



'Wightwick Hall' at Hazelden Farm, 7 August. Photo: Nick Gillam

The Bluebell Times

A Newsletter for Bluebell Railway Members, Staff and Supporters

August 2023

IN THIS ISSUE

If this issue of *The Bluebell Times* is noticeably a bit rougher round the edges than normal, then the reason is that it has been compiled while the editor is away on holiday. Of course, in today's hyper-connected world, you are never completely away from information, and from social media and internal communications alike, life at the railway continues at high pace. The strategy of an ever-changing selection of small family-focused events seems to be paying off, but such events still require plenty of organising – and *Flying Scotsman* is yet to come, and the winter events (Santa and SteamLights) have already gone on sale. When the time comes, we should not begrudge those charged with getting passengers to the Railway their own period of downtime to recharge the batteries!

One returning event from previous years is the return of "[Autumn Tints](#)" on selected days in late September and October. The combination of having a small engine again – *Fenchurch* – and the return to traffic of the LNWR Observation Car 1503 means there is once again the opportunity to run this cost-effective service at times we may otherwise be quiet. It may seem a little perverse to be looking ahead to autumn when -finally this summer – the sun is shining, but at the right times, autumn can rival the spring for presenting the countryside around our Railway in the best light.

A mention must be given here to the fantastic job done by the volunteer lineside clearance teams, who do so much to keep the line looking presentable and avoid the feeling of running through a "green tunnel". This doesn't happen without regular work of course – if you'd like to assist, and get a regular outdoor workout in the process – then why not consider [joining them as a volunteer?](#)

Tom James, Editor

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Checking in with the Chair

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

It's that's time again! Well, it's been a full-on month since my last missive. We are well into the school holidays and revenue is holding up well, which is interesting as some other railways around us have seen numbers fall and have reduced the number of days they are running. Thankfully the opposite in our case.

We have also put on sale tickets for [Santa Specials](#) and [Steamlights](#) and the initial response has been amazing – well over £200k of advance sales in two weeks. Thank you to everyone in the commercial team who put a lot of hard sweat and tears getting these up on the website. Let's hope that we continue at this rate, which certainly looks like we will.

In other news it has been a busy time in all departments with daily running in full swing and the challenges of keeping the railway running and doing the routine maintenance as well as the usual unexpected things! Thank you to everyone for the commitment and effort that you give the railway.

So far this year we have come a long way and achieved so much, which is truly amazing given where we were in January. However, we must not be complacent as some of our fellow heritage railways are seeing it can change overnight.

As we approach the end of the August we start coming into the period when we are at our busiest, we have [Flying Scotsman](#), [Beer Festival](#) and [Giants of Steam](#) and then the very comprehensive Christmas programme. There are also a number of smaller events across other weekends which will also be popular and profitable for us. This is the time of year we make money (we hope!).

Finally, as I am sure many if you have heard Flying Scotsman is out of traffic having its cylinders relined. I have been assured that as long as all goes to plan this engine will still visit us, if this changes I will communicate with you all on this.

Paul

Above: No. 73082 'Camelot' climbing Freshfield bank with a 12.30pm Special Wealden Rambler from Sheffield Park on 7 August – the 63rd anniversary of opening day. Photo: Peter Edwards



Jewel in the Crown – July 2023

Words by Bob Darvill, Jewel in the Crown project manager. Photos by Mark Padgham

Many elements of this season's work have begun to come together during July. The recent completion of the zinc and glass roof means work can continue shaded from the sun and dry from summer rain. We have regained the ability to move about the workplace unobstructed by temporary access and support structures. It is good to see familiar fixtures and features reappear too. The metal lampshades are back looking fine in their authentic green. Some of the original signage is also returned. Platform 5 remains a building site but visitors may now look back from platform 3 to admire and enjoy a view of the station uncluttered by scaffolding.

As things begin to come back together, this feels like watershed moment but there is still much to do. The platform edge paving is back, reset, firm and solidly supported but this needs to wait longer before passengers descend onto it from the next stopping train. There remains finishing coats of paint to apply to many of the more distinctive features of the platform. The S&T teams have made progress, but there is more cabling and wiring to be discreetly routed. We still need to reopen the subway and restore the many advertising signs to its walls. The single biggest remaining job will be to restore the paved surfaces along the whole platform length. This will require some significant preparation before it is ready for the paver. Finally there will be the fixtures to bring back such as the station clock. No doubt that will tell us whether or not we have actually finished on time!

Not all the work this summer has been on platform 5. The Friends and volunteers have also been busy with paint and brushes. The work continues, but new paint on the buildings of the other platforms is making a positive impact on way the station looks this summer.



The Q Definitely Still Needs You!

By Steve Pilcher, Maunsell Locomotive Society treasurer [Photos courtesy of Leaky Finders](#)

Maunsell Q class No. 541 is undergoing a 'Priority Overhaul'. Can you help raise funds to complete the work?

As mentioned in July's issue of *The Bluebell Times*, the [Bluebell Railway Trust](#) is helping finance the overhaul of the locomotive, which arrived safely at Leaky Finders' premises in Devon on 6 July (see first photo below). The contractors have made a good start on stripping down the locomotive and, at the time of writing this report, the boiler was due to be lifted out of the frames to enable work to commence on its overhaul. *[Now lifted – see second photo. Ed.]*

The tender remains at Sheffield Park and will require a new tender tank. Contact has been made with a number of companies/organisations which are experienced in large-scale fabrication work of this nature, with a view to obtaining quotations. Some positive responses have been received.

In due course it is hoped that a start can be made on getting the old tender tank 'freed up' to enable it to be lifted off. Attention will then turn to working on cleaning the frames, etc. However space in the yard in front of the workshop is at a premium, and we may need to await for Flying Scotsman to have completed its visit before a serious start can be made with this work.

The Maunsell Locomotive Society has agreed to try and raise £40,000 towards the cost of

overhauling the tender and providing a new tender tank. Within six weeks of announcing this appeal close to 25% of our target has been raised – this is a great start, but of course more is needed.

The Q is an ideal size and economical loco for hauling any and all types of train operated on Bluebell. It fits in well with the 'Southern' image, and it did actually operate in the vicinity. So... if you would like to prevent Bluebell having to hire in locos to maintain services, please consider assisting with this worthwhile project.

Online payments to the appeal can be made by clicking the [DONATE button on the Bluebell website](#) and following the online payment instructions. Select "Q 541 Overhaul" in the drop-down box.

Otherwise, for those who prefer to use cheques, please send a cheque, made payable to the 'Bluebell Railway Trust' (and a Gift Aid Form – if appropriate – downloaded from the Bluebell Railway website) to the Bluebell Railway Trust, Sheffield Park Station, Uckfield TN22 3QL. Please add a note to say it is for the 541 Overhaul Appeal.

And finally, a warm 'thank you' to all concerned who have generously contributed thus far. We are particularly mindful of how people's budgets are stretched at this point in time.



Progress on 84030

Words and photos by Chris Wren

It started with a heatwave where the paint on Harry's brush dried before he could get it on the item to be painted, followed by thunderstorms, high winds and a hosepipe ban. It must be an English summer!

But things are happening. The side tanks for 84030 had recently been completed by our colleagues at the 4253 Loco Group based at the K&ESR and on the 18 July, 84030 was dragged out into the sunshine by the workshop staff led by Andy Sabin and Ben Harvey from its polytunnel home to an area in front that had been cleared in readiness for the arrival of the side tanks. The frame was positioned as far forward as possible for ease of access.

To transport the tanks a HIAB lorry capable of lifting 5 tonnes with a 15-metre reach was arranged, the plan being for the tanks to be lifted straight onto the frame and with the HIAB pulled up on the tramway adjacent to the frame it was well within its reach.

After many months of design investigations, design group meetings, and visits to the 4253 Loco Group it was to Brian's and my relief that both tanks were easily positioned in their correct position on the frame and will require very minor final adjustment. A particular area of concern was the cutout in the lefthand side tank to

accommodate the reversing gear, but it fitted like a glove.

The success of the tanks was due to the great effort by Nick Wren and Vic Short in deciphering the available BR drawings to produce over 70 working drawings and the manufacturing skills of Charlie and the 4253 Loco Group.

Thanks must be given to Ben and his workshop team in the supervising and positioning of the tanks onto the frame of 84030.

Once the tanks had been secured on the frame, 84030 was pushed back into the polytunnel with the bunker area left out so that the gantry hoist can be raised allowing the top panels to be lifted into position.

Work has continued in other areas with Peter and Alan making handles and locking parts for the cupboards forming part of the cab side bunker panel.

Harry has been keeping up with the painting of bunker panels now that all required panels have been profiled and delivered.

Brian, Vic, Tony and myself have been making progress on building the bunker which is proving to be a slow and at times a little awkward.



Nick and Vic have now turned their attention to the cab, this again will take some deciphering before a set of manufacturing drawings can be produced.

Our forward plan is to have the bunker, if not complete, not far off by the end of this year and to get the cab panels out for profiling.

We still await the boiler to be transferred to Sheffield Park from its current home on a flat wagon at Horsted Keynes. Once at the Park work can get underway needle gunning and painting the barrel and stopping any further deterioration.



GET INVOLVED

The project can only progress by providing a stream of income, one way is by a donation(s). Please see our [web page on the Bluebell Railway Web site](#).

If you know anyone interested in joining the working group especially if they have an engineering skill, please ask them to contact Chris Wren at ccwren@gmail.com

Thumper 1305

Words and photos by Ben Wetherall, 1305 Oxted Gang Project Leader

A lot has been going on with 1305 this month. As mentioned in the previous issue of *The Bluebell Times* we had another Induction with over 10 attending. This then gave us the day when we had the most volunteers on site and working since the gang started as almost all new inductees popped over to 1305 and joined the members of the gang already working on it.

We then had our few days at Sheffield Park where much was done.

We managed an engine oil and filter change, jet washed out the engine room and fan cupboards as well as clearing the radiator elements which were solid with dirt in places and clearly hadn't been



attended to since Selhurst days. The radiator bodyside grille was removed and found to need repairing. Some underframe jet washing also occurred. (See first photo on previous page).

We have also got a home! Thanks to Operations Director Neil Glaskin, on our return to Horsted Keynes we found ourselves in Hudson's Bay in the up yard. Hudson's Bay is just over 2 coaches long south of the foot crossing which allows us to split the 2 coaches of 1305 and safely work between them whilst still not being foul of the crossing. There is also room for another medium sized vehicle between the fouling point of -4 road and the north side of the foot crossing. (Top)

It also has the advantage of us being totally independent of the rest of the yard as we can clip and padlock our points making us totally safe without affecting access to any other vehicles in the yard.

The underframe of the Driving Trailer Second (DTS) continues to be stripped cleaned and painted and parts have had to be removed to continue with this. (Centre)

The brake reservoir, Audible Warning System (AWS) receiver and brackets and the AWS junction box have all been removed. We are going to have to bite the bullet and un-wire and remove the AWS equipment case from the DTS too, not only to access the underframe above to clean it up and paint it but because the case itself has a hole in it which will need rectification.

In the engine room the fan gearbox (bottom) decided to imitate a cappuccino machine whilst the engine was running on one of the midweek days the gang were onsite and spewed frothy oil all over the newly cleaned fan cupboard.

Investigation has shown that the top lip seal had failed causing the oil to be pumped out the top of the gearbox until air was drawn into the internal oil pump, this made the cappuccino froth!

Both fan gearbox driveshafts have been removed as well as the fan gearbox itself and the spares are being identified as this is being written.



Both seals will be replaced as if one has failed the other won't be far behind and the centrifugal clutch for the fan is being given a birthday at the same time.

The engine can still be run for air creation purposes but until the fan system is back up and running only idling will be allowed, no more pre-heat, higher revs, thumping for a bit.

Inside the DMBS attention is now being turned to the corrugated flooring which will be cleaned up ready for cutting out the corroded bits found and the outer couple of inches that have definitely seen better days.

We also had one of the flaking rusty ceiling lighting trays sent off to the company who grit blasted and powder coated the Wickham brake parts recently thanks to Ali Bruce's recommendation. This has returned and is looking as good as new if not better and only cost £30. We will shortly be removing and sending the other 9 from the DMBS away for the same treatment.

Other than a good clean of the panels, this will be the DMBS saloon ceiling finished.

We won't get the 18 in the DTS done until we move work into there which will likely be after the DMBS is finished or we have storage to be able to empty the DTS.

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!



Wartime Visit for Westminster Under School

By Jonathan Pettman, Education team. [Photo courtesy of Robert Raikes](#)

Following a visit by children from Westminster Under School, we received the following feedback from their teacher. A selection of comments from the children – who were 8 years old – are also included.



“ It is with heartfelt thanks that I write to express my gratitude for such an awesome day with you all. The boys were totally absorbed in their activities; they loved the steam train and were wowed by the heat of the footplate... the air raid siren, the museum trip, the billeting officers, plane spotting, evacuees – you truly gave them all a day to remember.

I have no doubt that we will be back to visit you all again.

”

The Railway Visits can tailor visits to meet specific teaching needs relating to the National Curriculum, or to provide experience of specific events, such as WWII evacuation exercises, or occasions, such as enrichment days. If you'd like to find out more, please see the [dedicated web page](#) or contact education@bluebell-railway.com

When we arrived at Sheffield Park Station we were greeted by the Bluebell Railway workers. We had an amazing day at the Bluebell Railway. We got evacuee tags, got to go on the footplate and much more.

The temperature in the cabin was around 50 C so the fireman, who has to work every day in those conditions of course needed a towel to wipe the sweat off his face. When we got out it was hot outside but it felt cold!

We had a steam train ride and stopped at East Grinstead. We stepped on the footplate with coal and 1000 degree C fire. After that I listened to Malcolm and Robert's experience of evacuation

Here comes the good and the bad we experienced being evacuees. I was luckily chosen by the kind old farmer. The other four went to the unkind, mean farmer. (I wouldn't want to be going with them).

We then had an air raid siren, when we went under the tracks and sang "It's a long way to Tipperary".

Horsted Keynes Carriage Shop £500 Donation - And Our Future Is Secured

By Chris Wilson, Horsted Keynes Carriage Shop

AUGUST DONATION

The Carriage Shop volunteers are delighted to have been able to donate a further £500 to the Horsted Keynes station fund – this donation has been raised through sales in the Kiosk on platform 4. The Kiosk is a joint venture between the station staff and Carriage Shop and is open everyday trains stop at Horsted Keynes.

Station Master Tim Baker said 'The Horsted Keynes station staff express their grateful thanks to the Carriage Shop and its team for the kind donation of £500 for the continued restoration work on the station. The regular donations to both the station and other restoration groups at Horsted Keynes is extremely important to furthering the various restoration projects. It is important to understand the company has limited resources and cannot fund some of these projects which would be lost without the support of the Carriage Shop.'

Year-to-date, the Carriage Shop has donated £8,000 to Bluebell Railway projects.



Above: David Morgan and Chris Green outside the Kiosk on Platform 4 accepting the donation for Horsted Keynes Station Fund.

OUR FUTURE IS SECURED

For some time the future of Carriage Shop has been uncertain. We knew that at some point the Carriage would need to move to permit the repair of the platform edge and there have been suggestions to make better use of platform 1 once the repairs were completed. The Carriage is also starting to show its age after being our home for nearly 30 years. So where would we go? And would the Carriage and its contents even survive a move after more than a decade in the same position?

Following a meeting with Plc and Society Chairman Paul Churchman in late July, I am pleased to say that our future is now secured for many years to come, and we will be able to continue our work selling items to raise money and support Bluebell Railway project, albeit in a different vehicle and not on platform 1.

Following Giants of Steam in October the Carriage Shop will temporarily close and the contents will be emptied. During the winter months we will then move into the Art Exhibition Van ([Gangwayed Bogie Luggage Van No. 2462](#)) located in the dock outside Carriage & Wagon which Matthew Cousins has generously allowed us to share with him. More details will follow in due course, but we are aiming to reopen the integrated Carriage and Art Shop next February for the start of the new running season.

There will be certain ranges that we will not longer be able to stock, so if you are looking for magazine back issues (all magazines currently 4 for £1) or old VHS tapes (now 5 for £1) then please visit us before we close in October. To help with the move we will be running other stock clearance promotions - all bound magazines are now half price, including volumes of the Railway Magazine, Railway World and Train Illustrated for as little as £2.50 each. Hundreds more book titles have been added to our £1 display.

We are still able to accept all donations even when we are closed.

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

The Carriage Shop is open for additional days in August including days when the Flying Scotsman is running. For all the latest news and other opening times please visit our Facebook page: [facebook.com/BluebellRailwayCarriageShop](https://www.facebook.com/BluebellRailwayCarriageShop)



Above: The Carriage Shop on Platform 1 of Horsted Keynes station



Above: Stirling O1 No. 65 climbs Freshfield Bank with a service train on 2 August.
Photo: David Cable

In the News

Photos by Prima magazine

The August issue of [Prima magazine](#) features a three-page spread about the Bluebell Railway with a special focus on the trimming team.

The magazine's editor Jo Checkley visited the Railway and spoke to the trimmers in the Heritage Skills Centre at Horsted Keynes.

The report began by referring to the "dedicated team of volunteers" who "paint, build, mend, fix and sew to recreate and restore one of the finest heritage train lines in the UK".

She noted the "skill and passion of this incredible workforce".

Trimming team leader Steve Bigg was quoted as saying: "Our work here means we are carrying on the legacy of crafts from a time gone by and teaching more and more people these important heritage skills."

Also featured was volunteer Jenney Kelly who had previously been in the magazine's craft pages. She said: "I saw working here as a chance to learn new skills in upholstery."

Step back in time

Left: Horsted Keynes has been restored to evoke a station of the mid-1920s

There are more than 600 volunteers who help out at the Bluebell Railway and all ages are welcomed.

Full steam AHEAD for a trip down memory lane

Editor Jo Checkley found a celebration of fabulous heritage crafts when she visited one of the UK's finest vintage railways...

Deep in the heart of Sussex, a dedicated team of volunteers is at work. They paint, build, mend, fix and sew to recreate and restore one of the finest heritage train lines in the UK, the Bluebell Railway. It's thanks to these incredible men and women that the Bluebell Railway operates today, bringing joy to more than 160,000 visitors each year. But what is also remarkable about these volunteers is that they are single-handedly keeping alive some of our finest crafts. When I was invited to come and have a look around, the skill and passion of this incredible workforce was evident everywhere – from the trimmers (seat upholsters) to the carpenters and carriage painters. "We have people from all walks of life who come to volunteer at the railway," says Steve Bigg, who heads the trimming team. "Our work here means we are carrying on the legacy of crafts from a time gone by and teaching more and more people these important heritage skills."

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

The Bluebell Railway forms part of the original Lewes and East Grinstead Railway in East Sussex, which was opened in 1882 'amid much festivity'. It carried passengers – and a considerable amount of goods, including milk, farm produce, coal and timber. However, part of the line was only ever single track and by March 1958, it had closed. It was only thanks to the interest of four Brighton students, who arranged for a local enthusiast and professional railwayman to chair an initial meeting in March 1959, that the Lewes & East Grinstead Preservation Society was born (later to be shortened to the name still used today: the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society). A section of the original line was bought from British Railways and the Bluebell Railway was created, opening in the summer of 1960. It was the UK's first preserved standard-gauge passenger railway.

From top: visitors can delight in seeing the authentically restored stations

Many films, including Miss Potter and 102 Dalmatians, have been filmed at the Bluebell Railway.

ALL ABOARD

The current railway line is 11 miles long and runs between East Grinstead and Sheffield Park; each of the stations has been lovingly restored to evoke different eras of the great age of steam. Sheffield Park is in the style of the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway in the late 1800s. Horsted Keynes is that of the mid-1920s. Kingscote is the British Railways period of the 1950s, along with East Grinstead, which was connected to the line in 2013 so passengers can walk from a mainline train to the Bluebell Railway. Sheffield Park station was named after the Earl of Sheffield, who asked for the station to be built close to his estate, Sheffield Park, in return for allowing the line to cross his land.

Above: trimmer Jenney Kelly helping to restore a carriage

Left: volunteer locomotive footplate crew take a break. Right: a signal box lever frame

The Bluebell Railway runs through the beautiful Sussex countryside

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New Additions to the Museum Website

By Chris Wilson, Bluebell Railway archive volunteer

This month we have added a further 877 images to the Bluebell Railway Museum website bringing the total now available to 21,429. This update contains 300 photographs from John Scrace and 577 from the camera of Joe Kent. John's images include further selection of O2's on the Isle of Wight and Bulleid Pacific locomotives. Joe's photographs date from 1948 & 1949 and contain many interesting images from the early nationalisation period, including a wide mixture of locomotive classes and liveries, Diesel locos, DMUs and Pullmans Cars.



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

Above: One of the Bluebell Railway's own P class locos here as s1178 at Brighton Shed on 8 July 1949.

Photo: Joe Kent [152820]

Left: 6-CIT Unit No. 3041 on Victoria to Ore via Eastbourne service exits Red Hill Tunnel on 10 September 1949.

Photo: Joe Kent [152987]

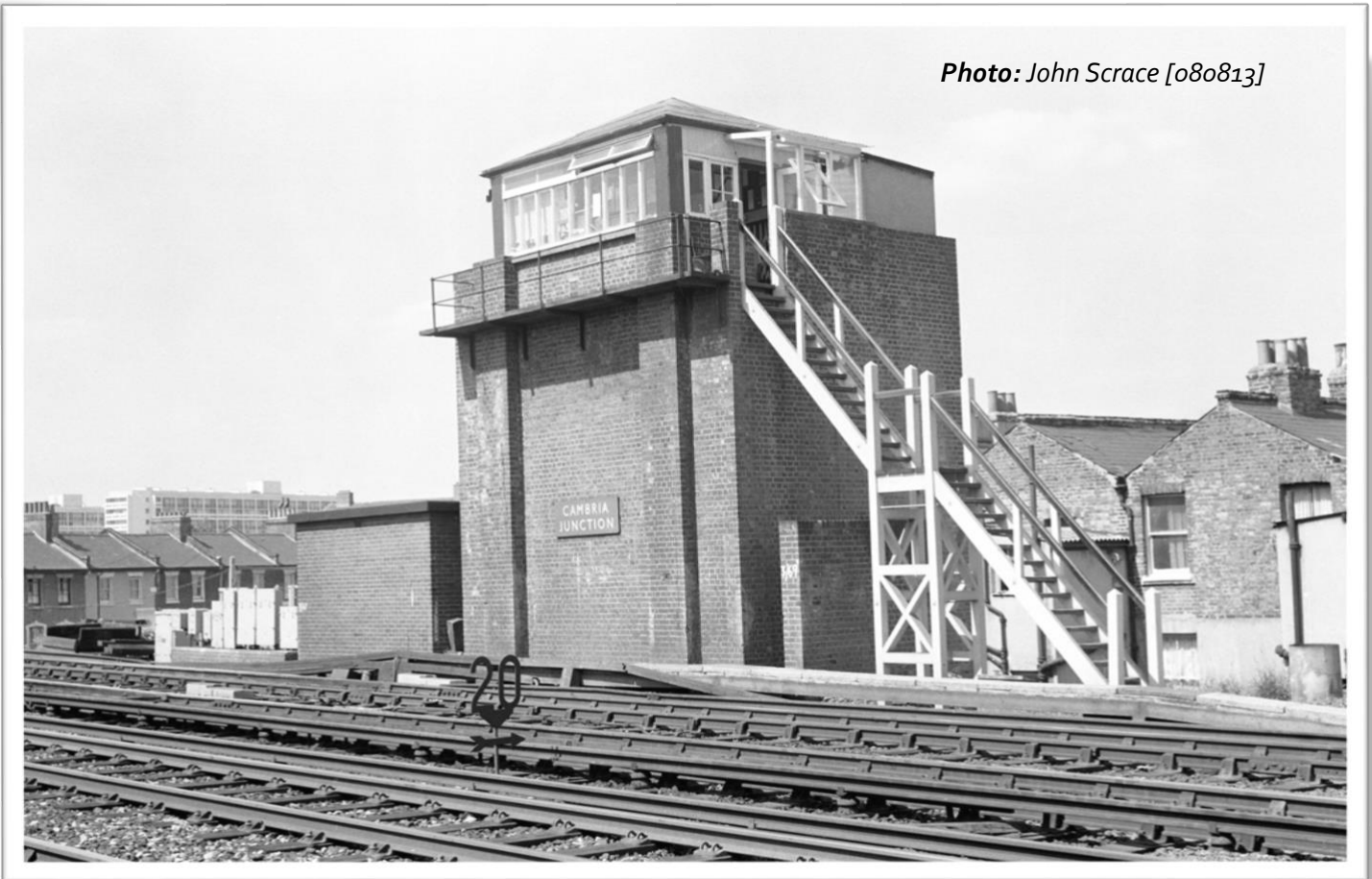
VIEWING AND ORDERING

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

On This Day, 11 August

By Tony Hillman, Deputy Curator

Three pictures from the Bluebell Photographic Archive taken on 11 August. Thanks to Martin Elms, Richard Peirce, Chris Sutton, Roger Merry-Price and Chris Wilson for finding the pictures and providing the notes.



On 11 August 1970 Cambria Junction (Jct) Signal Box was almost 100 years old. Opened in 1871, it was initially named Cambria Road Jct. after the road that passed underneath the line adjacent to the box. It was renamed plain Cambria Jct. by 1919.

The very tall box was a Saxby and Farmer Type 2a, which was being built between 1868 and 1874. It was constructed of wood, although that is not apparent from the picture as the whole structure, apart from the operating floor, was encased in brick as an "Air Raid Precaution" measure during the Second World War. It is not known why the box was so tall. Although four tracks pass the box, only the two nearest the box were controlled by it,

the other two were the South London Line that was signalled separately.

The initial lever frame was believed to be a Saxby SX186oS of 14 levers, later replaced by an LBSCR 1905 pattern one of 23 levers, spaced at 5 inches, installed in 1907. The semaphore signals and lock & block working were replaced on 8 March 1959 by colour light signals and train describers/block bells, as part of Stage 1 of the Kent Coast Electrification Scheme. The box did reach it's 100th birthday, but was closed on 7 February 1971 when the area was controlled from an NX type electronic panel installed in nearby Loughborough Junction box. Later still the whole area came under the control of Victoria Signalling Centre located at Clapham Junction.



This photograph shows Port Victoria on 11 August 1951, the station had closed just two months earlier

The original Pier station, the remains of which are visible in the background, was the terminus of a branch line from Hoo Junction, opened by the South Eastern Railway (SER) in September 1882. The original station buildings and track layout were of a very basic design.

By 1900 the pier supports had already been heavily damaged by storms and marine woodworm. The Pier station was later abandoned and replaced in 1932 by a simple wooden platform, then finally in 1948 by a concrete one, visible in the photograph on the left.

To the right can be seen the back of the Port Victoria Hotel, which survived until 1961, and the signal box, which was rebuilt in 1948 in place of the badly damaged SER box.

Shortly after opening the station had eight passenger departures a day and a daily goods to Bricklayers Arms. Traffic never developed as

expected and by 1951 there were just two services, on weekdays only.

Nevertheless, Port Victoria's isolated position afforded privacy, and it was often used by Queen Victoria when boarding the Royal Yacht, and by other dignitaries including Kaiser Wilhelm II.

Early in the First World War the area, including the Pier Station, hotel and signalbox, was severely damaged by two catastrophic explosions with heavy loss of life. An ammunition explosion on the 26 November 1914 sank HMS Bulwark and HMS Princess Irene was lost on 7 May 1915 in an accident that detonated its load of sea mines.

Pathé News made two short films (available on YouTube) of Port Victoria in [1939](#) and [1947](#). They both featured the only member of staff, Mr Stephen Hills, who served there from 1900 – 1951.

The area has now been completely redeveloped for industrial use. The only remains are the pier uprights, which can be seen at low tide.

Photo: Colin Hogg [042488]



Saturday 11 August 1956 and ex-LBSCR K 2-6-0 32339 of Brighton shed (75A) is seen near Longhedge Junction with the 5.10 pm Battersea Yard to Norwood Junction Down Yard (via Crystal Palace) freight. The train is a special, hence the initials SPL on the bottom locomotive disc.

The train is on the original LBSCR main line from Pimlico (1858-1860), subsequently Victoria, to Clapham Junction and on towards East Croydon. On 29 July 1862 the LBSCR obtained powers for a high level line from the south end of Grosvenor Bridge to Pouparts Junction, this line, now the main line from Victoria to Brighton, opened on 1 December 1867.

Longhedge Junction signal box can be seen in the distance. Opened by the LBSCR in 1890, it replaced two earlier boxes. It was built by Saxby & Farmer and was in use until 23 July 1978 after which the area was controlled from a panel in Stewarts Lane box. At one time it served routes from five different directions and had six running lines passing the box. The adjacent adjoining signal boxes were Factory Junction, Stewarts

Lane, Clapham Junction A, Pouparts Junction and Latchmere Junction. On the skyline, above the 5th wagon, is the mechanical coaler at Stewarts Lane shed.

No. 32339, one of seventeen 2-6-0s designed by L.B. Billinton, was built at Brighton Works in March 1914. After Grouping they remained confined to the Central Section being outside the loading gauge of the other two Sections. However, between July 1935 and August 1939 all the locomotives were fitted with new lower cab roofs, re-sited whistles and cut-down chimney and domes. This allowed their use on the Eastern and Western Sections although they remained allocated to Brighton line sheds. All of the class were withdrawn *en masse* in November/December 1962 following which 32339 was stored in the goods yard at Hove. It was eventually cut up at Eastleigh Works with an estimated mileage of 974,541.

Photo: John J Smith [040607]

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

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: Leaky Finders

The Bluebell Times

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Members, Staff and
Supporters*

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feedback about this issue or
suggestions for future articles
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.

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](#).

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