names will be asked to provide a short statement (150 to 200 words maximum), setting out what work they have done for the railway and in which department(s). As in 2019, the Awards will be given out much earlier in the meeting, shortly after we have dealt with the essential formal business of the EGM and AGM.

WHAT TO DO

If you are due a Long Service Award at the 2021 AGM, having completed, or will complete this year, 10+, 25, 40, 50 or 60 years' service (and we will include 2020 as an eligible year!), then you need to send me your name (as you would like it shown on the certificate, eg, Fred or Frederick), the award category and a short statement (around 150 to 200 words) setting out what you have done on the railway, no later than 7th August 2021, either by post c/o Sheffield Park Station or by email to gavin.bennett@bluebell-railway.com. There is no set format for the statement but please do include email and/or phone contact details in case I need to make contact with you.

Please do not rely on the fact that you may have mentioned it to me a while ago since I cannot guarantee that I will have remembered!

Along the Commercial Road

By Paul Lelew – Commercial & Marketing director

Ticket sales have been encouraging and we are meeting our sales revenue targets. As ever our most popular trains are the services that provide food and at present we are concentrating on selling compartments, however we are eager to get the Government indication on 14th June as to where the Covid guidelines are going from 21st June or indeed whether there is further delay to opening up the UK. This will allow us to plan and confirm in which direction all our upcoming events can head and when we can use our open carriage rolling stock and run our full services.

We have 3 new areas we are launching this year which are Gin trains, Brickworks and our first ever Beer Festival on for 3 days on Friday 10 September – Sunday 12 September. Keep an eye on the website for confirmation and details of when tickets will go on sale for these exciting new ventures.

Our new product we launched last year Steamlights is coming again to the railway and tickets go on sale on 30th June 2021, don't delay if you want to book we sold out the entire services last year in just 10 days!

Asa Griffiths and his team of volunteers have done an amazing job refurbishing and restyling the shop. I won't steal Asa's thunder as he has written an article specifically for this publication.

The website is constantly being enhanced and there are some fantastic 360 degree virtual tours Ruth Rowatt has been developing and are definitely worth a look. In addition Paul Baker has been busy installing more webcams and we now have seven cameras in total – three at East Grinstead, two at Kingscote and two at Sheffield Park – and when we have a better broadband service at Horsted Keynes we will add an additional two cameras. These cameras are only live on days we are running services.

EPOS our new Electronic Point of Sale system build is progressing well and we will receive all the hardware in June. The initial go live date was 1st July, however, we have put that back to 1st October 2021 to allow us longer to build, test train in the system once we have designed the till layouts for Ticketing, Catering, Retail and of course all the back-office functionality. The benefit long-term will be for the whole business to connect through one system and the data it will provide to help us manage the business more effectively going forward.

Our 400 beehives are thriving and it will soon be time to collect our rent in free honey, which will be sold via the retail shop and will be available online as well. Don't miss this product it will be limited stock and an exclusive product.

Edmondson Tickets

By Roy Watts, acting Vice Chairman and Chief Clerk

There has been some recent ill-informed comments on social media that Edmondson tickets will no longer be issued once the new Epos system has been introduced

It should be made quite clear that this matter has never even been discussed and that it is enshrined in Bluebell Railway Preservation Society policy the Edmondson card ticket is a fundamental part of the experience and will continue to be so.

Obviously Golden Arrow, Santa and other such special trains will remain computer generated as is the present situation



Bluebell Railway Gifts & Models

Words and photos by Asa Griffiths, Retail Manager

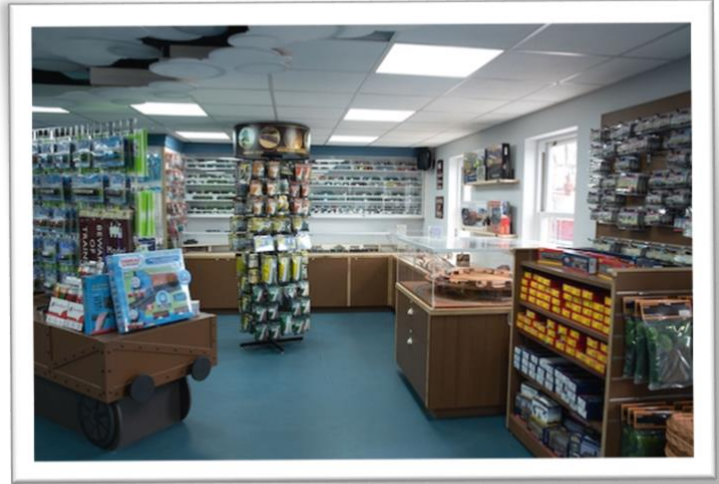
It was with great anticipation and delight that the newly styled Bluebell Railway Gifts & Models shop opened its doors again on the 20 May after an extensive renovation.

Many would agree that shop was long overdue a cosmetic update, and we were fortunate and thankful to receive a proportion of the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage grant that was earmarked particularly for improvements to the amount of light in the shop. We recognised we had a great opportunity to reassess our offering in store at the same time, to focus in on what really works for our customers and ultimately works to raise funds for the railway.

The shop was dark, not least because the windows were all covered up with bookshelves, and the lighting needed updating. The plan started with new LED lighting, and the uncovering of all the windows. We moved the high bookshelves to the areas where they would not be obscuring the light and in doing so, we refined and reorganised the selection of books in store which freed up space for other profitable areas. We still stock a focused selection, and our next project will be to develop our online shop further in conjunction with a new stock system, so we can offer an even wider range of enthusiast books and DVDs than we are already known for.

Friends of Sheffield Park offered their help in adding the finishing touches to the exterior of the shop, installing a new sign, and repainting the tired woodwork which now looks great.

I am delighted to say that the response from our customers has been overwhelmingly positive, it has been great to hear all the comments and kind words from volunteers around the railway and customers over the first few weeks. The kids and families that make up a large proportion of our customers absolutely love the new layout and space, and it has been great to see this positive feeling translating in to encouraging receipts through the tills in the first few weeks. Word is



getting round the model railway communities too, and we have seen a real uplift in model railway sales that we are sure will only grow further.

60(th) Cushions

By Jean Cox, Carriage Trimmer

For the 60th (+1) anniversary of the Bluebell Railway, an advance offer is available to members/staff for a unique limited edition (numbered 1 to 60) "ticket" cushion.

Each one is uniquely numbered, and contains prints of Bluebell Railway station tickets, amongst other tickets. This print fabric is no longer available on the market. Size of cushion is 16" x 16".

A choice of number can be made (where available).

All profits are to go to the Heritage Skills Centre at Horsted Keynes.

HOW TO ORDER

Cushions cost £30 if collected from Horsted Keynes. If you would like them posted, please add £3.50 post and packing.

Cheques should be made payable to Mrs Jean Cox. You can also make a bank transfer by arrangement.

Email: sidingsjc@yahoo.com

Telephone: 01403 255712



Bluebell Railway Goods Division

The Bluebell Railway Goods Division is making great progress keeping our wagon fleet in sound order. The photo shows the 1928-built [Southern Railway Engineer's Wagon No. 62002](#), which is being needle-gunned in preparation of a repaint, along with having a new floor fitted. The group is also working on the complete restoration of the 1946 [SR 5 plank wagon No. 12058](#), which was obtained in 2005 after having spent many years at Eastleigh works converted into a barrier vehicle for moving electric multiple units around the works, The restoration involves construction of a complete body onto a sound underframe obtained from Eastleigh.



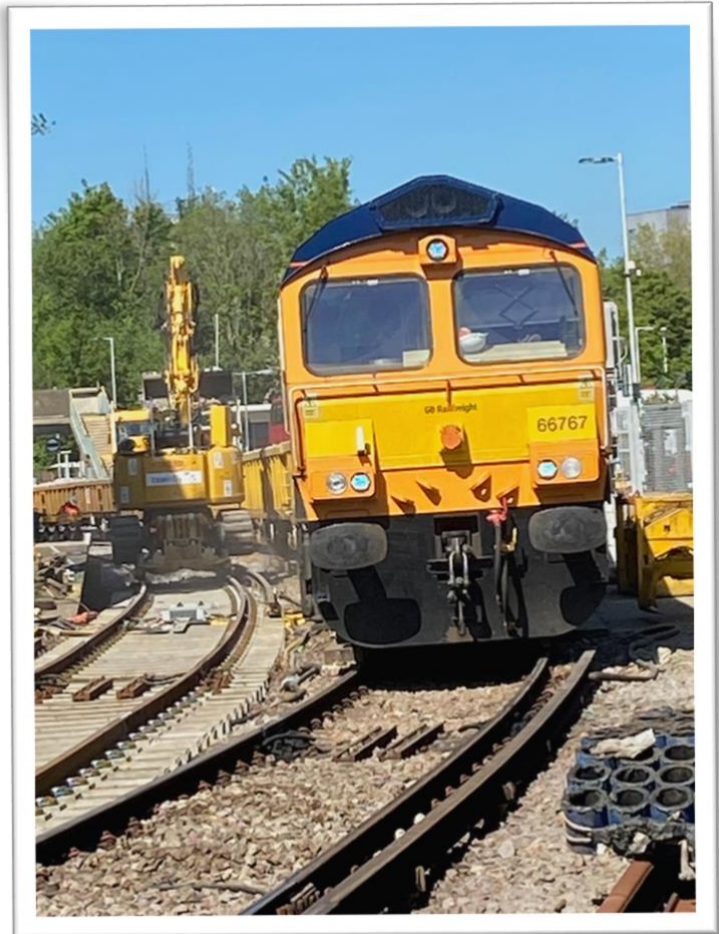
SR Engineer's Wagon No. 62002 Photo: Laurie Anderson

Around and About



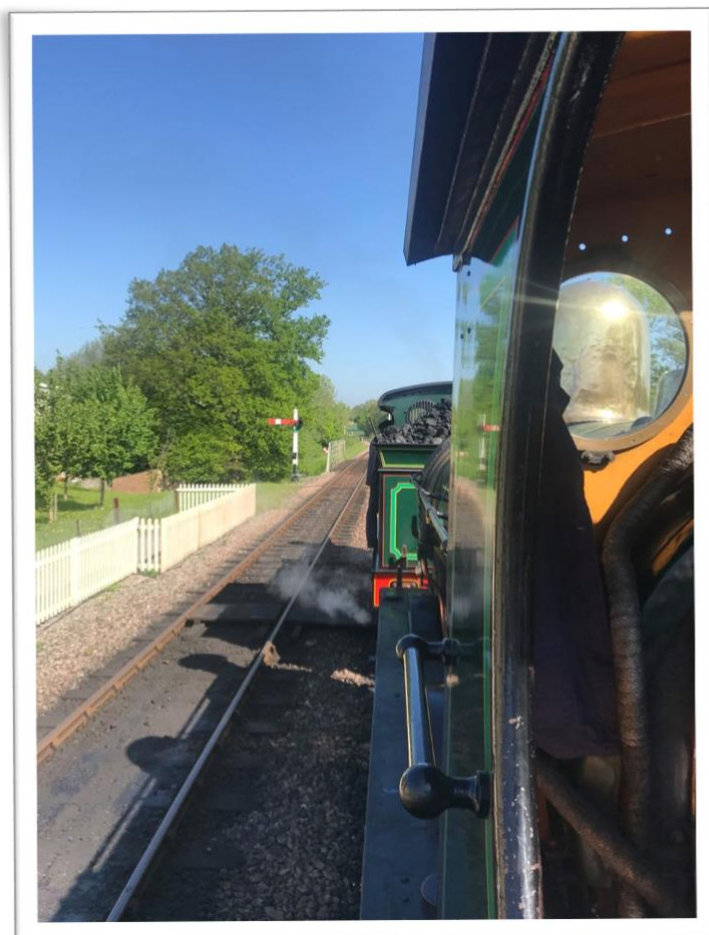
(Above): At Sheffield Park, the reassembly of 'Camelot' is continuing, with the boiler being lifted back into the frames on 31 May. Photo: Henry Mowforth.

(Below): The two SE&CR locos hauled the trains over the late May bank holiday weekend. They are seen here from the cab of No. 65 waiting to depart on 31 May 2021. Photo: Tom James



(Above): Network Rail has relaid the 'up' line in East Grinstead station with new flat bottomed rail. The picture shows the view from the Bluebell station, looking north. Locomotive is the most recently-named member of the class, No. 66767 'Kings Cross PSB 1971 – 2021'. Photo: Roy Watts.

(Below): Into June, the service set changed to an all pre-grouping set of compartment carriages, hauled by an immaculate No. 80151. Photo: David Cable



Sustaining Our Wonderful Pullman Train

By Bob Pamment, Rolling Stock Director

THE CURRENT POSITION

The Bluebell Railway's Pullman Train experience is designed to provide top of the range passenger accommodation, consisting of entirely Pullman car vehicles, providing a minimum of around one hundred customer seats, including some wheelchair access. This product is very much aligned to the company mission statement to provide a "heritage railway experience that educates, entertains, and inspires its visitors as it immerses them in the world of railway operation and development and tells the story of the way of life at the golden age of railways". It is a profitable operation.

The product is vulnerable, particularly in terms of reputation, if not supported by sufficient Pullman carriages in running condition. Demand for this product has historically been such that seats are booked many months in advance and, when full, potential customers have been declined. In recent years there has been some customer dissatisfaction due to the Pullman experience being compromised – due to the withdrawal of Pullman Car 'Lilian' – by the provision of a [Mark 1 First Open \(FO\)](#) (albeit a very nice FO) instead of a Pullman car. This has resulted in some decline in the demand over the last couple of years. It has been the aim of the Pullman Train Strategy to provide sufficient vehicles to cover for maintenance, overhaul and failure. It is planned that when a full complement of spare vehicles is achieved then, when they are not covering for non-available vehicles, the spare vehicles can be used in the formation to satisfy higher demand.

The most prominent area of vulnerability for the Pullman Train Product is the eventual failure of the [BGZ 32975](#). This vehicle – which acts as a brake van and scullery – is safe currently but in decline. A Pullman Kitchen Car is the ideal replacement for the BGZ as it would provide the scullery facility for the 100-seat train. Alternatively, it could, if required, provide a second kitchen car which, when formed with [Fingall](#), [Car 64](#), [Car 54](#) and [Car 36](#), gives a total of 161 seats. This would remove

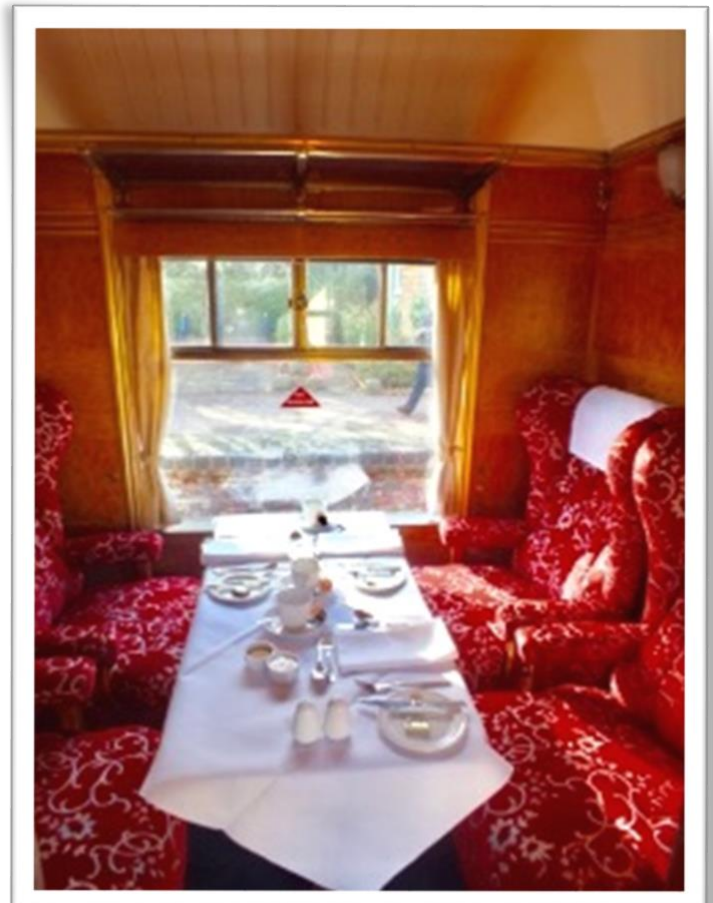


Pullman Car 'Aquila'

Above – general view

Below – Inside the Coupé

Photos: Richard Jones



the limitation of around 100 seats which is the constraint imposed by having only one kitchen car in the formation. Whilst we already have Kitchen Car [Carina](#), its condition is such that it will need around £500K spent on it to restore it and take a number of years to complete – so the opportunity is there to do something rather special with it when we have the money, particularly given its historical connections.

ENTER “AQUILA” & CAR 36.

Parlour Car 36, owned by David Jones, is already here and ready to be worked on. The major upgrade on Car 36 is the interior which needs to be re-equipped, the underframe being in relatively good condition.

The owner of Pullman Car 'Aquila', Richard Jones, has agreed to the transfer of his vehicle to the Bluebell Railway from the South Devon Railway. He has entered a running agreement for 30 years and the vehicle is in good condition internally but will require an intermediate overhaul plus a re-wire. The major areas of work on Aquila are on the underframe with some attention also to roof and bodyside plus the re-wire. The re-wire will require significant stripping out of the interior with subsequent re-build. Aquila arrived with us on 28 May 2021.

THE PLAN

Carriage and Wagon Works Manager Rowan Millard's team has been working on the underframe overhaul on 'Fingall'. 'Christine' also needs an underframe overhaul and Rowan has carried out some inspection so that parts can be manufactured in advance for when Christine stops for overhaul hence minimising the time that Christine will be stopped. Meanwhile Christine will be made available for one-off special events in the second half of this year. From Valentine's Day 2022, two Pullman vehicles will be available for the Pullman train plus Mark 1 FO 3069. When Car 54 is released from restoration then Christine will be stopped for its overhaul, thereby ensuring two Pullman cars are available all the time for the Pullman train (plus FO 3069). When Christine is released from overhaul in late 2022 then we shall have three Pullman cars available for the Pullman Train rather than two Pullman cars and the FO, and this gets us back to the kind of product that we were able to provide when Lilian was in service.

Next year a start can be made on Aquila's overhaul for completion at the start of 2024 when the BGZ is



Above – 'Aquila' inside the saloon

Below – Unloading at Sheffield Park

Photos: Richard Jones (above) David Jones (below)



likely to fail, be stood aside and eventually returned to its former condition. The overhaul of Aquila will be spread over the two years 2022 and 2023 and a start made on Car 36. With the introduction of Aquila in 2024 there will be the potential of accommodating 22 additional seats on the standard Pullman train. Finally enter car 36 giving us a total of 161 seats, or a sustainable 100 seat minimum train. It must be emphasized at this point that the dates suggested are somewhat aspirational and could easily drift given the uncertain nature of the unfolding engineering challenges. Even without surprises it can be seen from the summary below that with this focused plan it will still take us until 2025 to reach a position where we can breathe more easily in terms of the reliable delivery of this top of the range, luxurious, part of the railway story that we tell.

Early days (Prior to 2015) – Approximately 100 Pullman seats



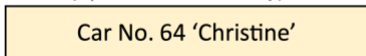
From Start of 2015 – 64 Pullman seats



From Late 2019 – 64 Pullman seats



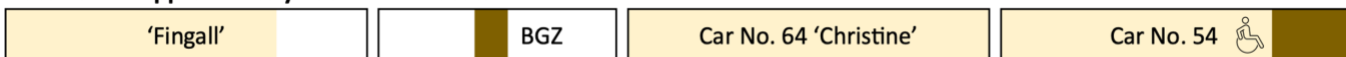
2021 (Special Events Only) – 42 Pullman seats



2022 – Approximately 55 Pullman seats



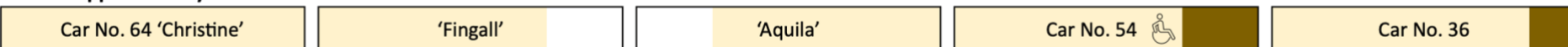
Late 2022 – Approximately 100 Pullman seats



2024 – Up to 120 seat Pullman seats



2025 – Approximately 160 Pullman seats or sustainable 100 seat minimum formation





Key  Brake compartment  Passenger accommodation  Kitchen / Scullery

Diagram: Katharine James / Tom James 1 June 2021

A Winter's Tale – Feedback

Rolling Stock Director Bob Pamment's article "A Winter's Tale" in the [previous issue](#) of *The Bluebell Times* prompted a considerable amount of feedback. All such feedback has been passed back to Bob, for which he gives thanks, and notes that he will use that feedback in discussion with the Rolling Stock Sub-Committee to develop a strategic plan for carriage and wagon assets. A selection of the views expressed is included here – Ed.

“ It is sad to see the condition that coaches rescued for restoration by a "preservation" society have been allowed to fall into over many years. It is not perhaps surprising though, given the amount of work the Bluebell Railway has had to do to keep its fleet running.

I suggest that the solution to this problem is to have an "SR Coach Association" formed, independent of the Bluebell Railway, which could then become owners of the "at risk" coaches.

The model for this is the LNER Coach Association, which has been able to raise funds and restore coaches which the NYMR would not have had the finance to achieve.

Any surviving SR (and earlier) coaches are irreplaceable no matter how bad their present condition and they should be considered as unique artefacts. They are part of the transport heritage of this country and their survival should be a primary consideration. ”

Dave Martin

“ With regard to Southern Railway related bogie coach retentions, I would suggest:

- ➔ Bulleid Coaches – Retain all eight (except perhaps one SOBT, of which we have four) – restore and modify the gutted SOBT 4227 for disabled use (as have the Mid-Hants Railway) with possibly a Miniature Buffet – Total 7 or 8:
- ➔ Maunsell Coaches – Retain all eight Restriction 4 passenger coaches – restore 7864 as Buffet plus disabled access through the centre doors to the former Pantry area. Retain all three Restriction 1/0 coaches – Total 11;

- ➔ LB&SCR Coaches – Retain both – consider use of Saloon 60 as Observation Car (the only remaining mobile twelve-wheel car?) – Total 2;
- ➔ SE&CR Coaches – Retain all five Bluebell-owned coaches plus SER 1050 – Total 6;
- ➔ Pullman Cars – Retain six operational plus *Constance* for display – Total 6+1.

This will total 32+1 or 33+1.

The BR Mark 1 stock should be reduced to a six-car rake and a *Wealden Rambler* (four-car?) rake (spare Bulleids or Maunsells could cover for overhauls) – Total 10.

In addition to the surplus Mark 1 stock, disposal should be considered of the four LSWR coaches (offered to the Swanage Railway?) and the 'Chesham' coaches (to Quainton?) ”

Phil Evans

“ With locomotives established groups are regularly seen promoting their projects such as the Brighton Atlantic Group and the Maunsell Locomotive Society. It results in a regular income and donations. On the C&W side I am only aware of two carriage groups, the first raising money for the restoration of the Maunsell Buffet car where there are occasional references to its activities. The second is the Brighton Stroudley Group restoring LBSC 328 and 949. I cannot see there has been any mention in the Bluebell News for a number of years that there is a supporting group providing some of the financing for these two vehicles. There are probably other carriage groups. A half page article in the Bluebell News outlining what these groups do and others may generate more interest and financial support. Inevitably it will not be to the same level as for locomotives which are always more popular. However, the BASH Group very successfully promoted the

restoration of the Metropolitan set of coaches a few years ago so there is a precedent. [...]

The Bluebell Railway has a fantastic collection of locomotives, carriages and wagons. It is very sad to see many are still decaying in sidings. However I see OP4 (and ultimately OP5) as the first stage towards many vehicles' restoration. Although not a GWR fan, I was very impressed to see photographs of the Saint hauling a matching prewar set on the Severn Valley Railway. It is hoped future generations will see a full rake of operational Bullied carriages again, likewise Maunsell Restriction 4 and pregrouping equivalents. All of this will not happen overnight but may well take at least several generations.

”

Brian Frow

“ Just overhauling one carriage over twenty trades and skills can be called upon, having a register of people willing to help when required can speed up the overhaul. To achieve the end result everyone must work as one team, to plan and budget.

Many of the skills are not found in today's industry so development of the Heritage Skills Centre to train the next generation is necessary. Traditional coach painting and signwriting is one example.

Any overhaul is not easy to plan and execute with so many elements which have to be preformed in the correct order, problems will arise and if not resolved quickly the time line will slip.

Take the lessons learned to improve the next overhaul, also take on best practice from other workshops which may well help. ”

Graham Burtenshaw

“ [The Bluebell Railway Preservation Society [Long Term Plan](#)] is the basis on which the Society delegates to the Company the responsibility to operate the railway. The plan includes the intention to have operational rakes of coaches representing the different eras of the Southern Railway and all its forerunners. This aim, along

with related aims for locomotives, is at the heart of what the Bluebell 'is', and the neglect of this part of the plan is a big part of the problem. [...]

Bob takes as a premise that the priority is to protect the 41 carriages in the working fleet, but that fleet doesn't have the right mix of carriages at the moment. I believe instead that we should develop a strategy to make more use of our older carriages, in line with the LTP, and hence also to prioritize them for restoration and maintenance. That doesn't mean a railway free of Mark 1's, absolutely not: the buffet and disabled access vehicles provide essential facilities on our trains at the moment and some others of the Mark 1 fleet are preservation items themselves. But it does mean giving fair balance to the use of the railway's resources to restore, and then to use, the rich variety of carriages we are privileged to own. ”

Keith Leppard

“ Bob Pamment paints a pretty clear picture of the complexities facing the decision makers regarding priorities and actions needed for each piece of rolling stock. I see within this picture a series of meetings that could go round and round in circles leading to an impasse for many vehicles. If that is indeed the case then we will not be serving our aims, or the best future for the vehicles; we will instead be playing into their demise.

If we really care about the preservation of such rarities then we need to act, sooner than later. Decisions need to be made. Meetings need to be direct and to the point. What is the best for each vehicle, not what is best for the Bluebell Railway? If we care about these specimens of history then we need to have the fortitude to let them go somewhere else, where their future and well being can be assured. Keeping relics around on the off chance that one day we might get around to preserving them is, at best, a very weak argument.

So, let's please act, make sound decisions and clean up our railway so that we can all be proud of what we have on display. ”

Roger Marler

Tales from the Shed: Part Three

Words and photo by Russell Pearce, Locomotive Department

Last time we looked at what 30064 was like to use in service and found out what might lie in wait for the unwary. This time we apply that knowledge and look at what a typical Sunday duty looked like in 1974 using this fabulous beast.

For all the fun, there are some quite big drawbacks to using this engine intensively:

- ➔ Coal capacity: on a busy summer Sunday on a six-car train and using hard coal, the engine had to be coaled between trips. This was eased when we started to use Welsh coal but was quite ridiculous when we acquired a supply of ovoid briquettes which vanished as soon as they met the fire and poured into the cab as soon as the bunker door was opened
- ➔ Heat: the whole of the fire-box end of the boiler is within the confines of the cab, which is wholly enclosed and lovely in winter. But in the summer the cab temperature was very high and loss of body fluids and salt was a real problem. (I think someone recorded 140° Fahrenheit in the summer of 1976)
- ➔ Fire throwing: when being worked very hard the engine could throw fire along with the best but also the ashpan design and lack of dampers meant that lost fire from the ashpan could also cause fires. Some of this was mitigated but by a gauze where dampers could be, with some success.
- ➔ Rough riding: this can be very tiring for the crew on a long day and that should not be underestimated but the late Fred Carter, our PW foreman back in the day, got very fed up replacing wooden keys after the engine had gone past
- ➔ Firebox leaks: as discussed above, eventually the tubes were welded into the firebox and the brick arch made a difference but it remains susceptible as any steel box does where there are no dampers.
- ➔ The water “balance-pipe” was of small bore and significantly retarded the time taken to water the engine. And the tanks are not huge,

just 1,000 gallons (1,200 US gallons), which sounds a lot but it would be a courageous driver that attempted two round trips to Horsted Keynes on that.

But while they are important issues, we should recall that this is a shunting engine first and foremost – and unsurpassed as such with power to move just about anything that requires moving and enough brake power to stop it all as well. But notwithstanding that, it did quite happily take loaded six-car trains to Horsted Keynes without much complaint and would do so day in and day out for weeks at a time when required. When it did require repair, it was relatively easy to do so.

Those of us who regard ourselves as connoisseurs of the engine relish the prospect of taking it to East Grinstead but something would need to be done to improve coal capacity. It is my opinion that it would still clean out the bunker on a round trip and I am a bit wobbly about water capacity but that could be dealt with by adding a well tank – and we do have water at East Grinstead on arrival.

So with all this mind we can now take a look at what was involved on a hot Sunday afternoon in 1974, the year before Sheffield Park was provided with signalling which permitted engines to run-round trains while something else was in the to Horsted [MISSING WORDS??]. At that time, you would only run-round if a token was extracted for the single line, so the two-train service was very challenging, especially when you remember that at the time what we now call No. 3 road at Horsted Keynes was an arrivals platform only.

So here is how the diagram would work using 30064 (other engines were easier but the overall system remained the same):

1. A pilot engine (27 or 72) went to Horsted in the morning to shunt as required and

return about 12:10pm with a five or six-car set to form the second train (the Horsted Set). On arrival at the Park, 30064, having been got ready by No. 5 men, was sitting in the Pump House siding

2. The 12:35pm up "main" train (using the "Park" set) was waiting in Platform 1 and would depart at the booked time. While that was happening, the pilot would draw the stock up the Newick Siding to release 30064 to Platform 2 so it could set back and collect its train
3. At this point the "4" duty crew took over the train engine handing over the pilot to Number "5" men, a senior fireman and cleaner, who carried on as station pilot, and were relieved by Number 6 men in due course and, for completeness, Number 1 men were relieved by "3" men (working the Park set on say 75027)
4. Anyway, the engine shunted to the Newick, coupled to its train and drew it into Platform 2 ready for departure. Crews did not have to wait long because as soon as the "main" train was at Horsted Keynes and run round, the section would clear for the "relief" train to follow it up. So 20-25 minutes at the most between arrival of the stock at SP and subsequent departure.
5. On arrival in Platform 3 (or 2, as it was then) the "main" train would leave from Platform 4. So our engine could then run round via Platform 4 and the down yard; in those days we could access 3 road station from the yard. However, since 3 road was an arrivals road only, all trains had to shunt north and draw back into 4 road to re-embark passengers and await the road. By that time of course the section was probably clear and the signal would be lowered and off we go, back to the Park.
6. Once there, the earlier procedure was repeated with 30064 setting back into the Pump House, this time to buffer up to a "3 plank" wagon loaded with coal and provided with cleaners to shovel it. The "4" men were relieved by the "2" men, the engine was coaled while someone else was getting a wash-out hose ready to fill the tanks. 27 would bark past "pulling-off" the

stock and the fireman had his head down making up the fire. Bunker replenished and tanks full, it was time to collect the train and start the process again.

This continued for further two trains. We should remember that in those days the last train did not depart for Horsted Keynes until 6:17 and went up as empty stock. Altogether making for a very hard afternoon for the No 2 duty crew, the fireman especially, because that duty was not provided with a third man.

So there we are, a look at an engine which holds a place in our hearts and which compared with the stable we have today, rather rough and ready but able and very willing to run a passenger train service, even though it was a million miles away from what it was designed for. There was also a time at one point in early 1976 when all we could offer to run the service was 30064 and we even ran a gala offering this stalwart alongside "Blackmore Vale".

Of course, we all have our favourites and while I put a couple of others ahead of this one in my personal list of best engines, it is about time that someone spoke up for her to ask whether, with this important place in our history, she doesn't deserve a place in SteamWorks!, if not in the "Works". In those days in the mid-1970s and into the 1980s this engine kept us going quite cheaply and for a while literally did keep us going. And maybe these pieces have helped to explain to our newer friends and members just what this engine means to our past.

Bluebell Railway Museum - 10 Years On

By Tony Drake, Museum Curator

On 23 June 2021 it will be 10 years since the present museum was officially opened by Lord Faulkner. As with any museum, displays change from time to time and ours is no exception. The museum team have been keen to enhance and add displays as appropriate.

The major enhancements have been the addition of a working signal outside the Withyham signal box – with the grateful help of the S&T and Infrastructure Departments and the enlargement of the viewing window into the carriage shed. In the museum a considerable number of display items have been added most of which have been purchased at auctions and several digital image screens to provide more information about items on display. If it has been a while since you last visited the museum it may be worth another visit.

When first opened, we guessed visitor numbers – about 9 000 per year. However, having been pressed for more reliable figures we started using a tally counter and much to our surprise the yearly total was in excess of 40 000! Prior to 2020, the yearly total was about 45 000 visitors.

We have quite a large Museum team. There is a Museum Management Committee which meets on a regular basis and reports to the Bluebell Railway Trust. The day-to-day operation is by a team of about 30 Museum Stewards who take turns to open and Steward the museum on days when there is a scheduled train service. A smaller Working Party meets most Wednesdays to carry out maintenance in the museum and enhancements of the displays.

In addition, there is the Archive Team working on photographs, Bluebell records and paperwork from 'southern' railways (WTT's, maps, posters etc.). Much of the archive material is stored off site in a commercial lock up. We are hoping to make a start soon on a new building on site at Sheffield Park to house both the archive and reserve museum collection.



JOIN THE TEAM!

If you would like to join our Museum team as a Steward, or assist with the archive, please do contact us: curator@bluebell-railway-museum.co.uk

On This Day, 11 June

By Tony Hillman, Assistant Museum Curator

Three pictures from the Bluebell Photographic Archive taken on 11 June. Thanks to John Sharp, Martin Elms, John Creed, Richard Peirce and Roger Merry-Price for finding the pictures and providing the notes.



The 12.30pm Leicester – Hastings (Saturdays Only) holidaymaker's service draws to a halt at East Croydon, Platform 5, on 11th June 1949. If the train was on schedule, the time is 3.53pm. The locomotive is H2 Class No. 32421, *South Foreland*, built at Brighton in 1911; this was a class of only six engines, a superheated version developed from the previous H1 Class. After stopping here for two minutes, the train ran fast to Brighton, arriving at 4.55pm, reversing and leaving eleven minutes later for Eastbourne, where it arrived at 5.45pm. Reversing again, it left at 5.50pm and called at Bexhill Central, St Leonards (West Marina) and St Leonards (Warrior Square), before arrival at Hastings at 6.25pm.

At the end of the platform stands East Croydon North signal box, built by contractor Saxby & Farmer for the LBSCR in 1896, and which lasted until 1955 when it was replaced by a power box in the final stage of the "CSCLS", the Central Section Colour Light Scheme. This closed the semaphore

signalling gap between colour light schemes at Victoria (1939) and London Bridge (1928), and the start of the main line colour light signalling southwards from Coulsdon North (1932).

Also visible are the concrete SR platform lamp-posts, still with their hexagonal opal glass shades and gas valves, and the remains of bands of white paint on the stems dating from the wartime blackout. Behind the train are the premises of Messrs. Hall and Co, builders' merchants, known as "Victoria Wharf". Bottom right are two SR Westinghouse disc ground signals. The one about to be hidden behind the front end of No. 32421 is the standard pattern, while the other in the extreme corner of the photo has a narrower disc, due to the restricted clearance between tracks at this point.

Photo: John J Smith



On the morning of Tuesday 11th June 1963, Battle of Britain Class No. 34064 *Fighter Command* stands at the western end of Basingstoke station. The locomotive is working Nine Elms Duty 23, the first part of which was the 7.20am Waterloo–Salisbury passenger, today with a load of five Bulleid coaches and six vans. The train has stopped at Basingstoke, two minutes early, for the scheduled 8.44am water stop and a crew change, which can be seen taking place: the relieving crew has just arrived carrying their coats, bags and the customary tea cans. With it from London the train has brought our photographer, Alan Postlethwaite, for a day's track walk as far as Whitchurch on the West of England main line.

The locomotive holds two unique distinctions. Firstly, it was completed at Brighton Works in May 1947, as the 1000th locomotive to be built there. A special naming ceremony took place in June. Secondly, in May 1962 it was equipped with an experimental Giesel Oblong (exhaust) Ejector. This successfully improved the engine's performance, reduced sparks from the chimney and lifted the

smoke to give the driver a better view. It had been intended to equip a number of other Light Pacifics, but with the imminent end of steam the orders were cancelled.

34064 was withdrawn in May 1966 and scrapped at Bridgend by the end of the year. Its final mileage was 759,666, giving an average of just under 110 miles per day during its 19-year working life.

Photo: Alan Postlethwaite



Around five hours later and over seven miles further west, Alan had reached Oakley station. Here we see modified Battle of Britain class 4-6-2 No. 34059 *Sir Archibald Sinclair* departing with what is believed to be the 12.58pm stopping service from Salisbury to Waterloo. If this is correct, the time is just after 2pm.

Sir Archibald Sinclair was built at Brighton Works and entered traffic on 3rd April 1947 as No. 21C159. It was named after the Liberal politician who served as Secretary of State for Air (1940-1945) during Winston Churchill's wartime coalition. He performed the official naming ceremony of No. 21C159 at Waterloo Station on 24th February 1948 as well as that for classmate No. 21C157 *Biggin Hill*. No. 21C159 was renumbered No. 34059 on 11 March 1949 and modified at Eastleigh Works in March 1960. Having run approximately 877,107 miles the loco was withdrawn on 29th May 1966. However, it was rescued from a Barry scrapyard and, after restoration by the Bluebell Railway, re-entered service there in 2009.

Oakley station, the first station west of Worting Junction, was first opened by the LSWR in 1856 although the station building in the background was erected when the line from Worting westwards was doubled in 1862. During the time Alan was there, three passenger trains called, but not a single person alighted from or boarded any one of them. It is perhaps no surprise, therefore, that Oakley closed with effect from Monday 17th June 1963, six days after the picture was taken.

To conclude, here is Alan's recent recollection of that day, 58 years ago:

"It was a wonderful day out walking the West of England main line. The wild flowers were a delight, so too the steam trains, a final flourish of BR, SR and the L&SWR engineering."

Photo: Alan Postlethwaite



The Bluebell Times

*A Newsletter for
Bluebell Railway
Members, Staff and
Supporters*

*The Bluebell Times is published
monthly on the second Friday of
each month. The next issue is
scheduled to be available on 9 July
2021 from [bluebell-
railway.com/bluebell-times](http://bluebell-railway.com/bluebell-times)*

*If you have any comments or
feedback about this issue or
suggestions for future articles
or features, contact:*

*The Bluebell Times editor
Tom James*

bluebelltimes@bluebell-railway.com

Tail Lamp

If you've enjoyed this issue of The Bluebell Times, feel free to pass it on to other people you think might also want to read it.

To find out when the next issue is out and for other updates about the Bluebell Railway, check our [website](http://www.bluebell-railway.com) or follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/bluebellrailway), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/bluebellrailway) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/bluebellrailway).

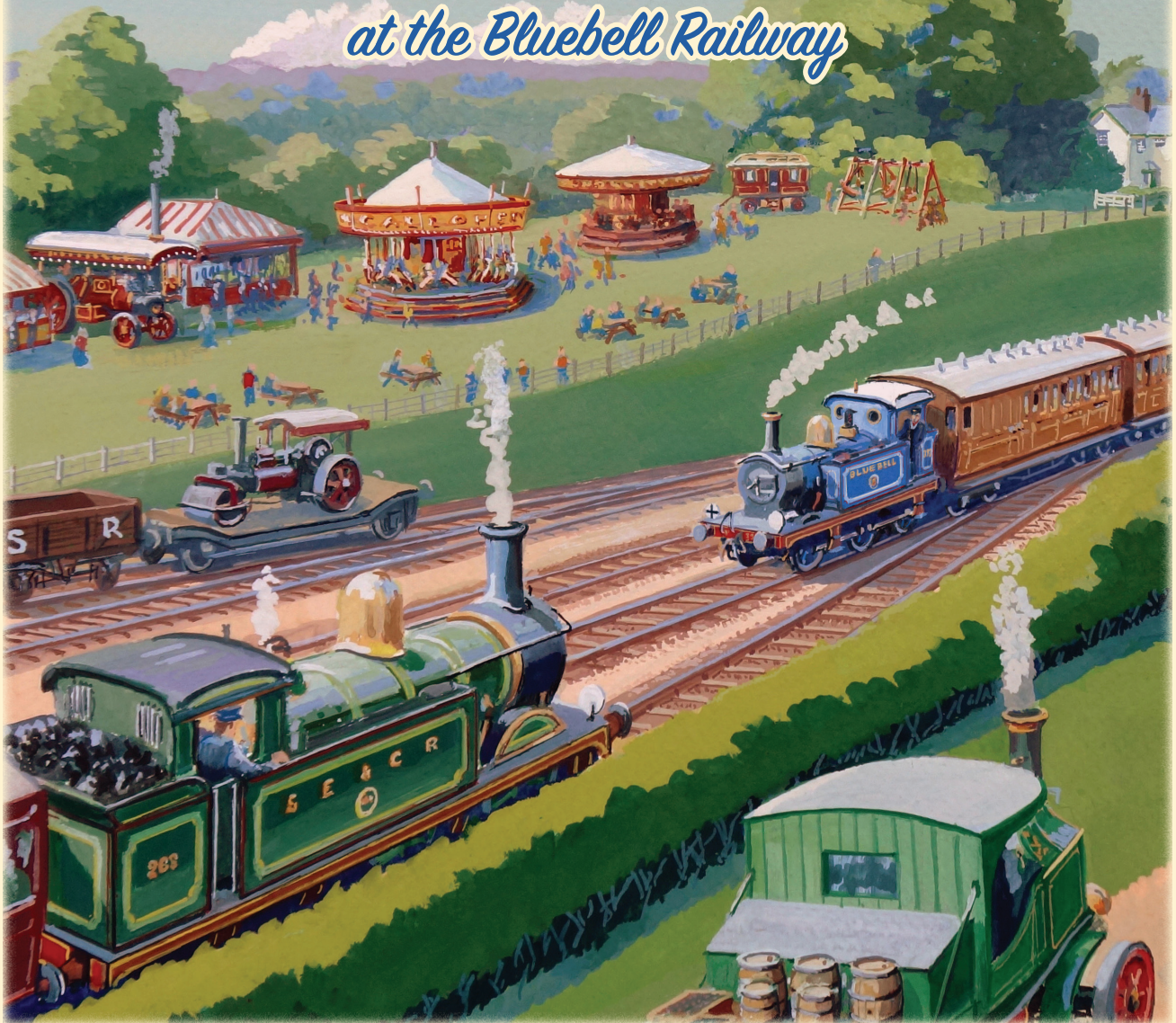
Contributors to this issue

- ➔ Laurie Anderson
- ➔ Gavin Bennett
- ➔ Graham Burtenshaw
- ➔ Dave Bowles
- ➔ David Cable
- ➔ Jean Cox
- ➔ John Creed
- ➔ Tony Drake
- ➔ Martin Elms
- ➔ Phil Evans
- ➔ Brian Frow
- ➔ Asa Griffiths
- ➔ Tony Hillman
- ➔ Katharine James
- ➔ Tom James
- ➔ David Jones
- ➔ Richard Jones
- ➔ Paul Lelew
- ➔ Keith Leppard
- ➔ Roger Marler
- ➔ Dave Martin
- ➔ Roger Merry-Price
- ➔ Henry Mowforth
- ➔ Bob Pamment
- ➔ Russell Pearce
- ➔ Richard Peirce
- ➔ Ruth Rowatt
- ➔ John Sharp
- ➔ Roy Watts

ROAD MEETS RAIL

WORKING STEAM FESTIVAL

at the Bluebell Railway



**TRACTION ENGINES • ROLLERS • WAGONS • CRANES
SHOWMAN'S • FAIRGROUND • BEER TENT • TRAINS**

*STEP BACK IN TIME AT HORSTED KEYNES STATION FOR A WEEKEND OF
STEAM POWERED DEMONSTRATIONS AND VINTAGE FAIRGROUND FUN!*

**BUY YOUR EVENT TICKETS IN ADVANCE, ONLINE...
VISIT WWW.BLUEBELL-RAILWAY.COM FOR DETAILS**

JULY
17th & 18th