



Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway A class catches the dying light of the sun. Photo: Jon Bowers

The Bluebell Times

A Newsletter for Bluebell Railway Members, Staff and Supporters

May 2023

IN THIS ISSUE

Despite somewhat iffy weather on the final day, the recent Branch Line Gala was a great success. A big event with multiple locomotive moves by road will always involve an element of financial risk, but it seems the costs were well recouped, and most importantly, our visitors got a busy and enjoyable event.

The next month carries on in the same vein, with the [Road Meets Rail](#) event on 20-21 May; then the important BRPS AGM and Members' day on 3 June (see page 3), and [Bluebell on Parade](#) 10-11 June. In between those enthusiast-focused events are a whole host of [family-focused](#) offerings. The editor – whose own childhood featured Pugh, Pugh, Barney McGrew, Cuthbert, Dibble and Grub – now knows plenty about a family of anthropomorphic Australian dogs! Such events are vital for our long-term survival but, subjectively at least, also seem to be contributing to a feeling of more energy around the Railway.

Finally, it would not be right to conclude without mentioning our friends and neighbours at the Rother Valley Railway. After a long legal journey, they have just been granted the necessary Transport and Works Act Order to allow completion of a line from Robertsbridge to Bodiam, connecting with the mainline at one end and the Kent and East Sussex Railway at the other. Congratulations are due to all those involved in the scheme; it will be a "must do" in due course when open. At a time when there is much gloom surrounding the sector, it is great to have such an open demonstration of confidence in the future.

Tom James, Editor

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Checking in with the Chair

By Paul Churchman, chairman, Bluebell Railway plc and chairman, BRPS

I am not sure where the last month went! It feels like five minutes ago that I was being gently nudged to get my article in so the editorial team can get the drafts completed and approved.

Still, it has been a busy month and one that has surpassed all our dreams in terms of revenue and visitor numbers.

We had Branch Line Weekend which was probably the most successful one we have ever done. It certainly was in terms of revenue across all areas of the Railway. We also had Dinosaurs and then we had Bingo & Bluey. The latter two were low-cost events and we didn't charge a premium for attending but were added value. My god, did it work. On the Dinosaur weekend, we doubled our normal fares revenue for the weekend and we didn't run any additional trains – we just spent a little bit of money on some dinosaurs.

This is all part of our new plan to give added value at minimal cost to drive our visitor numbers up and up – so far, it is working. We must remember though we are only ever as good as the last one and the consumer market is so fickle at the moment that we must be careful and vigilant and make sure we are delivering what our visitors want.

Looking at other things we have done in the last month, we had a crew filming for the Brighton-based detective series 'Grace' at Sheffield Park and Horsted Keynes for a day, Archie progresses at a pace, the Class 73 has arrived and, by the time you are reading this, it will hopefully be commissioned.

We have changed the food offering in the Bessemer Arms and the pie of the day seems to be the most popular change. We are improving menus on the Golden Arrow while the Afternoon

Tea trains are now superb as we are making virtually everything in-house. Neil Glaskin (who is Director responsible for catering – as well as Ops and commercial, he's doing so much I do feel bad!) and catering manager Megan Laughlin have analysed our costs versus income and what I can tell you is with the changes we have made in the last two months, our gross profit margin across catering is at the top end for the sector. This will help tremendously. What we must ensure though is that we keep control of the overhead costs.

We push forward, looking and hoping for a busy summer. If we maintain this momentum, we will be OK – not good but OK – and it will allow us to build on that for 2024 so that we can build us to a point whereby we can start major spending again on projects and maintain a break-even basis. This will all be achieved a lot faster if we have more people helping run our Railway. Many of you read BT and enjoy the content and think 'isn't it great' – but it's only great if we have people to deliver this. So if you are reading this and don't volunteer, then think about giving it a go if you can.

Finally, the AGM will be on Saturday 3 June and we have a Members' Day as well. It is not just for members. We want those members who don't come that often or don't often work on the Railway – as well as the general public – to come and see what we are doing and also see if we can recruit some more. The AGM will then be in a marquee in the field at Horsted Keynes and then there will be a hog roast and bar available afterwards as well as 'Fenchurch' in the station with some late departures to East Grinstead and Sheffield Park – although there is now a train strike that day, but we will look at doing some brake van rides around Horsted Keynes in the evening. If you can come along, then please do.

Paul

BRPS AGM and Open Day – 3 June

By Roy Watts, BRPS Acting Vice Chairman

On AGM Day, Saturday 3 June, as part of a change to normal proceedings, the Railway is throwing open its doors in order for members to see what goes on behind the scenes.

Departments will show what they do so members can get an idea of just what makes the Railway work.

At Sheffield Park, there will be loco workshop visits, the loco owning groups will be able to update you on their respective projects and you will be able to see the progress being made on restorations. Catering will be laying on a display of Silver Service in a Pullman car and there will be stewards on hand in the Museum to answer any questions you may have.

At Horsted Keynes, there will be carriage shed tours where you will see the progress being made on a number of carriages as they continue their journey back to full operational service. Such items as Car 54, Hastings 3687 and Stroudley 949 amongst many others will be on show. The trim shop will provide an insight into the painstaking work they do in keeping all those seats refreshed and renewed.

The wagon group will be on hand demonstrating what goes on to keep a vital – yet often unsung and hard-working – part of Railway history looking like new, a condition that rarely lasted.

The Infrastructure teams will mount a display of some of their equipment and be on hand to answer any questions you may have and maybe entice you to join the "outdoor gym"!

The newly arrived class 73 number 73133 "Bluebell Railway" will be rededicated and space permitting, Class 205 number 1305 will be on show so members can see the work involved in bringing this unit back to life.

A member of the Trust will be on the station giving an update on the "Jewel in the Crown" project, returning Horsted back to its former glory.

Don't forget that a lot of the projects groups will have sales stands so please do support them where you can.

At each station, staff will be on hand to explain what they do and visits to signal boxes will also be possible subject to permission of the signalman.

The idea of the day is to hopefully encourage members to see what is currently going on at their Railway and how they can help by possibly volunteering to help one of the many departments as we need as much help as possible at this particular time if we are to get through this current difficult period. It will also help members understand and hopefully appreciate some of the problems that the Railway currently faces.

After the AGM, which will be held in a marquee at Horsted Keynes, there will be a hog roast and bar.

A late train will leave Horsted for East Grinstead and then return to Sheffield Park.

Unfortunately, the 3 June has been announced as a strike date by the rail unions but it is still hoped as many members as possible will take the opportunity to come and see what makes the Railway work and maybe ask a question of the Society management. We hope that by bringing the AGM back to the Railway and at an earlier time, it will make this more attractive and a way forward for the future.

On behalf of the Chairman, Paul Churchman, we look forward to seeing you.

Railway Cuttings

Words by Paul Bromley, communications director, Bluebell Railway plc

Photos: PBS Newshour, The Times and Sussex Express

There has been local, national and international media coverage of the Bluebell Railway in recent weeks.

A film crew from American TV news channel PBS Newshour visited as part of a comprehensive report on the challenges facing Britain's heritage railways as a result of the war in Ukraine.

The [final broadcast](#) devoted a considerable part of the report to the Bluebell Railway with filming at Sheffield Park and Horsted Keynes as well as on board the train and with the footplate crew.

There were plenty of shots of 'Fenchurch' and mention that Horsted Keynes had been used as "Downton" station in the Downton Abbey TV series.

Interviewees included chairman Paul Churchman who spoke about appealing to a wide range of visitors.

He said: "People don't want to just come for a train ride anymore. It needs to be so much more than that. You need to have the added value to the day out in the visitor experience."

Sheffield Park station foreman Patricia Beale highlighted the long-standing interest in steam engines. She said: "It's something that gets in your blood. I mean, I love railways and steam engines, the smell and just the general ambiance. Steam engines are living creatures, or they appear to be living creatures. They breathe."

Paul also had the final words of the report with his plea for people to visit to help heritage railways survive. "Come here, spend your money, help us survive. Enjoy the experience we have. It is unique."

The [full report is on YouTube](#) and the Bluebell features at 4:45 – 7:00 and again at 7:40 – 8:00.

The Times/Sunday Times online listed '[Seven of the best places to see bluebells in the UK](#)' in a feature article.

The report said: "More than half the world's bluebells grow in the UK. In April and May each year, lakes of indigo flowers flood through the spring woodlands. Here are just a handful of the hundreds of great chances to see them, along with places nearby to eat, sleep and take cover from the April showers."

It added that a vintage train ride in rural Sussex was a great way to spot bluebells.

The full section on the Bluebell Railway read: "The woods around the Bluebell Railway overflow each spring with the flowers that gave the line its name. The rural views along this vintage train ride take in fields of sheep, the distant weald from a viaduct, and bluebells on trackside embankments.

"Walks between the line's four stations — each with the distinctive style of a different era, from late Victorian to 1960s — nearly all pass through bluebell woods. Tulips and magnolias are



blooming in the pioneering wild garden at the 16th-century Gravetye Manor, where the Michelin-starred Dining Room uses spring produce from the garden for herb salads or rhubarb soufflé.”

The vintage theme was featured in a [report by the Sussex Express](#) after a reporter visited the Railway and had a tour of what we have to offer.

The report was headlined: ‘The Bluebell Railway in Sussex: a journey back in time to the Golden Age of British rail travel’.

It noted that some railway stations in Sussex had closed then added: “Thankfully, some stations in our county are not as ‘lost’ as others thanks to the vintage rail enthusiasts at The Bluebell Railway. This wonderful network travels through 11 miles of tranquil Sussex countryside, boasting one of the UK’s best collections of working steam locomotives and carriages.”

The reporter got a flavour of what we have to offer on the approach at Sheffield Park noting “dozens of old-fashioned adverts adorning the fences”.

There was a tour of the signal box and museum. “The museum houses an incredible collection of bells, signs, model trains, clocks and various kinds of old machinery, with a well laid out, detailed history of the railway,” according to the article.

The overall impression created was: “one great thing about the Bluebell Railway is that its history is not static”.

As a follow-up to the PBS Newshour report, Paul Churchman received an email from a viewer in Ohio who wanted to know where he got his jacket from!

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Seven of the best places to see bluebells in the UK

One of Earth's great wildflower shows is coming soon to a woodland near you

A vintage train ride in rural Sussex is a great way to spot bluebells

4. Bluebell Railway, Sussex

The woods around the Bluebell Railway overflow each spring with the flowers that gave the line its name. The rural views along this vintage train ride take in fields of sheep, the distant weald from a viaduct, and bluebells on trackside embankments. Walks between the line's four stations – each with the distinctive style of a different era, from late Victorian to 1960s – nearly all pass through bluebell woods. Tulips and magnolias are blooming in the pioneering wild garden at the 16th-century Gravetye Manor, where the Michelin-starred Dining Room uses spring produce from the garden for herb salads or rhubarb soufflé.

SussexWorld

The Bluebell Railway in Sussex: a journey back in time to the Golden Age of British rail travel

In our modern stressful ‘age of the motorcar’ it can be sad to think about all the beautiful old railways that were lost to time and progress during the 20th century.

The Bluebell Railway has one of the best collections of vintage steam locomotives and carriages around

Thankfully, some stations in our county are not as ‘lost’ as others thanks to the vintage rail enthusiasts at The **Bluebell Railway**. This wonderful network travels through 11 miles of tranquil Sussex countryside, boasting one of the UK’s best collections of working steam locomotives and carriages.

News in Brief

ROAD MEETS RAIL: 20 - 21 MAY 2023

Road and rail-based steam, goods trains in operation, with shunting demonstrations, and demonstrations of goods loading and unloading.

[Timetable](#) – full [Event Details](#) and [advance booking](#).

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.

See how road building, wood sawing, timber haulage and thrashing were carried out in the early 1900s. Watch as steam wagons and pantechinons arrive with goods to be unloaded for onward rail transport and larger loads are craned into wagons. Experience vintage fairground rides, enjoy an ice cream and watch miniature steam displays in the paddock, with a fabulous view of the passenger trains passing by.

On the Saturday evening: live music, food and drink at Horsted Keynes. Everyone is welcome to this event so come along, wind down and enjoy the evening with us.

BRPS AGM REMINDER

By Gavin Bennett, BRPS Secretary

A reminder that the Society AGM is being held on Saturday 3 June as part of Members Day. The

AGM will start at 2pm, in a marquee at Horsted Keynes Station but will be open for signing in at 1pm. If you go to Burgess Hill out of habit, you will be in the wrong place! AGM documents and proxy voting forms will be on the [Society web pages](#) in about two weeks as well as through the post. *[See also page 3 – Ed]*

ANNUAL CRICKET MATCH

By Alex Widdowson

If you travel on the Bluebell Railway regularly you would have seen the Scaynes Hill Cricket Club ground on the west side at the top of Freshfield Bank. Well, for the past five years there has been an annual tradition of a Bluebell XI playing against Scaynes Hill CC! It is again making a return this year and we are looking for new faces who have cricket experience past or present to come have a go and play for our railway team on Sunday 13 August 2023. Time TBC

If you are interested then drop an email to alexwiddowson1@gmail.com to put your name down and we can hope for our first victory.

C&W UPDATE

Photos by David Chappell

Two photos below from David Chapell, showing progress in the paint shop as of 7 May on Pullman Car No. 54 and Mark 1 RMB No. S1818.



Education on the Home Front

Thanks to Bluebell Railway education guide Jonathan Pettman, who forwarded this article from 14-year-old Camron Lindley, who visited the Railway in April on a Home Education Group visit

“ Today I attended the Bluebell Railway evacuee event, we were invited to attend in dress up and it helped get a real feel for how the children would have felt on the day.

I found the day both educational and fun.

We started out with the steam train ride to the end of the line and then stopped for lunch.

The staff were fantastic and answered questions we had along the way.

My personal highlights were WW2 airplane bingo, and we an unexpected surprise of an air raid siren event.

There was even a real evacuee there, who I had the utmost respect for. He took time out of his day to tell us about how he felt being an evacuee.

It was an unexpected treat to hear him tell his story of what they had to go through on the first few nights of being evacuated.

In conclusion I found my day informative and an absolute blast.

It's made me want to commit my time to the steam line when I'm old enough after seeing the dedication of the volunteers and employees who work at the stations and on the line.

Thank you for having Sussex home educators for the day we are very grateful for the energy and efforts that went into planning our day. ”



Horsted Keynes Carriage Shop Donates £1.5k

By Chris Wilson, Horsted Keynes Carriage Shop

The Carriage Shop volunteers were delighted to be able to make two donations on Saturday 22 April during the Branch Line weekend.

£1,000 has been donated to the Bluebell Railway Goods Division group who are doing fantastic work with the goods stock on the railway.

We have also been able to donate £500 to the Horsted Keynes station fund. This has been raised through sales in the Kiosk on platform 4. The recently reopened Kiosk is a joint venture between the station staff and Carriage Shop and is open everyday trains stop at Horsted Keynes. Already on sale in the Kiosk are specially commissioned Horsted Keynes themed souvenirs which will be joined by others that are currently in production.

Following these donations we have donated a total of £5,000 in 2023 to Bluebell Railway projects.

The Carriage Shop is on platform 1 at Horsted Keynes station and sells second-hand books, models, DVDs, photographs, bound magazines, jigsaw puzzles and other railway and transport collectibles.

We welcome donations of any of the items listed above which can be brought in on any day we are open. To contact us regarding a donation of items please email:

bluebellrailwaycarriageshop@gmail.com

For all the latest news and opening times please visit our Facebook page:

[facebook.com/BluebellRailwayCarriageShop](https://www.facebook.com/BluebellRailwayCarriageShop)



Above:

Laurie Anderson and Matthew Lander, Bluebell Railway Goods Division leadership team. For more information on this group visit: www.bluebell-railway.co.uk/bluebell/wagon/index.html

Below:

Clive Cutbill And Alan Dean, Horsted Keynes station volunteers.



Progress on Thumper 1305

Words and photos by Ben Wetherall, Diesel Traction Engineering Co-ordinator

Another busy month for the gang with Simon at the helm, the continued stripping of the motor coach driver's side saloon is almost all now done bar ceiling panels. This included the discovery of two hatches under the seats (10 gold stars and a big pat on the back for anyone who can guess correctly what they are for!)

The engine room has been stripped of all the fire extinguishing system pipework, which is in the process of being stripped back to bare metal and repainted by Noah and Alfie (becoming known as "the youth"!)

and CO2 bottles which require fully inspecting, pressure testing, recertifying, and refilling offsite by approved suppliers to the industry.

Whilst all this is out the way, a start has been made cleaning the treated aluminium skin of the engine room interior which has many years of grime on it but happily is coming up very nicely.

Wiring to the main terminal bar in the engine room is also being checked and any wires with defects of any level are being marked up for renewal. We are aiming for long and reliable service from 1305 so will be rightly attending to anything that may compromise this before she is released to traffic.

A start has been made by Terry and Rich on the grubby but much needed task of removing the decades' worth of sandite and brake dust from the underframe. (Sandite is a sand based paste applied to the running rails in leaf fall season to aid with traction on the big railway. Having done its job it gets flung up by the wheels and sets solid wherever it may land though!)

This coating is a mixed blessing as although it is a pain to remove, being well adhered, dusty and messy, it is a fantastic preservative for the metalwork it's adhered to.

Other tasks completed have been making new wooden spacers for underneath the handbrake column, the creation of a donations box thanks to



Tim Baker who found us a spare one that needed a little work doing to it, the Grainger family for making it ready for use and the horn valve changing project being completed by Alfie and Mike.

It is currently planned for 1305 to be in Platform 1 at Horsted Keynes for Members' Day on 3 June and for the whole of Bluebell on Parade where it

will be open for visitors to come on in and see what we are up to.

We also plan to have one of the new nameplates on display, so be sure to pop by and say hello!

As well as this, Neil Bird and his 5 inch gauge miniature Network South East train will be up at Kingscote giving rides for a small fee at Bluebell on Parade.

HOW TO HELP

As always if you would like to join the gang and help us get 1305 back to passenger carrying order then contact Ben.wetherall@bluebell-railway.com, follow the gang's progress on Facebook at [1305 Oxted Thumper Gang](#) or on Instagram [@1305s_thumpstagram](#). Or if you would like to donate to the only Bluebell Railway-owned ex BR diesel traction, then there is an option in the drop-down menu for 1305 in the [Bluebell Railway Trust's web page](#). Please make sure you add gift aid too to maximise your donation.

Many thanks and we hope to see you soon!



A Day in the Life of ... a Golden Arrow Pullman Steward Part 2

By James Young, Golden Arrow steward

The Golden Arrow dining trains are one of the most popular services with customers. The chance to enjoy a meal as a steam train pulls you through the lovely countryside appeals to people of all ages.

But behind the scenes a dedicated team of paid catering staff work wonders to provide a memorable occasion for passengers.

So what's involved in being a Golden Arrow steward? In this two-part series, James Young provides a detailed account of a typical shift and answers the most frequently asked question from customers.

In Part 1 (in the March issue of The Bluebell Times), he looked at the preparations before the passengers arrive and the first leg of the journey. We pick up the story with the train back at Sheffield Park station after the first round trip up the line to East Grinstead and back.

With the train back in Sheffield Park, there will be a flurry of activity with the team split up, with some preparing the tables for dessert service while others help the chefs take all of the remaining food and support equipment back into the Bessemer Arms kitchen, and some take off any dirty glasses so they can be washed. The Wine Waiter will be restocking the bars on the train and emptying the empty bottle bin crates.

The Dessert Team Leader will have taken over running service from the Train Manager as soon as the last mains course food is served as they will now be spending their time writing up all of the drinks bills for each table. Once everything has been taken off the train including all mains plates and cutlery, desserts and cheese and biscuits will be brought on and stored in the fridge in Fingall along with milk and cream for the tea and coffee. All of the above takes place in quite a short period of time as, depending on the timetable in operation, the train may well only be at Sheffield Park for 25 minutes before departing on the second journey.

OFF WE GO AGAIN

With everything loaded on for the second trip, dessert service can begin which is led by the Dessert Team Leader following the same service pattern as for all previous courses.

Desserts are served from salvers either already plated or silver served with serving cutlery. Usually, five or six stewards will be involved in serving desserts along with another steward serving pouring cream and possibly custard depending on the dessert menu. Another steward will be taking out cheese and biscuits where passengers have ordered this instead of the dessert. At the same time, the Wine Waiter will be going through the train serving drinks for the final part of passengers' journeys with the aim to have completed all drinks by the time Horsted Keynes is arrived (the second trip is usually only as far as Horsted Keynes).

Again, due to the time serving all three carriages, usually it is the case that immediately after finishing serving desserts in Fingall, passengers in Sapphire have finished eating and so dessert plates can be cleared, working in teams of two clearing onto the large trays.

Once cleared, the same stewards will take down coffee and tea cups, sugars and mints for each table. By the time this is all completed in Sapphire, the same exercises can take place in Christine then Fingall. While this is all going on, the Dessert Team Leader will be making up the cafetieres for the coffee and pots for the tea and also directing stewards to take out the cheese and biscuits ordered as an additional course by any passengers.



Depending on the number of stewards on board, it may well be that while dessert service is taking place, any washed starter and mains cutlery brought on while at Sheffield Park can be polished and put away. The Train Manager will have written up all of the drinks bills by now and it is the job of the Wine Waiter to take them out to each table.

Two rounds of tea and coffee will be served to finish off the journey with one served while at Horsted Keynes and the second just after departure which will involve most of the stewards taking either a cafetiere and cream jug or a tea pot and milk jug, serving each passenger in turn. While this service is going on, the Wine Waiter will collect all drinks bills and process any credit card payments (yes, after a number of years we now have credit card machines that work anywhere along the line and you don't need to stand there waving the machine in the air hoping to get enough Wi-Fi signal for the payment to go through!).

With the second round of coffee and tea completed, it will be a matter of stewards pairing up with again the large trays to collect finished-with coffee and tea cups, any remaining dessert plates or cheese and biscuit slates and plates. If there is time before the train arrives back at Sheffield Park, any remaining glasses and empty bottles will be collected from tables.

END OF THE JOURNEY

As the train pulls into Sheffield Park station, those stewards who were on doors when passengers boarded will make their way to those same doors once again to then see each passenger off the train.

Once all of the passengers are off, it usually means that the Operations Department will want the train shunted back into the Carriage Shed (fortunately if it is a Friday or Saturday evening it stays in the platform and no-one is breathing down your neck to get the train moved), there will be a quick flurry of activity to take anything off the

train that needs to be returned to the Bessemer Arms, bring on clean laundry ready to re-lay the train, empty bottles taken off and deposited in the recycling bins, any additional bar stock brought on and any clean glasses returned to the train.

ON THE FINAL STRETCH

Stewards will have been allocated jobs for the end of shift including stripping and re-laying each of the carriages, tidying the BGZ (the six-wheeled brake guard's van that provides pantry and scullery facilities) and washing and polishing all of the glasses. Usually, teams of two will work in each carriage, one or two stewards will tidy the BGZ which involves polishing all of the washed cutlery and putting away all spare crockery and two to three stewards on glasses. The Wine Waiter will clean down all of the three bars, restock them and transfer the wines to the fridge in the BGZ. The Dessert Team Leader will clean down the kitchen in Fingall.

Re-laying the train is where the competitive nature of some comes to the fore as everyone wants to be the first to lay up their carriage and so there tends to be a mass scramble for crockery, cutlery and glasses with the pressure put on the Kitchen Porters to finish washing any of the dessert service and on the stewards washing glasses to finish doing the table glasses. However, you usually find that everyone mucks in to get the job done so an early finish is achieved.

Once the train has been laid up, it is a matter of taking back to the Bessemer Arms any bags of dirty laundry, bags of rubbish and any remaining items that we don't want left on the train and then clocking out. This then just leaves someone to shut the blinds, lock the doors and turn off the carriage lights to end another shift on the Golden Arrow Pullman.

STEP TO IT!

Typing this article, and I expect many of you reading this, will get the impression that working on the Golden Arrow Pullman is a never-ending cycle of either serving or clearing. There are times when it does feel that way but there are breaks, you just have to grab them when the opportunity arises.

I wrote before of not needing to go to the gym to tone your muscles. Well, working on the train can also help with your step count as a while back someone measured the number of steps they took during a shift – it equated to five kilometres!

Working on the Golden Arrow is enjoyable, rewarding and at times challenging for so many reasons including getting to serve fine food and drink to passengers, having the opportunity to talk to passengers about the Railway, the Pullman train and the other services the Railway operates, being part of the experience recreating yesteryear train travel as it was in the 1930s, learning new skills such as silver service and, above all, working with a great team of people.

For me, having been involved in the Railway for over thirty years and with the Wealden Rambler Afternoon Tea service since it started fifteen years ago, working on the Golden Arrow was the obvious next step and it is gratifying when you meet passengers who remember you from the last time they travelled on the train a number of years ago.

And one final point to mention is that the most common question from passengers is: 'have you ever dropped anything?'

This is always asked while you are in the middle of food service! The answer is always 'yes'.

Everyone who has worked on the train will have experiences when something has dropped off a plate, salver or from serving cutlery on to the table or floor – or worse, a passenger's lap. It comes with the territory of serving food on a moving train. My 'claim to fame' is managing to drop a broad bean into a plc Director's champagne flute with it ending up sticking out the top of the glass!

GET INVOLVED

If, after reading this article, you are inspired to work on the Golden Arrow Pullman as a steward, then please contact either catering manager Megan Laughlin at Megan.Laughlin@Bluebell-Railway.com or deputy catering manager Sarah Vigar at Sarah.Vigar@Bluebell-Railway.com for more details.

New Additions to the Museum Website

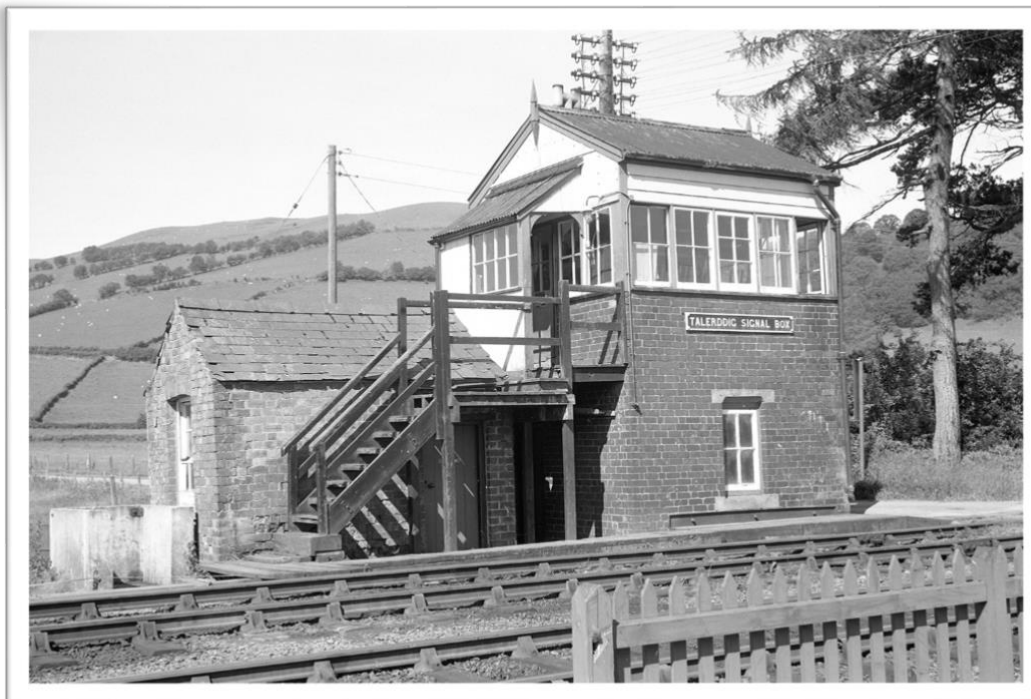
By Chris Wilson, Bluebell Railway archive volunteer

This month we have added another 161 images to the Bluebell Railway Museum website bringing the total now available to 19,811. This batch contains photographs of stations and signal box locations beginning with the letters 'T', 'U' and 'V' all taken by the late John Scrace.

Every photograph sale directly benefits the Photograph Archive giving us much needed funds to invest in conservation and storage materials.



Above: Tunbridge Wells West station site, including Goods Shed and rolling stock on 24 May 1958. John Scrace [083424]



Left: Talerddig Signal Box on 2 July 1977. John Scrace [083467]

VIEWING AND ORDERING

To view and order go to www.bluebell-railway-museum.co.uk and click on the Archive tab. There are various searching methods, including by locomotive number or class and location. The content key search allows you to see all the images of a particular type, for example, all the images taken of Fenchurch. Use the New key to see all the latest images including those mentioned and shown here and the Nearly New key to see what we added last month.

On This Day, 12 May

By Tony Hillman, assistant museum curator

Three pictures from the Bluebell Photographic Archive taken on 12 May. Thanks to John Creed, Martin Elms, Richard Peirce, Chris Sutton, Roger Merry-Price and Chris Wilson for finding the pictures and providing the notes.

Photo: John J Smith [40749]



From 27 November 1949 until 5 June 1950 the line between St Leonards (West Marina), West St Leonards and St Leonards (Warrior Square) was completely closed to enable major engineering work to take place in Bopeep Tunnel. Trains terminated at the former two places together with Hastings, but main line trains from the Tonbridge direction were diverted to Bexhill West.

On Friday 12 May 1950 the 5.6pm from Cannon Street arrives at Bexhill West behind Schools Class 4-4-0 30902 "Wellington", still looking smart in lined black livery after a recent visit to Eastleigh Works. 30902 was allocated to St Leonards Shed and was operating their Duty 402. Most London – Hastings duties were worked by the Schools class and shared between St Leonards (74E) and Bricklayers Arms (73B) Sheds. In the middle

of a motley rake of coaches can be seen one in Pullman livery. This was one of six 'narrow' Pullmans built for the Hastings Line. Withdrawn during WW2 only 3 returned to the line, now classified as Pullman Refreshment Cars.

The line between Crowhurst and Bexhill West, with an intermediate station at Sidley was opened on 1 June 1902. A lavish terminus was provided at Bexhill West in anticipation of a volume of traffic that never materialised, controlled by a large signal box of 123 levers (No1) at the approaches to the station and a smaller one of 22 levers by the buffer stops. The usually ample accommodation was severely stretched during the blockade. In normal circumstances the service was provided by a 2 coach Push/Pull set and later by a 2-car DEMU, prior to closure on 15 June 1964.



Saturday 12 May 1951 and LBSCR Class 11X 4-4-2T No. 2002 is seen leaving Heathfield tunnel on the 'Cuckoo' line between Polegate and Eridge. The locomotive is hauling the 4.39 pm Eastbourne to Tunbridge Wells West, part of Duty No. 655. Interestingly that duty was rostered for a LMS designed (but Brighton built) Fairburn 2-6-4T but presumably the locomotive was not available so the 11X tank was substituted. The rolling stock is the usual SECR Birdcage stock as was customary on the line in those days before Maunsell stock was cascaded from main line service.

No. 2002 (then numbered No. 2) was in the second batch of ten Class 11 tanks ordered in February 1907. Designed by Douglas Earle Marsh it was built at Brighton Works entering traffic in July 1907 and initially allocated to Battersea shed. It has to be said that the 11 locomotives, along with the 12 and 14 tanks were regarded as failures, unlike the 13 class whose performance was regarded as excellent.

Following grouping in 1923 the class of twenty 11s were of little real use on the Central Section of the Southern Railway and thought was given to their mass withdrawal. However, following a suggestion by the Brighton Works Manager, Richard Maunsell, the SR's Chief Mechanical Engineer, decided to fit the class with larger boilers from the LBSCR B4 4-4-0 class, the boilers being surplus following conversion of the B4s to B4Xs which entailed them being fitted with new boilers. This conversion, spread over seven years, gave the SR a useful locomotive, eighteen of which survived to be taken into BR ownership in 1948.

No. 2002, although allocated the number 32002, never carried it. After storage at Bognor shed in 1950, alongside uncompleted Leader class Nos. 36002 and 36003, it was returned to service. Withdrawn as the last survivor of the class in July 1951, with an estimated mileage of 936,727, it was scrapped at Eastleigh Works a few months later.

Photo: John J Smith [41401]



This photograph of Cannon Street, taken on the evening of Monday 12 May 1958, features the train shed roof, signal box and steam traction; it captures an image of the station that would be gone forever within a few years.

The dismantling of the remains of the train shed roof, which had already begun in early 1958, would be completed within 12 months. Part of the glass roof had already been removed before World War II as a precaution but ironically had been damaged when the building it was being stored in was itself bombed. The station was also hit several times in the London Blitz by incendiary devices and by a high explosive bomb.

Meanwhile, the signal box that can be seen beside the western tower was a temporary construction that used the base of the 1926-built box, much of which had been lost in a fire in April the previous year. By May 1958 it had already surrendered its function to a new power box on the south side of the Thames.

In the evening sunshine, two locomotive hauled trains can be seen on the bridge. Just leaving, on the 5.40pm Cannon Street to Ramsgate via Chatham is Bricklayers Arm allocated Modified Bulleid Pacific 34001 Exeter.

Waiting to leave is Hither Green allocated King Arthur 30796 Sir Dodinas le Savage, on the 5.47pm to Dover Priory. Hither Green was predominantly a freight engine depot, and this service was its only express passenger duty. As a result, the engine, at this time usually 30796, was kept in excellent external condition as can be seen in the photograph, note in particular the painted smokebox door hinges. By June 1959 regular booked steam services from Cannon Street had ceased.

Photo: Colin Hogg [48411]

Job Vacancies

ROLLING STOCK DIRECTOR

As a plc Board member, the Rolling Stock Director has professional and technical responsibility for the company's rolling stock fleet and for the strategic direction of the department.

The Rolling Stock Director delegates day to day management of the fleet to the C&W Works Manager, through the Chief Operating Officer.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate competences to meet the professional requirements of the post.

COMMERCIAL & RETAIL DIRECTOR

The successful applicant will be responsible for providing the strategic direction for the commercial, marketing and retail to expand the commercial business development particularly in the areas of event management, business, and commercial planning as the means to win new business, to explore new avenues of activity and to seek out opportunities to help the Bluebell PLC develop and grow.

The Commercial & Retail Director delegates day to day management of the department to the Chief Operating Officer.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate competences to meet the professional requirements of the post.

SAFETY AND ASSURANCE DIRECTOR

As a plc Board member, the Safety and Assurance Director has professional responsibility for ensuring implementation of the requirements of the safety management system across the railway and for the strategic direction of the department.

A key function of the role is to Chair the Bluebell operating and safety review group and also to act as lead contact with regulatory authorities.

The Safety Director delegates day-to-day management of the department to the Safety Manager.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate technical competences to meet the professional requirements of the post.

CDM REGULATIONS COMPLIANCE MANAGER (VOLUNTARY POST)

The successful applicant will be responsible for undertaking the role of Principal Designer and Principal Contractor on various projects across the railway.

It is essential that the post holder has current construction industry experience under the CDM Regulations 2015 and railway industry knowledge is preferable.

This post would suit someone planning on leaving the construction industry, but keen to still be involved in construction project on a part time or ad hoc basis.

This is a volunteer post that carries no remuneration or specific hours of duty. However, the successful applicant will require sufficient time and flexibility to effectively undertake this role and have the appropriate competences to meet the professional requirements of the post.

HOW TO APPLY



If you believe you have the right qualifications and experience for any of these roles, please send your CV to lisa.boyle@bluebell-railway.com



Photo: Dave Bowles

The Bluebell Times

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or features, contact:*

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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.

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