



## THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN

*Putting the sparkle back into Horsted Keynes Station*



### BLUEBELL RAILWAY ANNIVERSARY APPEAL

# The Bluebell Times

A Newsletter for Bluebell Railway  
Members, Staff and Supporters

## Special Issue

### IN THIS ISSUE

"36 ½ miles from London Bridge lies a place of singular beauty and of exceeding interest to men of art – a veritable Arcadia". Thus wrote Lieutenant G. Harvey in *The Amateur Photographer*, and what was true in 1892 surely remains true today. For Horsted Keynes station remains a place of beauty, a time-warp of pre-war atmosphere punctuated by the occasional bustle of trains passing before settling back down to quietude.

139 years after it was built, and 60 years after the Bluebell Railway reached the station in October 1961, Horsted Keynes is rightly seen as the Jewel in the Crown of the Railway – but it is a jewel that needs attention. In places the station is showing its age, so today the Railway is launching its 60+1 anniversary appeal to restore this gem back to its full glory. In this special issue of *The Bluebell Times*, we set out the grand plan for the station renovation, "from the Chimney stacks to the tracks".

For that to happen, we need your help. The initial target phases of the work are estimated to cost £792,000. Thanks to a very generous bequest from the estate of Roger Williams – a stalwart of carriage and wagon restoration at the railway – £200,000 of that total is already earmarked for the appeal, but much more still needs to be raised. There is a donation form on the back page of this special issue, and other ways to donate, including online, are outlined on page 5. As an added incentive, match funding has been agreed such that every £10 donation is worth £20 to the appeal, or £22.50 with Gift Aid. With your help, we can put the sparkle back into Horsted Keynes Station.

Tom James, Editor

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# Chairman's Introduction

By Geoff Mee, chairman, Bluebell Railway Plc

Today we are starting on a journey not only to restore our 'Jewel in The Crown' at Horsted Keynes Station but also to re-establish its pre-eminence as a unique historic example of the Southern Railway and its predecessor. It is the largest and most complete station on the heritage railway network, so a real gem. We are fortunate that the original structure has survived for nearly 140 years and, despite its age, it has remained in relatively good condition. Time is catching up with us so now it is essential to arrest its gradual decline.

To this end, we are launching a special appeal under the banner headline of 'The Jewel in the Crown – Putting the Sparkle back into Horsted Keynes'. The funds raised are firstly to effect repairs to make each of the buildings water-tight followed by restoration of the buildings on each platform. We are not going to raise all of the funding in one go but a successful appeal will go a long way towards the eventual restoration.

In financial terms, we want to raise at least £500,000. This is our minimum target and we hope to beat it by a considerable margin as early as possible, so please dig deep to support the appeal.

Money is only the start of story. Equally important is our aim to get as many volunteers, members and friends of the Railway involved in some of the work of the project.

Every hour of volunteer help will enable the funds that are donated to go so much further. I have my paint brush ready for action and when the time is right, I hope that you will be able to join in with the whole range of skills available within the Bluebell family that will be needed.

So, please, please support the Appeal in every possible way so that together we can restore Horsted Keynes to its rightful place as the "Jewel in the Crown" for now and into the future.



*Horsted Keynes in 1959, on the eve of preservation. At this date, the line to Sheffield Park was closed, but electric trains were still running in via Haywards Heath. Lines of redundant carriages displaced by the Kent Coast electrification project are stored in the sidings on the west side of the station. Photo: Alan Postlethwaite*

# The Grand Plan for Horsted Keynes

By Trevor Swainson, Appeal co-ordinator

## INTRODUCTION

Information regarding the history and other general information on Horsted Keynes Station is set out elsewhere in this edition *The Bluebell Times*.

Lots of people from across the spectrum of the Railway have expressed opinions on the state of The Station. It is not in imminent danger of falling down but it is generally agreed that 'something must be done'.

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

The Station is almost 140 years old and, for its age, it is in reasonably good condition. However, deterioration creeps up, almost unseen and unnoticed. Some might say that a few repairs to the gutters and a lick or two of paint are all that is needed to 'freshen' things up. To the casual observer, things did not look too bad but the list of things that require attention started to grow rapidly.

## DETAILED SURVEY BY J J HATFIELD LIMITED

After preliminary discussions, it was agreed that we should undertake an independent and comprehensive survey of the Station, literally from chimney stacks down to railway tracks. This was carried out by J J Hatfield Limited under the supervision of Jim Hatfield who is a long-term supporter of the Railway.

The survey covered not only the Station buildings but also the Signal Box, the approach road and a few other items. For the purposes of this report, the focus has been made just on the Station buildings.

The findings of the survey amounted to more than 60 pages of detailed text looking at each and every part of the Station. To many, the results were not that surprising and reflected the growing concerns but at very least it quantified on a building by building and platform by platform basis just what was needed to be done.

In Jim Hatfield's report, the necessary works to be undertaken are broken down into the key elements. This is not necessarily an order of work as it will only be when more detailed investigation 'under the surface' is assessed and this might lead to discovery of additional problems not evident at first sight.

## ORDER OF WORK

The priority is to work on the Station House and Platform 5 followed in succession by Platforms 3 & 4 and then Platforms 1 & 2.

Thus, in Phases 1 & 2 of the project comprising the Station House & Platform 5, the first priority is to make the buildings waterproof. This entails 40 separate areas of work.

Planning for this phase is already underway but, for practical and operational reasons, it is unlikely that work will start until the late Winter/early Spring of 2022.

The timing of the third and subsequent phases has not yet been decided as these are dependent on a number of factors:

- ➡ Progress on Phases 1 & 2
- ➡ Availability of funding
- ➡ Operational requirements of the Railway.

The largest cost element on Platforms 3 & 4 and 1 & 2 will be the replacements of the zinc sheeting on the canopy roofs.

The station is Grade II listed and works will have to be sympathetic to that status and in line with listed building regulations.

## WHAT IS IT ALL GOING TO COST?

These estimates of cost are based on prices ruling at December 2019 and therefore it is certain that inflationary pressures will cause the costs to rise

INITIAL PHASES OF WORK		
Phase 1	Station House & Offices including Canopy Box Gutter	£195,000
Phase 2	Platform 5	£187,000
Phase 3	Platforms 3 & 4 and Canopy	£410,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>£792,000</b>
FUTURE WORK ON THE STATION		
Phase 4	Platforms 1 & 2 and Canopy	£330,000
Phase 5	Subway	£52,000

## WHO IS GOING TO MANAGE THE PROJECT?

With many years of recent experience, everyone agrees that a strong Project Management team is put in place so that each aspect of the work is carefully controlled. This will be under the management of Barry Luck, the Infrastructure Director with the support of Melissa Jordan. This team has demonstrated its ability to manage complex projects including the completion of OP4 and the Heritage Skills Centre both from an organisational and financial point of view.

## WHO IS GOING TO DO THE WORK?

Much of the work on each phase will be placed with specialist outside contractors as this will probably be the quickest way of work being completed due to the complexity of what is required. However, we are hopeful that the various Friends' group and volunteers will be able to provide a lot of help, thereby not only saving money but also creating a feeling of ownership of the Project for the Railway.

## WHO IS GOING TO PAY FOR THIS?

Money, as ever, is not freely available for this or any other projects and it is necessary to attract donations from far and wide.

The role of the Trust is to provide such funding. We have a good start arising from a specific legacy from the estate of the late Roger Williams that has

provided £200,000 specifically for the Horsted Keynes Restoration project.

We are today launching a new fundraising appeal and this will run throughout the Autumn and Winter periods. The Appeal is to be known as:

*'The Jewel in the Crown. Putting the Sparkle back into Horsted Keynes Station'*

This Appeal will be made to all members, shareholders and friends of the Railway from whom we hope to receive at least £170,000. This forms part of the initial target but we would like to think that we can exceed that target by a considerable margin on the basis that every penny raised will help to fund the restoration work.

As an incentive, the Bluebell Railway Trust will match the donations on a Pound for Pound basis for up to £150,000 of donations in the period to 31 January 2022. Similarly, the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society will also provide matched funding of £20,000. The combination of donations plus matched funding can therefore add up to £340,000.

Depending on the individual tax status of each donor, we will claim Gift Aid from HMRC on qualifying donations.



The total initial target therefore will be as follows:

- ➔ The estate of the late Roger Williams  
£200,000
- ➔ Donations from members, shareholders and supporters  
£170,000
- ➔ Matched funding from the Trust  
£150,000
- ➔ Matched funding from BRPS  
£20,000
- ➔ Total potential funds raised  
£540,000

Although not included in the above totals, if each qualifying donor is able to complete a Gift Aid declaration, we estimate that an additional £30,000 might be claimed from HMRC.

## How Can I Help?

We have set a target of at least £500,000 to be raised for work in Phase 1.

The Bluebell Railway Trust has received a legacy of £200,000 from the estate of a late member and, in addition, the Trust will provide matched funding of up to £150,000 for all donations received by 31 January 2022. Potentially, this could result in £500,000 being raised very quickly. In addition and, subject to your consent, Gift Aid will be claimed to augment the donations by 25%.

You can make donations in a number of different ways:

### BY PAYMENTS VIA DEBIT OR CREDIT CARDS THROUGH OUR WEBSITE

All such payments will be completely secure and no card details will be retained for payment processing. Simply go to our website at [www.bluebell-railway.com/make-a-donation/](http://www.bluebell-railway.com/make-a-donation/)

### BY DIRECT BANK TRANSFER BY BACS TO OUR BANK ACCOUNT

This is particularly helpful as it reduces bank charges on card payments. Please make sure that you quote reference JIC/& your surname when making the payment: Account No. 61059056 Sort Code 60-10-26 Reference JIC/[surname]

Please complete and return the donation form (see back page) for Gift Aid purposes.

### FUTURE WORK AND ITS FUNDING

If we achieve our minimum target then we will have enough money to complete Phases 1 & 2 and to do a considerable amount of the work required under Phase 3.

Based on the Hatfield survey, this will leave a shortfall on the total amount of funding required if all the work is sub-contracted. That makes it important that we exceed the initial target by a considerable margin. It is equally important that we maximise the 'self-help' contributions from members, shareholders and supporters of the Railway providing their energy and skills to help out.

**Please help us to put the sparkle back into our jewel in the crown at Horsted Keynes.**



### BY CHEQUE

Please ensure that you complete the donation form and return it with your cheque made payable to: The Bluebell Railway Trust at:

Sheffield Park Station  
Uckfield  
East Sussex  
TN22 3QL

### BY BANKERS' STANDING ORDER

Please download the standing order form from our website [www.bluebell-railway.com/donate/](http://www.bluebell-railway.com/donate/) and return to The Trust, together with the donation form. We will forward each form to the relevant bank.

# The Jewel in the Crown

By Trevor Swainson, Appeal co-ordinator

## THE EARLY YEARS

Horsted Keynes Station was built in or around 1882 to the design of Mr Thomas Harrison Myres who was the Staff Architect of the London Brighton and South Coast Railway. Similar designs were adopted for stations all along the line from Lewes to East Grinstead.

The Keynes Station was one of the largest stations in Sussex having five platforms. It is at the junction of the relief London to Brighton line and of the branch line that meandered southwards to Lewes and then on to connect with coastal services to and from Brighton. In terms of the number of train movements, it was a busy station but passenger numbers never reflected the volumes of trains and, in terms of its importance, it was never more than a pleasant interlude on journey to and from the South Coast.

At first sight, there seemed little point in constructing such a large station in a rural setting in Sussex. However, there were other railway companies seeking access to Brighton and the London Brighton and South Coast Railway was determined to prevent any competition for its lucrative traffic.

Soon after the opening of the Station, a visitor remarked that 'the station at Horsted Keynes Junction is remarkably handsome and abundantly roomy; it has a long and wide central covered platform as well as up and down-side platforms ... The rural station greatly shames by contrast the ramshackle, unsightly property at London Bridge.'

After a brief period in office, the first stationmaster, Mr William Yeomanson was promoted to greater things at Hove and the high standards he had set for the opening of the station soon deteriorated to the point where it was as though the posting to Horsted Keynes was viewed almost as a punishment for misdeeds committed elsewhere.

In 1913, there was a grand plan to rationalise the signalling arrangements that led to the removal of the canopy on Platforms 1 & 2 in order to improve the sightlines for the signalman at the south end of the station.

Very soon in its life, the Station became useful for storing locomotives from Brighton awaiting repair or disposal. This storage facility was repeated at regular intervals throughout its life right up to its eventual closure.

## THOMAS MYRES

Thomas Harrison Myres (1842 – 1926) was born in Preston, Lancashire, where his father was a partner in the architecture practice Myres and Newton in that town.

T.H. Myres trained under Frederick Banister, from 1860 the Chief Engineer of the LB&SCR, but who had himself earlier worked for Myres and Newton; Thomas Myres was later to marry Banister's daughter Katharine.

From 1880, Myres was responsible for designing new buildings for the LB&SCR, and between that date and 1882, he oversaw the design of 18 new or rebuilt stations: Hassocks (now demolished); then those on the Hailsham – Eridge line; Chichester – Midhurst; Lewes – East Grinstead (the present day Bluebell Railway) and finally Ardingly on the Horsted Keynes – Haywards Heath line. Twelve of those eighteen stations still survive, though only those on the Bluebell – Sheffield Park, Horsted Keynes and Kingscote – are still in use as operational stations.



*The station shortly after opening. At this time, the upper story of the station house still had a faux half-timbered appearance – the hung tiles came later to provide better weather protection. The stained glass in the booking hall porch was recently re-instated. Photo: Bluebell Railway Museum Archives*

## ELECTRIFICATION

The imagined volumes of traffic that were anticipated when the line first opened never materialised but hopes were raised in the 1930s when the line from Haywards Heath to Horsted Keynes was electrified. It was intended that the electrified lines would continue northwards to East Grinstead and beyond but, despite intensive lobbying, attention was diverted to the electrifications of the lines to Portsmouth and then the intervention of the Second World War caused the postponement and eventual cancellation of the plan

## THE WAR YEARS

During the Second World War, Horsted Keynes enjoyed another brief renaissance with increased freight and military traffic. Once again, its main use was as a storage facility for ships' propellers, components for tanks and for other 'war' materials. There were additional train movements thousands of Canadian and other troops together with their tanks and vehicles that were marshalled and billeted in the lead up to the D-Day Landings.

There were few bombing raids that affected Horsted Keynes although there was one near miss when a returning German bomber jettisoned its bombs with one landing on the station drive with another landing in a nearby field. Fortunately, there were no casualties resulting from this. Meanwhile, overhead, there were constant raids on London that were intercepted by RAF fighters during the Battle of Britain.

## THE YEARS UNTIL CLOSURE

Soon after the War, after all war materials and ordnance were removed, the Station reverted to its sleepy services to and from Haywards Heath and for trains to and from Lewes. Yet again, the yard at the Station was the storing place for redundant rolling stock and together with, for a brief period, partially assembled new electric stock for the Kent electrified lines were also stored.

The little used services to and from Lewes were soon earmarked for closure and, in 1955, these were closed until local campaigners forced British Railways the re-opening of the line. However, this was only a temporary reprieve as the reinstated

service – known as the ‘sulky service’ – provided poorly timed connections making it virtually unusable for passengers with connections to other services. Having successfully proved that this service was not making any money, British Railways was able to justify closure of the line again – this time permanently - in 1959. The electrified shuttle services between the Station and Haywards Heath continued until 1963 before this line was also closed.

When the line was closed, several stations were either demolished or sold off as private dwellings but Horsted Keynes remained virtually intact ready for the re-opening of services by the Bluebell Railway.

### THE STATION IN PRESERVATION YEARS

The Bluebell Railway Preservation Society was formed in 1959 and, in the following year, the Bluebell Railway was granted access to Horsted Keynes Station. At the time, the electric trains were still running from Haywards Heath to Horsted Keynes and this, in part, was one of the reasons that the Railway was able to inherit the station buildings from British Railways when the mainline services were withdrawn.

With few exceptions all the stations between East Grinstead and Lewes were either demolished or sold off as private dwellings, leaving Horsted Keynes as the sole survivor. This could have been a short-lived reprieve, but the newly formed Bluebell Railway was able to acquire a complete station that had survived in virtually its original form since its construction in 1882.

In the early days of the Bluebell Railway, trains were not permitted to run into the Station, instead terminating a Bluebell Halt to the south. In 1961, Bluebell trains were allowed into Horsted Keynes albeit topped and tailed by an engine at either end. Finally, with the closure of the electrified line to Haywards Heath, full access was granted without the need for two engines on each train.

### FROM 1963 TO THE PRESENT DAY

Fortunately, most people would say that the retention of the Station in its (nearly) original form has been one of the most significant things in the history of The Bluebell Railway. The decision to

reinstate the canopy on Platforms 1 & 2 was a popular decision and in 1992 work started culminating in its completion in 2000 returning the Station to its former glory.

### HORSTED KEYNES STATION, AS BUILT

Other than the replacement of the canopy, the Station has remained largely unchanged since its transfer into Bluebell Ownership with one notable exception and that was the replacement of the stained glass windows at the entrance to the booking hall in the Station House.

In the photograph of the Station when it was first built, there were stained-glass windows. At some unknown point in the past these were lost but, in 2012, the windows were reinstated in memory of former Bluebell Railway stationmaster Simon Baker who was killed in a tragic accident. The entire cost of the reinstatement was met from donations by his colleagues.

In what unwittingly became standard practice, the lines to the east of Platform 1 continue to be one of the main areas of storage on the line. Nowadays, there is a wide range of locomotives and rolling stock awaiting restoration. As the French might say, “Plus ca change, c’est la meme chose” translated loosely as “nothing changes”

So here in 2020, 138 years after first being built, Horsted Keynes Station survives. It is beginning to show its age but, in a recent independent building survey, the Station was found to be in remarkably good condition for its age and, with the timely plan to carry out refurbishment and restoration, it will soon return to its 1930s glory.

*With grateful thanks to The Bluebell Railway Museum for providing much of the historical information from its archives.*

*For more detailed information on not only Horsted Keynes but also of the whole line from Lewes to East Grinstead, it is worthwhile obtaining a copy of ‘An Illustrated History of the Lewes and East Grinstead Railway’ by Klaus Marx published in 2000 (ISBN 0 86093 847 7)*



# From the Chimney Stacks to the Tracks

Whilst there are no serious insurmountable defects with the main brick station building and offices on platform 5, the canopies, especially when raining, expose the defects in the guttering and the failure of much of the original life-expired zinc roof sheeting. Water has been allowed to penetrate through failed box gutters along the length of the canopy and interfaces with the brickwork.

It's the same story with the canopies on the island structure on platforms 3 and 4 and, to a lesser extent, the guttering on the 'more modern' matching structure on platforms 1 and 2.

Topography also plays a part – the land east of the station rises sharply and there are several small streams that run off from higher fields into the area and ultimately, its drains. Upgrades will also be required to the drainage of the area and the station approach road.

Brickwork supporting the platforms has also spalled or is simply missing in places, which will also need attention, along with platform surfaces and edging. Put simply, repairs are needed 'from the chimney stacks down to the tracks'.

*Photos: Colin Tyson*



# Horsted Keynes Through the Ages



*The station in August 1882, just prior to opening. The figures on the left are William Yeomanson, the station's first Station Master, and his family. Those on the right are workmen involved in construction of the line. Photo: Bluebell Railway Museum Archive*

*As built, the station had two signal boxes and the junction between the Lewes and Haywards Heath lines was at the north end of the station. In order to save costs, in 1914 the station was rationalised. The junction was moved to the south of the station; the north signal box was downgraded to a shunting frame, and the canopies and buildings on the western island platform (the current platforms 1 / 2) were removed to give the signalman a clear view of the north end of the station.*

*In this August 1934 view, Stroudley D1M No. 2221 heads a service for Haywards Heath.*

*Photo: H.F. Wheeler / Bluebell Railway Museum Archive*







*(Left) The next significant change was electrification of the line from Ardingly. That may seem to have been an extravagance, but essentially it enabled units on the Seaford – Haywards Heath service to run to and from Horsted Keynes out of the way, rather than lay over at Haywards Heath, blocking a platform on the busy Brighton Mainline. By the time of this 1950s view, the platform line at the back of the island platform had been removed, as well as all but one of the “up” sidings.*

*Photo: Bluebell Railway Museum Archive*

*(Below) A red-letter day for the new Bluebell Railway – on 10 October 1961, the Railway was allowed access into Horsted Keynes station for the first time (having previously had to stop at a halt the other side of New Road Bridge). The Railway’s four operational locomotives from that time – ‘Stepney’, the Adams Radial Tank, and P class locos ‘Bluebell’ and ‘Primrose’ power the inaugural service, formed with the Metropolitan Railway carriages.*

*Photo: R.C.Riley / Bluebell Railway Museum Archive*



*(Left) The Bluebell celebrated the centenary of the Lewes and East Grinstead Railway in 1982 – the station is seen during a cavalcade of locomotives at that event.*

*Photo: Bluebell Railway Museum Archive*

# Behind the Scenes at Horsted Keynes

By Tim Baker, Station Master, Horsted Keynes

## THE OLD STATION MASTERS OFFICE

Mr Ben Bowley was Station Master at Horsted Keynes from 1922 until his retirement in 1941.

Traditionally the Station Master's office at Horsted Keynes was the booking office on Platform 5. As the company's representative – the Agent – he would have worked from the main point of sale at the station.

In around 1935, the Ladies' Waiting Room on platform 4 was taken over by Mr Bowley as his office and, to this day, it is still used by the Station Masters over the years.

During his spell in charge, the line from Haywards Heath via Ardingly to Horsted Keynes was electrified in 1935. This was part of the electrification plan by Southern Railways to continue the third rail to Eastbourne and the Sussex Coast. A regular hourly service operated most of the day from Seaford to Horsted Keynes and after the war, for the first time, the Ardingly branch had a Sunday service!

As part of this modernisation, the Station's oil lamps were replaced by electric lights but this did not include the Station House. A visit to the ladies' toilet today reveals the light in the waiting room area hangs low, presumably over his desk, rather than from the ceiling as in all the other rooms.

One WC cubicle was shelved out and used as a storage cupboard and, most telling, this room is the only room on the station to have facilities to hang any blackout blinds. Similar blind holders survive in the waiting room at the privately owned Barcombe station near Lewes.

After Mr Bowley's retirement, the final resident Station Master was Mr Bothroyd who lived in the station house at West Hoathly (and was active in that village's plays and pageants). When Mr Bothroyd moved on, Ardingly and Horsted Keynes fell under the Station Master of Haywards Heath, Mr Berry.

## RESTORING THE STATION LOOS!

With a limited train service after the final lockdown in May 2021, the station staff at Horsted Keynes decided to deploy resources to redecorate the Ladies' cloakroom on platform 4.

Traditionally the railways would paint their stations every 10-20 years. Often the last time the station was painted was recorded with a date above the Gentleman's toilet door. However, in the case of the Ladies' cloakroom, the paint date is recorded under one of the benches and this shows it was last painted in October 1990 with the names of Tim Baker and the late Simon Baker (no relation) scrawled alongside!

There has recently been much talk about the correct shade of green. Research has been undertaken and we have used Dulux "Bright Green" on the interior of this room in place of Buckingham green which has been used for the past 50 years!

We have been very fortunate that a number of companies in the trade and very kindly supported the Horsted Keynes station staff in donating supplies these include:

- Sherwin Williams UK Ltd for supplying 25 litres of Ronseal floor stain
- Homebase, East Grinstead store for donation of decorative sundries
- Crown Paints Ltd for supplying 50 litres of Santex masonry paint
- Bartonline Ltd for supplying 16 litres of Brush Cleaner

A good local effort!



# £K for HK

By Roger Kelly, Bluebell Railway Preservation Society trustee

It seems strange to talk about the new century when we are already 21 years in but, in this relatively short period, already there has been a considerable amount of fundraising for the Railway in the 21st Century.

The early years were dominated in funding the push towards East Grinstead; this was achieved through the tremendous support and contributions from so many people both from within and from outside of the Railway.

However, completion of this massive project did not end the continuing investment in new and improved facilities throughout the Railway. Horsted Keynes as a whole has been the beneficiary of many fundraising efforts both on the major and smaller projects.

At the end of the 20th Century and in the early years of the 21st Century, there were a number of significant improvements made to Horsted Keynes Station. These included:

- ➔ A new canopy on Platforms 1 & 2 undertaken by Robin Elliot and his team to rebuild rebuilt the structures that had been demolished by the LB&SCR in 1914. This entailed raising over £100,000 in cash (at today's prices) plus materials donated or recovered from other stations in the South East.
- ➔ In 2007 a grant of £3,500 was obtained from the John & Ruth Howard Trust for structural repairs to the Platform 5 canopy.
- ➔ In 2010-11 the project to reinstate the stained-glass windows in the station porch, in memory of the late Simon Baker was carried out under the leadership of Ian Fribbens. He and his team raised £3,600 of donations mostly from many of the station staff.

In 2007, Steve Bigg put forward a proposal to build a new undercover storage facility for carriages & other rolling stock. With initial funding of £50,000, plans were developed leading to an application by Messrs Roger Kelly, Steve Bigg and Sam Bee for

grants from the (then) Heritage Lottery Fund. Unfortunately, this application was unsuccessful but, rather than sitting back bemoaning our bad luck, in 2014, the team made an appeal to members and supporters that raised the wonderfully surprising sum of over £400,000 thereby enabling work to start. A second appeal followed in 2018 raising yet more funds for the project that now was extended to include a new Heritage Skills Centre ('HSC').

Today, both the storage facility and the HSC are in the very final stages of completion thereby providing the Railway with superb new facilities.

In summary nearly £2 million has been raised in the past 25 years towards projects located at Horsted Keynes. Let's hope that the 'Jewel In The Crown' appeal will continue to receive such support and be equally successful.



*The restored stained glass in the porch at Horsted Keynes – compare with the photograph on page 7.*

*Photo: Derek Hayward*

# Filming at Horsted Keynes

Photos by Mick Blackburn, filming liaison volunteer [or as credited](#)

Horsted Keynes has long been popular with film makers, the large size and period atmosphere providing a wealth of opportunities. The following photos show some of the many productions that have been filmed at the station. For more information, there is a website dedicated to [filming at the Railway](#)



(Above) *'The Woman in Black'* (2010) with Daniel Radcliffe

(Left) Jenny Agutter, Sir Richard Attenborough, Jemima Rooper, Jack Blumenau and Clare Thomas in *'The Railway Children'* (1999)

(Right) Sir David Suchet in *'Poirot'*







(Above) Horsted Keynes transformed to 'Downton' station in Downton Abbey (2011 – 2014)

(Right) The station has also been used in several pop videos, including '9 to 5 (Morning Train)' with Sheena Easton (1980) Photo: Bluebell Railway Museum Archive

(Below) Eric Idle, Steve Coogan and Terry Jones in 'The Wind in the Willows' (1996)





# Accident at Horsted Keynes in 1908

Words and photos by Tom James, Bluebell Railway volunteer

*Horsted Keynes has had a quiet existence for much of its 139 years, but the dangers of working on the railway were brought into sharp relief by the death of LB&SCR employee Thomas James in 1908 – who coincidentally happened to be the editor's great grandfather.*

*I acknowledge the assistance of Mike Cruttenden and the late Klaus Marx for original research in the local press and the Locomotive Department records of the LB&SCR. The photograph of Thomas James is from my father's family collection.*

*The story first appeared in "Bluebell News" and subsequently in "The Brighton Circular", the magazine of the Brighton Circle.*

In the churchyard at Horsted Keynes stands a small war memorial commemorating the dead of two world wars. Amongst the names of those killed in the First World War are three brothers: Thomas, Oliver and William James. For their mother Jane, the loss of three sons must have been a terrible blow, one repeated in homes throughout the land. Yet the loss of her sons was not the first tragedy in her life, for six years before the start of the war, she had lost her husband in equally tragic circumstances, victim of an accident at Horsted Keynes station.

Jane James' husband was also called Thomas. He had been born in Gloucestershire in 1852, but had moved to Horsted Keynes sometime around 1880. In the 1881 census, he is recorded as a 'labourer' and was lodging with three other men similarly described. Although there is no proof, in the light of Thomas James' subsequent career, it seems likely they were engaged in the construction of the Lewes & East Grinstead Railway. Sussex air evidently suited him better than that of Gloucestershire, for in 1881 he married a local girl, Jane Woolgar (b. 1862), in Horsted Keynes church. By all accounts they had a happy married life, and over the next twenty-five years they were to have 13 children – eight sons and five daughters. Over the course of their married life, the family moved several times, but latterly lived at Hole House in Horsted Keynes.

Following the construction of the railway, Thomas stayed on and was employed by the London Brighton & South Coast Railway to work on the line. In the 1891 census, he is recorded as a



'Platelayer'; in 1901 a 'Railway Ganger'. At the time of his death, he was the Ganger responsible for the section of line between Horsted Keynes and Sheffield Park. It is tantalizing to believe that he is one of the people shown in the photo of workmen at Horsted Keynes (*see page 6 of this issue*) but I suspect we'll never know.

On the morning of 13 October 1908, Thomas James was knocked down by the engine of the 7:50am Horsted Keynes to Brighton train. It seems



he was still alive immediately after the accident, for he was conveyed immediately to Haywards Heath where he was inspected by Dr Percy Newth. He was then taken to the Cottage Hospital, but died shortly after admission. The accident actually occurred while the engine – which had arrived at 7:39 with a Brighton to Horsted Keynes service – was running round ready for its 7:50am departure.

The inquest into the death was held at Haywards Heath Petty Sessions court house on 15 October 1908 before the East Sussex Coroner, Mr G Vere-Benson. Police inspectors Lainchbury and Young represented the railway company. (It was normal practice for the LB&SCR to be represented by a police inspector as a watching brief at such cases, though unusual for two to be present). The first witness was Jane James, who verified details of the deceased for the benefit of the jury. There then followed three witnesses: William Frank Nichols, Charles Unstead and 'Earnest' Stephen Carey, all of whom were porters at Horsted Keynes. All had either seen or spoken to Thomas James before his death. None of them noted anything unusual in his behavior or demeanour at the time (this was a polite way of saying the deceased was not under the influence of alcohol).

They were followed by the engine driver George White of Brighton Shed, who stated that the curve of the line prevented his seeing James at the time of the accident. Driver White said that he did not know an accident had taken place until he was told. Those familiar with the line will know that viewed from the station, the Ardingly line curves sharply to the right beyond the signal box.

The last witness was William Morris, the inspector of Permanent Way. He informed the court that the method of train working at the station had changed that very week and that he considered it was possible that James had been taken by surprise; however, he did not elaborate as to what the change had been.

A verdict of accidental death was returned and, at the suggestion of Mr Jolly, the foreman, the jury agreed to hand over their fee to the widow. The funeral took place the following day. There is no reference to a subscription opened on behalf of



*The only photo we have of Thomas James, thought to be on his wedding day in 1881. At that time he was engaged as a labourer, probably constructing the Lewes and East Grinstead Railway on which he was later employed for nearly thirty years maintaining the p/way.*

Mrs James, but in the Mid Sussex Times of 27 October 1908, there is an advertisement stating:

'Horsted Keynes: Mrs J James and family wish to thank all friends for the kind sympathy shown to them in their bereavement'.

In addition to the Coroner's investigation, there was also an official Railway investigation, the details of which are contained in the quarterly returns on accidents on the railways:

*Inquiry into an accident that occurred on the 13th October at Horsted Keynes to ganger Thomas James*

*About 7.45 a.m., while James was examining his length a short distance south of the south signal cabin, he was knocked down and fatally injured by a light tank-engine which was running chimney first along the up main line to get round a train which stood on the down main line.*

*James' regular hours of duty were 11 ½ per diem, and at the time of the accident he had been on duty for 1 ¾ hours.*

*As no-one witnessed the accident, it may be attributed to misadventure, although I consider that engine driver G. White, in charge of the light engine, was to blame for failing to keep a proper look-out as directed in Rule 139.*

The details are brief, largely just stating the facts of the case as they are known, but it is interesting that the investigating officer considers the engine driver to be at fault. Evidently this view had little impact on his subsequent railway career, for just two months later, George White was given charge of one of the new Marsh I4 atlantic tanks, No. 35. The earliest date recorded for Brighton based George White being in charge of an engine is with C2 0-6-0 No. 449 from June 1897 to July 1899. Then there is a gap around the turn of the century where it is possible that White had an engine which was scrapped in 1902. The next locomotive allocated to his name was D3 0-4-4T No. 365 'Victoria' from August 1902 to February 1904. Next followed E4 No. 581 'Warningcamp', which was probably the locomotive involved in the above accident. This locomotive was of course a sister to the Bluebell's preserved E4 'Birch Grove'.

Some years after the accident, Jane James married a second time, to a certain Mr Francis. He was certainly a wealthier man than her first husband;

our family tradition has it that she maintained that she married 'once for a family, and a second time to be looked after'. Mr Francis died at some point in the 1920s; thereafter, the by now elderly Mrs James went to live with her second youngest son Frank (b. 1903) and his wife Edith – my grandparents – who lived in Moulscomb. There she lived out her days until she died in the late 1930s. Frank – after Army service in India – worked on the buses in Brighton. During the Second World War, he was called up again as an anti-aircraft gunner: his name is commemorated on a painted memorial of all the Southdown employees who served during the war, which is now preserved in the bus depot at Amberley Working Museum (look for James F).



*Billinton E4 No. 581 Warningcamp – probably the locomotive involved in the accident. Photo: Dave Searle collection.*

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### **LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY.**

Inquiry into an accident that occurred on the 13th October at Horsted Keynes to ganger Thomas James.

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As no one witnessed the accident it may be attributed to misadventure, although I consider that engine-driver G. White, in charge of the light engine, was to blame for failing to keep a proper look-out as directed in Rule 139.

J. J. H.



# The Bluebell Times

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Members, Staff and  
Supporters*

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*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](mailto: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](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

Contributors to this issue

- ➔ Tim Baker
- ➔ Mick Blackburn
- ➔ Paul Bromley
- ➔ Derek Hayward
- ➔ Tom James
- ➔ Roger Kelly
- ➔ Geoff Mee
- ➔ Roger Price
- ➔ Dave Searle
- ➔ Trevor Swainson
- ➔ Colin Tyson



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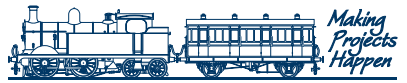
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