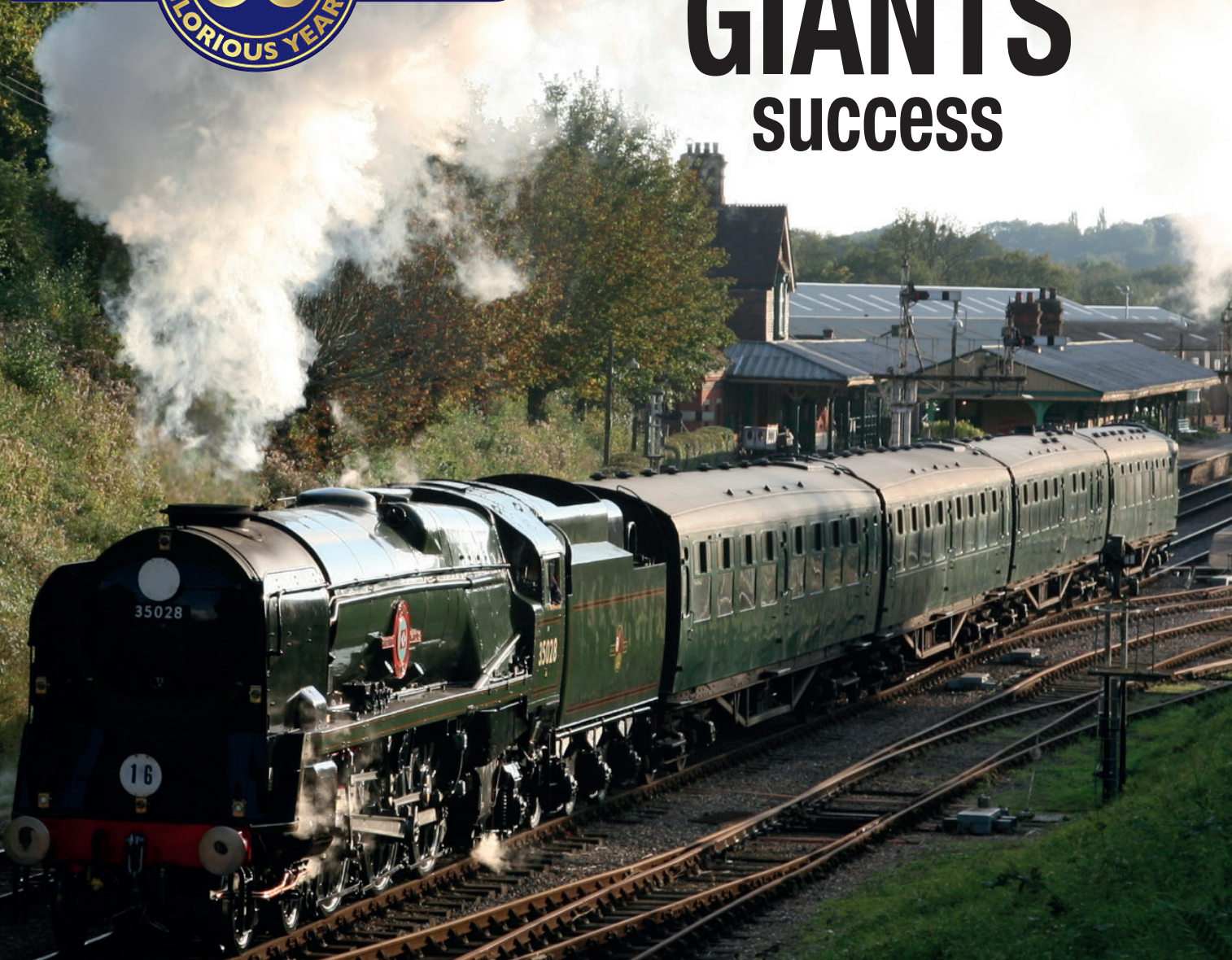




Crowds return for **GIANTS** SUCCESS



Governance Reviewed: **NEW ERA BEGINS** **FOR PRESERVATION SOCIETY**

THE END OF EAST GRINSTEAD HIGH LEVEL – IN COLOUR!



JOURNAL OF THE BLUEBELL RAILWAY



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Editor: Colin Tyson
 'Westering', 6 Kedale Road,
 Seaford, East Sussex
 BN25 2BY
 colinjtyson@hotmail.com
 Tel: 07943 021585

Editorial team: Roger Cruse,
 Paul Bromley, Roger Price
Design: Anita Waters

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Front cover: Visiting 'Giant'
 No 35028 *Clan Line* heads
 through Horsted Keynes on
 a Jon Bowers charter on 14
 October 2021.
 ANDREW STRONGITHARM

Rear cover: Sleeping Giants:
Camelot, Cheltenham and
Clan Line on shed at the end
 of 8 October 2021.
 DAVE BOWLES

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 not necessarily those of the society or
 company.

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BLUEBELL RAILWAY PLC

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 Paul Lelew
Operations Director Mike Ellis
Safety Director Martin Cresswell
Non-Executive Director
 Paul Churchman

BLUEBELL RAILWAY

Sheffield Park station, nr Uckfield,
 East Sussex TN22 3QL. Tel: 01825 720800
 Email: info@bluebell-railway.com
 www.bluebell-railway.com www.bluebell-railway.com/brps
 Filming Enquiries: Tel: 01825 720835
 www.bluebell-filming.co.uk



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Our two visitors for Giants of Steam, Nos 35028 *Clan Line* and 30925 *Cheltenham*, helped us to record the busiest weekend since before lockdowns. The pair are seen at Sheffield Park on 18 October, preparing for a Jon Bowers photo charter. DAVID CABLE

So we come to the end of another turbulent year for our Railway, disrupted by Covid. We managed to squeeze virtually a year's worth of special events into half a year and ended it on a high with Santa and Steam Lights.

None of this would have happened without our people – staff and volunteers, ensuring that things could happen. It proved a testing time for our hard-pressed people and they have all responded to the challenges magnificently. If not involved with tracklaying during our engineering shutdown then please take a well-earned rest!

This is the last *Bluebell News* to be

published by the 'old' Bluebell Railway Preservation Society set-up – the journal of the society since 1959 and getting on for 300 issues. From 1 January 2022 the BRPS becomes a Company Limited by Guarantee, the reasons are explained elsewhere in this issue. It will mean a tweak to some membership categories and how we conduct an AGM but on the face of it, members will not notice any physical differences. It's been a long time coming since the original Governance Review, not helped by Covid, but the fact we are through it all is due in no small measure to Mike Priestley, who led the sub-committee. That he should pass

away suddenly on 2 December has come as a great shock – let our new set-up become his legacy.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colin Tyson".

Colin Tyson
Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2021 has been a turbulent year for our staff and passengers alike. As I write, a new Covid variant is dominating the news. Clearly 2022 is going to be another turbulent year in which survival of the Bluebell in its current format must remain our top priority.

As a result of the pandemic our delayed 60th anniversary year turned out to be very different to the one we planned. But, due to the hard work by everyone on the Railway it has turned out to be a memorable one - with a grand finale with Santa and Steam Lights trains fully booked. My thanks go to everyone who has helped to turn a turbulent year into one of the best from our customers' point of view. New ideas implemented at speed in 2021 are a good basis for the coming year.

I believe that 2022 is probably going to be more difficult. Our

financial position will remain a concern and we will need to contain costs and increase the income from our timetabled train service. Demand for these services will probably be lower than last year because inflation will continue to rise and the money in our customers' pockets for family days out will certainly be less.

However new ideas flourish on our railway so 'catching and converting' them will be the name of the game. I am pleased to see an increase in new members again so new ideas from them are particularly welcome, indeed perhaps a 'game changer'.

My seasonal best wishes to all.

GORDON PETTITT
President, BRPS

IN BRIEF

Horsted appeal

As at 8 December, the current 'Jewel in the Crown' fundraising appeal to restore Horsted Keynes Platform 5 canopies and station house had raised 92% of the initial target. Thanks to those that have responded thus far. A reminder that match-funding for your donations from the Bluebell Railway Trust will continue until the end of January. Donate online at bluebell-railway.com/donate/

75027 on display

Standard Class 4 No 75027 was recently roaded to Goodwood for a private event for an American client. The fee for this will go towards the miniature railway project at Sheffield Park, which is awaiting much-delayed planning permission from Lewes District Council.

More beer

Enthusiasm over our first beer festival held in the summer, Adam Towler from CAMRA Brighton & South Downs Branch said: "If you want a festival with lots to see and explore instead of a plain church hall, pub garden or town hall, then Bluebell's the place." Next year's festival is planned for 23-25 September.

Volunteer Workshops

The Railway is to run a series of volunteer workshops in order to share and develop ideas with fellow volunteers, with the aim of helping us map out our future, on 29 January, 12 February and 5 March. If you would like to participate email Gordon. Dudman@bluebell-railway.com. Lunch and refreshments provided.

Lobby for improvement

Tenders have been received for improvement works to be undertaken in the porter's lobby, kitchen and bathroom in Sheffield Park station house. The work will be undertaken during the winter close down and is being funded by the Bluebell Railway Trust.

Shop record

The week that included Giants of Steam Weekend saw an all time weekly sales record for our retail shop. Well done to Asa and the volunteers.



The new chairman and several new trustees gather for their first meeting with society officials on 21 October: Roger Kelly, James Young, Mike Hopps, Ian Watson, Gavin Bennett, Steve Bigg, Don Brewer, Mike Priestley (RIP 2 December), Paul Churchman, Laurie Anderson, Richard Clark, Reuben Smith, Charles Hudson, Andrew Ellis, John Knight and Chris Saunders. COLIN TYSON

BRPS moves forward to incorporate as a Company

Members will no doubt recall from previous articles in *Bluebell News* that a recommendation was made in the Governance Review Report 2018 that the BRPS should incorporate to become a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG). A sub-group of the Society Committee was appointed to undertake the detailed work of transferring the Society Rules into Articles of Association (AoAs), to comply with Company Law.

The outcome of this work was communicated to members as the draft AoAs in advance of the BRPS EGM/AGM that took place on 2 October and was passed almost unanimously at that meeting, with just two votes against.

The key benefit for members from Society incorporation as a CLG will be that in the extremely unlikely event of a major uninsured claim against the PLC, or a winding-up following its declared insolvency, members' individual liability will in future be restricted to just £1. This would not be administratively viable to collect.

Much detailed work has taken place by the committee to submit the required information to HMG Companies House in order to formally attain the status of BRPS as a CLG. By way of a topical update, we can advise that official confirmation was received from Companies House on 16 November of the incorporation status of Bluebell Railway Preservation Society as a 'Private Limited Company by guarantee, without share capital use of limited exemption'.

The AoAs as approved by the membership will be lodged at Companies House, and accordingly will be available to view online. Although there is no intention to send out further printed copies of the AoAs to members so as not to incur unnecessary administration, printing and postage costs, if there

is a demand from some members without internet access, the BRPS board will consider the provision of limited numbers of printed copies which will include a p&p charge to reflect associated costs.

As a CLG, the BRPS Company will be required to comply with the Companies Act 2006, and any subsequent amendments to the Act. However, we reiterate the assurance that members' personal details will not be shown online at HMG Companies House.

As previously advised, the incorporation of BRPS will not change its core functions and objectives in any way. However, some key amendments brought about by incorporation, and that will therefore affect aspects of the Society's processes will be:

- The introduction of proxy voting facilities for all members in connection with subsequent EGMs/AGMs (a requirement of the Companies Act).
- The Junior Membership maximum age threshold to increase from 16 to 18.
- Senior Membership status for those commencing membership of the BRPS after 31 December 2021 will be from age 65. Senior Membership status for those already a current member before 1 January 2022 will still be able to attain Senior membership status from age 60.

Full details of the above and all other aspects of membership, etc. are contained in the AoAs, as already detailed in the draft provided to all members prior to the recent EGM / AGM.

For logistical reasons it is intended that the BRPS CLG will officially commence operation from 1 January 2022. Members will be kept up to date with any further developments associated with incorporation in future editions of *Bluebell News*.

MUSEUM ACQUIRES STROUDLEY NAMEPLATE

Our museum is now displaying its recently acquired *Remembrance* nameplate and its sub-plate relating to those employees of the LBSCR that fell in the Great War, in a deal made with member Laurie Marshall prior to his passing earlier in 2021. An



advantageous deal was later made with Laurie's sons for the acquisition of Laurie's *Stroudley* nameplate and this will also find a new home in the museum.



LONG SERVICE AWARDS PRESENTED AT DELAYED AGM

The Covid-delayed 2020/2021 BRPS AGM/EGM was held at The Burgess Hill Academy on 2 October, at which it was finally possible to ratify, with members' support, the proposed Memorandum of Association to move the BRPS to a Company Limited by Guarantee from 1 January 2022.

Receiving awards for a total of 1,035 years' service between them were: **60 years:** Mick Blackburn, Bill Brophy, Chris Cooper, Tom Dobson, Chris Saunders **50 years:** Roger Barton, Roger Cruse, David Foale, Tony Leaver, Chris Majer, David Middleton, Roger Merry-Price, The Bulleid Society, Philip Wilson **40 years:** Heidi Mowforth, John Lander **25 years:** Nik Barton, Daphne Bond, Roy Bond, Deborah Carver, David Cockram,



Roland Law, Pat & Ray Medhurst, David Mills, Eric Mobbs, David Tutt **10 years:** John & Pat Wigley, Martin & Alex Widdowson, Michael Cole, David Gooch.

ABOVE: 2020/21 long service award winners with their badges and certificates.
COLIN TYSON

Encouraging start for volunteer co-ordinator

A staggering 92 potential volunteers made contact with us up to the end of November. Whilst accepting that not all will progress through to becoming active volunteers, if only 50% do, that would still be an increase of 45 more volunteers since the end of September.

As a result, a couple of departments no longer have any vacancies and waiting lists have had to be opened in the S&T department, and a couple of others are approaching the same position.

Immediately after Christmas I will be asking all managers to let me have details of the ideal number of volunteers that they want for each of their departments/grades/groups so that I can begin to target specific vacancies. Before this can happen though, I will also need the managers to provide me with the number of current volunteers in those roles, including names and contact details, which should of course be readily to hand.

An area of volunteering that I believe needs urgent reviewing is the railway's need for stewards. Be they Santa-on train, Santa-at stations, SteamLights-catering, SteamLights-at stations, Special Events-catering, SpecialEvents-at stations, Special Events-on train, and Meeters & Greeters. Add the various different types of Guides also needed and you will get some idea of the wide ranging 'occasional roles' that requires us to have a large group of volunteers available to meet our needs.

I believe that as most of the roles are complementary and not exclusive, and with the correct type of training delivered, we should be able to offer volunteering opportunities as stewards/guides at almost any time of the year. Just because a volunteer is, for example, a Santa train steward shouldn't mean that they are not asked to offer their services at an event taking place in the summer. By not doing

so we frequently suffer shortages unnecessarily, often resulting in last minute panics and pleas for help. This action often results in more volunteers being sought, only to find that when they turn up there is not a lot for them to do, causing frustration for them and also for the usual staff on duty who may be unaware that they are even attending.

I am working with my Volunteer Review colleagues Lisa Boyle and Steve Bigg on this issue and it is our intention to hold a number of face-to-face sessions in early Spring with existing stewards and guides, existing volunteers in other departments who may be interested to occasionally work with our visitors and, of course, hopefully lots of new volunteers. We are planning to arrange sessions on a range of midweek and weekend dates, lasting for a couple of hours. Dates, times, and venues will appear on the website during February. If you would like to attend and don't want to miss out on one of the sessions, just send me an email at volunteer.coordinator@bluebell-railway.com to book a place. I will then let you know the details when they have been confirmed, for you to choose the one that best suits you.

Finally, I want to thank all volunteers and members of staff who have worked hard to turn a difficult Covid-affected year into a successful one in so many ways and I wish you, plus all society members, the compliments of the season. If you have yet to volunteer and find yourself with free time in 2022, why not make a New Year's Resolution to do so; contact me at the email address above and between us I am confident that we will find something suitable for you.

GRAHAM AITKEN
Volunteer Coordinator

Special award for member No 1 Charles Hudson

Congratulations to BRPS Vice President Charles Hudson MBE, who has received an award from the Institution of Railway Signal Engineers (Minor Railways Section) in recognition of his contribution to minor railways signalling for over 60 years. Charles is a fellow of the IRSE, which he gained through his career on BR.

His active service as the Bluebell's S&T engineer started from when we took possession of Sheffield Park and he is still volunteering, having held a number of senior positions on the railway and a trustee for 56 years. In his younger days he was an active member of St John Ambulance, receiving an MBE for his dedicated service, for which he is rightly proud. Charles has always supported IRSE and he, along with his supportive wife Jill, have travelled the country and the world on visits and conventions promoting the heritage railway sector.



OP4: Clearing the sidings of ‘tarpaulined stock’

The completion of tracklaying in OP4, enabling final measurement of the lengths of the storage roads, along with the decision that a walkway across the middle of the shed was not required, has enabled a more-efficient utilisation of the storage space to be worked out. The Rolling Stock Sub-Committee had previously agreed that half a set (three bogie coaches) awaiting maintenance might be stored in F-road to enable efficient splitting and storage, with the other half of the set in E-road (the maintenance road). Three coaches are therefore planned to be accommodated in B road of our original carriage shed. In addition, because the Pullman set is currently of reduced length, one carriage can be stored at Sheffield Park carriage shed.

The 25 carriages intended to be stored under cover, awaiting eventual restoration or overhaul, are therefore:



A view of OP4 from the top of the new switch room. JON GOFF

LBSCR: 60, 94, 270, 676, 992
LCDR/SER/SECR: 48, 172, 33, 719, 971, 1050, 1061, 1170
LSWR: 25, 320, 494
SR (Maunsell): 1365, 5644, 6575
SR (Bulleid): 1481, 2515, 4227, 4279
Pullman: *Aquila*, Car 36 (one at SP).

The following carriages cannot be accommodated under cover and so will remain under tarpaulins at present: 950, 4444, 7864, ‘Carina’ and the two SER



Fingall and the Birdcage Brake occupying the OP4 maintenance roads. JON GOFF

bodies recovered from Pagham in 2018. No 7864 (the Maunsell Restaurant Car) is not included since it is planned that this will enter works in the near future. No 4441 (nondescript brake) is being retained to be restored as a wheelchair-accessible vehicle for the Maunsell set, but is already badly decayed, so storage under tarpaulin will not be that much more detrimental to the remaining fabric. The two SER bodies are firstly currently accommodated on rather longer underframes making their inclusion problematic, but in any case they are under very new tarpaulins, and the teak structure and lack of interior makes them the most robust remaining vehicles to store outside. SECR Birdcage 950 is privately owned, and 'Carina' little more than a shell, but again both are under relatively new tarpaulins.

There are several further vehicles which we had hoped might be accommodated, including three LSWR goods vehicles/vans, which would have filled odd corners, but are now displaced by more delicate (longer) carriages, and three further SR Maunsell vehicles, which will now be disposed of, as described below.

The BRPS Rolling Stock Sub-Committee has reluctantly concluded that two Maunsells, which came to the railway not as part of our planned collection, but because they were 'available', still don't fit in any long-term plans and so should be disposed of. These are Nos 2356 and 3724, which were similarly reported 26 years ago as unlikely to see restoration (*Bluebell News*, Winter 1995). The former, we hope may appeal to another heritage line as the sole surviving SR steam-hauled side corridor third, but it must be borne in mind that its body structure is so weak it would probably not survive road transportation without being 'flat-packed'. The latter, with a long brake and only four compartments was never considered a suitable vehicle for restoration to original condition, but was retained for conversion into a disabled-accessible saloon, however the committee's conclusion is that 4441 would be much more suitable since it could be adapted for that role with no exterior modifications to the original design. The third

Maunsell vehicle to be disposed of is the Post Office Sorting Van, 4922. With the ex-NRM 4920 in the care of a dedicated group, and in much better condition than 4922, which has sat on

our sidings unloved since the paint fell off it 40 years ago, the committee concluded that it is unlikely to ever be restored, since the huge cost and lack of restoration space and volunteer

commitment which would be required to construct an entirely new body was unlikely to materialise for a vehicle of marginal utility.

RICHARD SALMON



Gary Whittaker finishing of the hand rail around the septic tank. JON GOFF

Four tracks completed

Thanks to a film company using OP4 for a film set, the shed was completely cleared of stock. This has been the only time it has been clear with all four tracks completed and with the adjacent Heritage Skills Centre wall finished. This gave the Infrastructure Dept the opportunity to finish fitting the rainwater down pipes properly which couldn't be done without the wall being finished first. It also presented an opportunity what the whole interior looks like.

In addition, partly due to UK Power fitting a new, more powerful supply to the site and partly due to a new distribution board being required for OP4, a new switch-room was built inside the end of OP4.

Some of the OP4 work still to be carried out can be seen in the photo opposite. The fire wall between the storage shed and the work area is still only half height and half length. Three more buffer stops need to be fitted and the door at the far end doesn't exist yet. The concrete path on the left also needs to be finished off with a ramp down to the ground level and some hand rails added.

Round the back of OP4

Two more tasks, well out of the public gaze round behind OP4, are nearing completion. Most of the concrete paths and steps around the Heritage Skills Centre are finished or close to it. The ground and between the path and the road can soon be back filled, tidied up and landscaped. This will give 'clean shoe access' to all the doors into the side and back of the skills block and into OP4. The drainage of the area is now also complete and the manholes concreted in and finished.

Another very important task but one most people don't really want to know too much about is also coming to an end and that is the installation of the big new wastewater treatment plant, not just for OP4 but for the whole station. It is now fully

installed with the safety hand rail around the top as well as being wired up and plumbed in. A little more wooden cladding is required to make it more visually acceptable than concrete blocks on our heritage site. At time of going to press it was waiting to be seeded and commissioned by the company who supplied it.

JON GOFF



Wooden cladding going in to hide the concrete blockwork. JON GOFF



Rear path by the Skills Centre and steps into OP4. TIM CRUMP



Sussex Express
 Dame Jacqueline Wilson launches new book at Bluebell Railway's Sheffield Park Station
 Popular children's author Dame Jacqueline Wilson made a special appearance at Bluebell Railway's Sheffield Park Station on Tuesday afternoon to launch her new book.
 The Primrose Railway Children is a modern reimagining of E. Nesbit's classic story that tells the tale from the youngest child Phoebe's point of view.
 Lucky pupils from St Giles Church of England Primary School in Horsted Keynes were invited to the event to talk to the novelist.
 They also had the chance to take a vintage steam train ride with her.
 The Bluebell Railway was the set for Carlton's 2000 TV film of The Railway Children as well, making it the ideal place to launch the book.



SussexLive
 Barcombe, Barcombe Mills, Bishopstone Beach Halt: The cluster of abandoned railway stations and what's there now
 It was part of the line that ran between East Grinstead and Lancing, which is now a section of the Bluebell Railway.
 By the 1970s the stations had started to come into some construction and some trouble, before the site closed for good in 1993.
 The railway tracks were lifted away and removed from the area, leaving little more than the iron line ever actually existed.
 It is a nice little back to the building's original structure.
 However, the station building itself still remains in all its glory nearly 70 years later.
 It has since been converted into a home, but the layout of the building makes it very obvious that it used to be a station.



THE Sun
 Travel a UK Travel Family
HO-HO-GO Kids will love this Santa-themed train ride on the Bluebell Railway this Christmas
 LET'S face it, summer is probably over - so it's time to start looking forward to Christmas.
 If you're looking for a family-friendly activity, tickets have gone on sale for the Santa Special steam train ride, on the Bluebell Railway.
 Kids can pick a gift straight from Santa's workshop

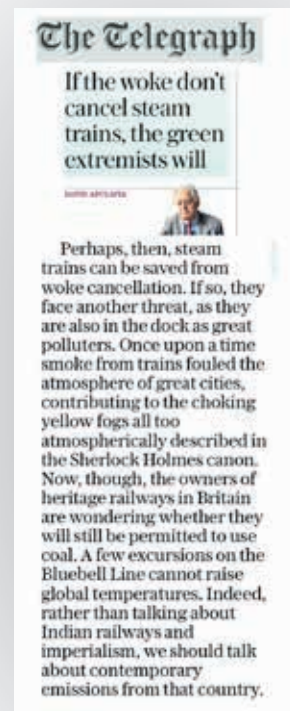
SEPTEMBER
 Sussex Express was among the newspapers reporting on the visit of author Dame Jacqueline Wilson to the Bluebell Railway for the launch of her new book *The Primrose Railway Children*.
 The author had visited the Railway as part of her research for the book and spoke in interviews about the 'wonderful' heritage railways.
 The report said: "Lucky pupils from St Giles Church of England Primary School in Horsted Keynes were invited to the event to talk to the novelist. They also had the chance to take a vintage steam ride with her."

Sussex Live highlighted some disused railway stations including Barcombe and Barcombe Mills and said the line between East Grinstead and Lewes is now a section of the Bluebell Railway. It pointed out: "They've changed a lot in the last 50 years."
 The Sun started its promotion of festive days out at the end of summer. The paper used the headline 'HO-HO-GO Kids will love this Santa-themed train ride on the Bluebell Railway this Christmas'. The report included a photo of British Railways Standard Class 4MT No 80151 on snowy tracks and a jolly Santa inside SteamWorks.

OCTOBER
 Rail Business Daily was among a number of publications to report on the launch of the Jewel in the Crown appeal for Horsted Keynes station. It pointed out the station had featured "in scores of TV programmes and films" and used a picture of the *Downton Abbey* cast.
 The Telegraph listed 'Britain's greatest railway journeys' and encouraged readers to "take

in the wonderful sights across Britain from the comfort of your carriage".
 It said: "Southern's trains to East Grinstead provide an easy way for Londoners to reach the Bluebell Railway whose station is a few minutes' walk from the main-line platform. The 11-mile journey to Sheffield Park weaves through well-wooded Sussex countryside, carpeted with bluebells in spring."
 The Sun provided a checklist of ideas for people who were thinking about travelling again. It described the Bluebell as "more than just a train ride".
 The report said: "If you're looking for a family day out with a difference, then why not steam through Sussex in style and comfort on the Bluebell Railway."

NOVEMBER
 Heritage Railway reported on the return of Autumn Galas after two years' absence with details on various events including Giants of Steam at the Bluebell Railway. The cover photo of issue 286 was of visiting Merchant Navy Pacific locomotive No 35028 *Clan Line* approaching Holywell - a photo taken by David Cable.
 The Times showed a picture of BR Standard Class 5 locomotive No 73082 *Camelot* "covered in lights for its first trip of the Christmas season at the Bluebell Railway".
 The Telegraph published an opinion piece by David Abulafia, professor of Mediterranean history at the University of Cambridge, headlined "If the woke don't cancel steam trains, the green extremists will".
 His article said that smoke from trains once upon a time "fouled the atmosphere of great cities" and now the owners



The Telegraph
 If the woke don't cancel steam trains, the green extremists will
 Perhaps, then, steam trains can be saved from woke cancellation. If so, they face another threat, as they are also in the dock as great polluters. Once upon a time smoke from trains fouled the atmosphere of great cities, contributing to the choking yellow fogs all too atmospherically described in the Sherlock Holmes canon. Now, though, the owners of heritage railways in Britain are wondering whether they will still be permitted to use coal. A few excursions on the Bluebell Line cannot raise global temperatures. Indeed, rather than talking about Indian railways and imperialism, we should talk about contemporary emissions from that country.

of heritage railways were "wondering whether they will still be permitted to use coal."
 Professor Abulafia added: "A few excursions on the Bluebell Line cannot raise global temperatures."
 The Times chose to illustrate a piece on sustainable train travel linked to the Glasgow Climate Change Conference, with an unrelated photo of Horsted Keynes station, captioned "Country train stations have become a rare species since the Beeching cuts".

PAUL BROMLEY
 Communications Director



RailBusinessDaily
 Bluebell Railway launches £500,000 appeal to put the sparkle back into Horsted Keynes station
 The heritage line is asking the public to help finance the cost of heating, lighting and replacement of existing beams at the Grade II listed historic station in West Sussex.
 The railway's appeal co-ordinator Trevor Swainson said: "The station buildings were built in Victorian times and are now showing signs of wear and tear. We are pleased to have so far raised in the appeal and hope this appeal will help the sparkle back into the station."



The Telegraph
 Britain's greatest railway journeys
 The Bluebell Railway
 The railway is a wonderful example of what the South coast has to offer. It is a wonderful example of what the South coast has to offer. It is a wonderful example of what the South coast has to offer.



THE Sun
 CHECKLIST These 10 top brands are there for you if you're thinking about travelling again
 More than just a train ride
 If you're looking for a family day out with a difference, then why not steam through Sussex in style and comfort on the Bluebell Railway.
 Opened in 1960, it's the oldest steam heritage, standard gauge, passenger-carrying line in the country.
 It's a great family day out with 11 miles of low winding path, an area of outstanding natural beauty, four period stations, an accredited museum and the SteamWorks exhibition in the locomotive shed at Sheffield Park Station.
 Film fans will also be excited as it's featured in productions such as The Woman in Black, Point, Christopher Robin and Horsted Keynes Station is Downton Abbey Station!
 Devote your experience with fine dining or afternoon tea and take advantage of the busy schedule of events throughout the year including traditional steam fairs and a CAMRA supported beer festival.
 Visit bluebell-railway.com for more information on upcoming events, education and group visits, volunteering, weddings, virtual tours and much more.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR CHRIS COOPER

The National Transport Trust's Lifetime Achievement Award for 2021 was presented to Bluebell volunteer Chris Cooper by Trust Patron HRH The Princess Royal for sixty years' service to the railway, particularly in recognition of his work on carriage cleaning and presentation, at an awards ceremony at Fawley Hill Railway Museum on 20 October, hosted by Lady Judy McAlpine, wife of the late Sir William McAlpine.

The citation

Chris Cooper was member No 32 when the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society was founded in 1959.

Chris hails from south London, being born just after the Battle of Britain had ended but still at a time when London was being bombed which would affect his and many other families.

He spent much of his life in the Wallington/Waddon area close to Croydon, an area rich in virtually all types of transport - from the bustling Southern Railway with its constant stream of electric traction, the bustling goods yards of Norwood and the industrial areas of Croydon where the power stations and the majority of the factories each had their own private sidings. So many local stations boasted busy goods yards such as at Hackbridge, famous for its cables or Waddon for its metal products or output from the Payne's Poppets factory. Then there were the countless central and country bus routes that criss-crossed this part of South London including trolleybus routes 654 and 630. It was from the top deck of the former or gazing through the fence line that Chris was able to see the operational Croydon Airport and its final flights and closure. Indeed Chris joined a campaign to save the airport and turned his attention to Bluebell when that scheme failed.

Chris's career was in retail but in those days seven days a week shopping was a future concept and with no Sunday trading, Chris would be found at Sheffield Park. Like most people at the beginning of the movement, Chris helped as an all-round volunteer, weeding the track, greasing points and

signalling and took part in the opening ceremony on 7 August 1960 hand signalling trains out of Sheffield Park.

Chris became our third 'Santa', a role he took for several years and as the Santa services expanded, Chris would often be found cleaning and preparing trains for their next turn of service.

A few years after operations began, General Manager Horace May asked Chris if he would like to clean the carriages first thing in the morning - and thus began a lifetime's passion to keep and maintain both the interior and exterior of the coaching fleet in good condition.

He left his career in retail to become the Railway's full time carriage cleaner, where he built up a regular team of cleaners - still very much in existence today - and a key part of maintaining the high standards which Chris set.

This ensured the carriage fleet was being maintained in top order, after all, the locomotive at the front might be the attraction but for the majority of the time passengers spend their time in a carriage and their environment is all important as that's the impression they take away.

Leading the team, Chris set a very high standard, so much so that the feedback from passengers and visitors became a key feature of the Bluebell to the point where other heritage railways would send their cleaning teams over to learn from Chris, which was a real achievement and one to be proud of.

Not one newly restored example of the coaching fleet has ever left the works without Chris and his team giving the vehicle a thorough internal and external clean.

During his time, Chris has served on several committees and was an elected Society Trustee and as one of the founders of the London Area Group, Chris was responsible for organising his legendary coach trips all over the country, including a private visit to Fawley Hill!

In March 2019 at the Bluebell's 60th anniversary dinner, Sir Peter Hendy presented Chris with an award celebrating his 60 years of service to the Bluebell and in

December 2020 he celebrated his 80th birthday but sadly, circumstances prevented any celebrations.

Whilst not attending the Railway every day of the week now, Chris was still regularly driving from Dorking to the Railway to continue sweeping, mopping, cleaning windows and polishing the brass to ensure our

coaching stock continues to be renowned for its cleanliness.

To everyone at the Bluebell Railway, carriage cleaning and Chris Cooper are synonymous.

The Bluebell is grateful to Chris for everything he has done and it's not a bad record to still be cleaning carriages with such passion after 60 years.

ROY WATTS

Chris Cooper writes:

Please pass my thanks to all those who sent good wishes on the presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award by the National Transport Trust and HRH Princess Anne on 20 October.

The award was totally unexpected and was the highlight of 61 years at the Bluebell.

However I feel I must correct one or two misleading statements that have appeared in certain publications. I did not play the part of Father Christmas on the first Santa Special. That position was played by Richard McGilveray; the driver was Tom Dobson and the guard was John Potter. I believe the next Santa was Tom Martin for two seasons, then I took the job for the next ten years!

I have never been a signalman on the Railway, perhaps the impression was gained by someone who saw me operate the ground frame at the north end of Horsted Keynes and came to the wrong conclusion.

The only things I can lay claim to are:

- the saving of the Tom Martin films (and subsequent transfer to DVD)
- persuading Jerry Lawrence and Phil Gardner to make the 'Bluebell Lost & Found' video
- 'Bluebell on Parade' days in the 1970s
- Organising members' coach trips to other railways
- The founding of the London Area Group (not Croydon)
- ...and the Carriage Cleaning Department!

"A Grand Day Out" - see page 29



LEFT: Chris Cooper receives his award from The Princess Royal.
ROY WATTS



RIGHT: Chris, sponge and bucket. BARRY COWARD

From the Chairmen



As we pen this article we have just received the devastating news that Mike Priestley, Trustee, has sadly passed away suddenly. This is a tragic loss for his family and also for the Bluebell. Mike was someone who had put so much effort into leading the way forward with our new strategy plan and the long term aims of the Railway and we will miss his input as well as his strong character.

So we now have two new Chairmen, we also have a number of new trustees and we have also just appointed a new IT Director. It's a very busy time and we are working to ensure that we have the Railway ready to come into 2022 and able to grasp the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

We have made some re-alignments to really ensure that the three elements of our railway work together to deliver the best outputs we can. The Preservation Society has revised Trustee roles to give support to the Plc in terms of strategy and support. We have established a number of sub-committees led by a trustee and working with departmental directors so that the aims and goals are delivered through the Plc with everyone working together to achieve this. It also provides a mechanism for the Plc to feed back suggested amendments to the strategy to ensure that we are always striving for the most practical and achievable aims. We then have the Trust by our side to support us for charitable elements and the receiving of donations.

Something we are going to do which is new is that the Society will now take the

lead on the Railway's Estate and the long term view of what we have and what we should do with it, with a view to how this sits within the Railway's long term aims and objectives.

The sub-committees are set out below with the Trustees who are leading them:

Locomotive Engineering – Laurie Anderson
Infrastructure – Mike Hopps
Catering – James Young
Commercial & Retail – Richard Clark
Capital Projects & Funding – Roger Kelly
Estates – John Knight
Volunteer Resources – Reuben Smith
Rolling Stock – Andrew Ellis
Long Term Plan/Strategy/Corporate Governance and Preservation Standards - Steve Bigg and Chris Saunders

All of this is a lot to achieve and the workload never reduces. During the early part of 2022 we will be holding workshops to engage with volunteers and paid staff and we will be doing everything we can to support the excellent work that Graham Aitken is undertaking. We need more people to run our Railway. We need people from every walk of life, with every type of skill. We appeal to all of you to think hard - can you do a day, a month, a week, a fortnight? If we are going to be the premier preserved railway in the UK then we need everyone to help.

We have set the bar high for 2022, we want to as a business increase our revenues and hopefully turn a profit. We want to improve

the IT across the Railway and we want to increase our membership and increase the number of active volunteers. This is no mean feat, especially as we enter 2022 with the economic headwinds of rising inflation and the likelihood of rising interest rates. All of this will not stop us from setting out to make 2022 one of the best years operationally and financially.

We have a wonderful and unique Railway, with a collection of rolling stock and locomotives that make it that, but we also have the people, all of which make it unique. We are committed to ensuring that our people are at our forefront and that we communicate to you what is happening. The digitally-produced *Bluebell Times*, which is monthly and available to supporters and members, is our commercially-led publication and can advise on event updates more frequently. You can subscribe to this through the website and we would encourage you to do this.

For the 2022 AGM we are exploring how we can make this more engaging for members, how we can make it more reaching and inclusive for everyone as we have a membership of nearly 10,000 and we see just 2-3% of you at the AGM. As this is developed in January we will update you.

PAUL CHURCHMAN
Chairman, BRPS

GEOFF MEE
Chairman, Bluebell Railway Plc



Junior and Secondary Schools: A scale model *Tonbridge* looks up to visiting class mate *Cheltenham* at Sheffield Park early in the morning of 9 October. LANCE ALLEN



No 35028 *Clan Line* makes swift work of Freshfield Bank with the 9am train from Sheffield Park on 9 October 2021 Giants of Steam Weekend. THOMAS SHRIMPTON

BOILER SHOP BULLETIN

541

We are in the process of making new smokebox main steam pipes including new flanges. We have also fitted an anti-carbonising steam feed into the blast pipe to alleviate carbon build up in the blast pipe.

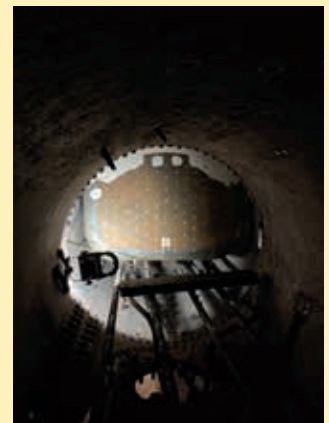
34059

Mostly covered in the Bulleid Society update on page 17. Just to say all boiler stays are now fitted, at long last. We continue the long and tedious job of nobbling all the fire side stay heads, all 2,500 of them. The crown stays have also all been nobbled on the outside.

72

Good progress has been made over the last year. New throatplate, backhead, outer firebox wrapper, front tubeplate, foundation ring, barrel repair patch have all arrived.

The new throatplate has been fettled, stay and foundation ring holes pilot drilled, fitted



No 72's boiler with new throatplate and backhead fitted, also the new firebox tubeplate offered in for a test fit. HENRY MOWFORTH

and riveted to the barrel. The new backhead has also had stay and foundation ring holes pilot drilled and all other features marked out then been welded in by outside contractors. The new foundation ring has been trial fitted and had some holes put in to help with alignment, it is now away with Israel Newton & Sons to be fitted to the new firebox

they are making. Newton's have also had a new firehole door ring made for No 72. A new longitudinal stay support bracket has been made due to cracking in the old one.

New components for the new ashpan and smokebox have been ordered and should be with us before the end of December.

A majority of the boiler

fittings are to be replaced with new due to being life expired, therefore patterns for various steam valves are in production. A regulator J pipe pattern is also being repaired so that a new casting can be made.

#justlikebrdays
#justlikebrboilershop

HENRY MOWFORTH

Filming on the line

2-3 and 30 September
Masters of the Air
Apple TV

A nine-part series that follows the exploits of the American bomber pilots of the US 8th Air Force

between 1942 and 1945, who were based at Thorpe Abbots, Suffolk, during the war.

The production company spent three weeks at Horsted Keynes station building a section of Paris

Gare du Nord station in the new OP4 carriage shed, which had been completely emptied of stock for the duration.

No locos were involved in the filming, which all took place

inside the train, made up of carriages Nos 1309, 6686 and B7404, hauled in and out of the Gare du Nord by diesel shunter D4106. The filming took place over two days; the train arriving at the station 19 times on the first day and 29 times on the second day.

On September 30, shots were taken of the lineside from the SR bogie brake van to be transposed onto the green screen in the carriage shed later. Other lineside shots were filmed for a different episode of the series near Three Arch Bridge, under which a train steams on its way to Oxford, hauled by the S15, 'thinly disguised' as a GWR engine.

6-7 September
Amazon Fashions
Winter Collection

From a weather point of view, the summer of 2021 wasn't all that great, but we were treated by the weather gods to a hot, sunny Indian summer in early September. Thus on two of the hottest days of this mini-heatwave, Amazon Fashions shot their winter collection at Sheffield Park, on the platform and in and out of various carriages.

The S15 in 'GWR livery' on a train to Oxford for *Masters of the Air*.
ALL: MICK BLACKBURN



The Oxford train passes the camera near Three Arch Bridge.





Attention to detail: French signage in carriage No 1336.



The Gare du Nord platform under construction in the OP4 carriage shed.

The models sweltered in winter coats, boots, hats and scarves, trying to look as though they were snuggled up under a chilly winter sun. The fashion world works in such a way that, as this issue of *Bluebell News* hits your doormat, those same models are probably freezing in summer dresses on a windswept beach somewhere.

8 September

Call my Agent
Amazon Prime

Call my Agent is a popular French TV series adapted for the British audience. The series is set at a London talent agency where the agents are scrambling to keep their valuable star clients happy and the business afloat following the sudden death of the

company founder. Horsted Keynes station was dressed to represent a present day film crew, filming a scene from the 1940s. The station was populated with actors and extras in both wartime and modern dress, and the arriving and departing train of Southern stock hauled by the S15 provided the action.

HEIDI MOWFORTH



The S15 in the limelight again for *Call My Agent*.



Call My Agent period extras in 1940s dress.

Locomotive Department

The Giants of Steam gala proved a great success, with the railway busier than it had been since before the pandemic. The event hosted two visiting locomotives: Merchant Navy class *Clan Line*, a very rare visitor to heritage railways; and Schools Class *Cheltenham*. In addition, from the home fleet *Camelot* made its first gala appearance after its recent intermediate overhaul, supported by S15 No 847 on the service trains, with H class No 263 providing brake van rides – in a vacuum fitted goods train – at Horsted Keynes. Both visiting locomotives stayed at the railway for some time after the gala, with a number of photo charters and, for *Clan Line*, footplate experience days for members of the loco's support crew. *Cheltenham* operated service trains to the end of the half term holiday, while Standard 4MT No 80151 did similar on a reciprocal visit to the Mid-Hants Railway. The swap appeared to be popular with the visiting public on both railways.

We thank the Merchant Navy Locomotive Preservation Society and their support crew for the loan of *Clan Line*; and the Mid-Hants and NRM for the loan of *Cheltenham*.

Looking towards 2022

As we head into the new year I thought I would outline some of the things to look forward to in 2022.



Looking forward between the frames on *Sir Archibald Sinclair* showing the trailing driving axle; middle crank and big end; and some of the lubrication pipework. TOM JAMES

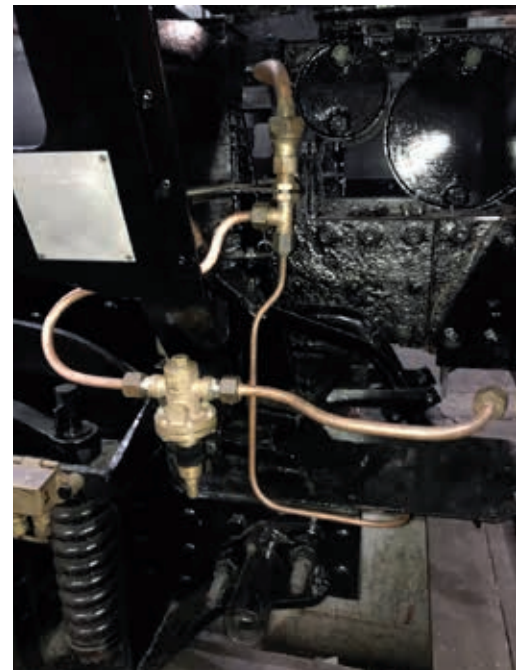
No 34059 *Sir Archibald Sinclair* is on track to make a welcome return to service mid-year (see separate report). We can also look forward to the return of *Fenchurch* for its 150th anniversary. Events are being planned to mark this occasion. The refurbished frames, motion and new cylinder block will return early in the year from Statfold Barn and the boiler, which will almost be brand new when it is finished, is also coming together nicely. I hope we can

look forward to many years' reliable running from these two favourites.

This good news is tempered somewhat from the fact that we will lose H class No 263 in February at the end of its 10-year boiler certificate. We also do not

believe the S15 will last beyond its next annual exam in May due to a number of concerns, including the condition of its boiler and tyre wear.

We will however be making a start on overhaul of the Trust's H class once *Sir Archibald Sinclair*



Steam supply for the Stones electrical generator under the left-hand side of the cab. TOM JAMES



View above the frames, looking towards the back end of the loco, showing the middle engine and valve gear in place, and the numerous lubrication pipes running from the mechanical lubricators mounted on the running plate. TOM JAMES

RIGHT: One of the newly-machined valve gear die blocks. The holes in the top are for lubricating oil. TOM JAMES

RIGHT: Thanks to Bettys & Taylors Yorkshire Tea for sponsoring 2,500 teabags to Loco Dept



and *Fenchurch* return to service and I'm hoping for a relatively quick turnaround since it had significant mechanical work undertaken recently. It needs new tyres and springs which are of course costly, as well as some attention to the boiler crown girders.

The work to *Stowe's* boiler continues but the work remaining is extensive and we do not expect this to return from contractors until later in the year.

We will be carrying out some preparatory work on the 9F which is planned to be the next large loco to be overhauled. This has been selected because it is a Bluebell engine, is not believed to require substantial boiler work, and has an active fundraising 'Awake the Giant' appeal led by Andy Taylor who has also assembled a team of volunteers to assist with the overhaul.

Other projects will be the installation of a reverse osmosis water treatment plant, which will yield several benefits such as improved loco availability through reduced washouts and improve our resilience to the risks presented by our existing water supply. We also want to make a start on developing the area around Wainwright Villas to improve working conditions for all loco owning groups. This will be the first phase of a project to demolish the wooden workshop which is beyond economic repair and to relocate the containers in this area to make space for the second phase to construct a two-road workshop similar to Atlantic House to improve working conditions and facilities.

Overhauls and maintenance Stroudley Terrier No 72 *Fenchurch*

The mechanical overhaul of the locomotive is continuing at Statfold Barn. The decision has been made to fit the new cylinders, and these are now in place within the frames – thus ending the long-time anomaly of *Fenchurch* having rather larger cylinders than the other Terriers. The new cylinders are of standard 13in diameter. Most of the motion work is finished. Five of the horns are fitted; the sixth needs specialist welding to repair. The wheels also need non-destructive testing to ensure they are fit for further use (one



No 73082 *Camelot* and No 30925 *Cheltenham* raising steam for the Giants of Steam gala on 9 October.
CHRISTOPHER WARD

wheelset was replaced at the last overhaul but two of the sets are original).

The boiler is a very extensive reconstruction of the original, in which most of the platework is new, but the barrel is original. The design is the same as that used on replacement boilers for the Isle of Wight and KESR Terriers in the 1990s, but subject to some subtle design changes on account of reusing the original barrel. The effect of that is that numerous test-fittings of parts are required to ensure everything fits together as planned, in particular to ensure that the tube holes in the smokebox tubeplate and firebox tubeplate line up correctly. The inner firebox components are at Israel Newton & Sons for assembly.

BR Standard 5MT No 73082 *Camelot*

Camelot returned to traffic before Giants of Steam after a rapid overhaul. Along with No 847, it is one of two engines rostered for SteamLights trains.

Maunsell S15 No 847

The S15 is in traffic and is covering SteamLights and Santa services. The annual boiler inspection is due next May; however, it is envisaged that the loco may be withdrawn at that point on account of the overall mechanical and boiler condition making it not cost effective to re-certify for another year.

Maunsell Q class No 541

The valve bores have been

re-bored by a contractor; new valve heads are currently being machined, and new valve rings will be fitted. The cylinders will require similar work of reboring, new piston heads and piston rings. New main steam pipes (from the superheater header to the valve chests) are also required.

Wainwright H class No 263

The H class's ten-yearly boiler certificate expires in February 2022, after which time it will be withdrawn. It is planned to use the locomotive on a number of footplate experience courses early in 2022 until that date. The girders which support the firebox crown were last replaced in BR days, and it is felt to be prudent to give them a thorough inspection before another period in traffic.

Stirling O1 class No 65

The O1 remains a reliable performer; however, evidence from crews is that water consumption is starting to rise, which is indicative of needing a piston and valve exam. The boiler ticket needs renewing in May.

BR Standard 4MT No 80151

The locomotive has returned to the Bluebell from the Mid-Hants Railway and, at the time of writing, is mid-way through its annual boiler inspection. It was expected to return to traffic for the Santa season.

BR Standard 2MT No 84030

Work is progressing on the bunker build with the bottom section of the cab end, including the shovelling plate - hopefully before Christmas. The team has also been busy painting all the various panels to protect them from the weather. The next phase of the bunker is now being planned with Vic Short preparing profile drawings of the back and side panels, the shelf and side cab end panels, so that tenders can be sought.

Nick Wren has recently joined the team to investigate and prepare final manufacturing drawings of the side tanks from the limited available BR drawings. This will have to take into account health and safety regulations for confined space working, which may result in us having to make some adjustments to conform to the requirements.

Personnel

Sadly, Maunsell Locomotive Society Chairman and Chief Engineer Ray Bellingham passed away in mid-November (obituary – page 34) but suffice to say he was a driving force behind the provision of Maunsell locomotives to the railway, without which the railway would be a much poorer place.

Nimalan Satkuranathan and Danny Robertson have been promoted to Passed Cleaner - congratulations to both of them.

PAUL RUSSELL
Locomotive Engineering
Director
and TOM JAMES

No 928 Stowe

Since the last report, Heritage Boiler Steam Services have started to fabricate new copper sheet to form the bottom half of the doorplate. The new copper sheet for the bottom half of the firebox throatplate has been tack welded to the original top half and the whole section placed back into the 'frame' of the inner firebox to ensure that when it is welded together it will be correctly aligned.

Melvyn Frohnsdorff has started re-instating some of the pipe runs under the cab floor and for the larger diameter pipes that sit under the running plate. The recent visit and operation of *Stowe's* 'sister' No 30925 *Cheltenham* created a useful opportunity to check the arrangement of pipework under the running plate.

Various members of our working party have pressed forward with work to clean and repaint the eight boiler cladding sheets which were starting to go rusty in places. At the time of writing nearly all the sheets have been cleaned and painted.

Rodney Packham and Barry Smith have made a good start on re-constructing the wooden cab floor. They are close to concluding the construction of the two wooden beams that support the metal fall plate between the cab and tender.

The loco's cylinders have been measured and the outer cylinders have been found to be worn and in need of having liners fitted. It is understood the chassis will go into the workshop early into the new year (after work on No 30541 is completed) to allow this work to take place and further work on the motion and chassis. This will be a very positive step forward for the project.

Q Class No 30541 and S15 class No 847

Both the Q and the S15 were available for traffic during the Summer and early Autumn. No 847 was 'stopped' for a period in July/August to allow some maintenance issues to be addressed and has been



Stowe's refurbished pipework being re-instated underneath the cab. MELVYN FROHNSDORFF



Stowe's new cab fall plate timbers. STEVE PILCHER

occasionally used on Steam Lights services. By the end of 2021 – it will be eight years since No 847 entered its second period of service at Bluebell. It has now 'clocked up' over 50,000 in this second period of running. This is a high mileage and it is very likely that it will not be able to run for the full ten years of its boiler ticket. So do come and see it in action whilst you can. No 30541 is currently in the works for attention to pistons and valves.

U Class No 1638

Still in store at Horsted Keynes.

U class No 1618

1618 remains at Sheffield Park. In June/July it was stored in the catering dock where some of our mid-week volunteers put some time in to 'smarten' up the running plates and make it more presentable.

Fundraising for *Stowe* – tubes appeal

A warm thank you is extended to all those who contributed to the tube appeal mentioned in the last edition. Over £5,000, including Gift Aid, has been raised thus far. Further donations will be gratefully received. Smoke tubes can be sponsored at £60 each and flue tubes at £250 each.

Ideally, please make out a cheque payable to the Bluebell Railway Trust (and enclose a Gift Aid form) or else please make cheques payable to 'Maunsell Locomotive Society' and send to the Treasurer, 312 Riverside Mansions, Milk Yard, London E1W 3TA.

If you would prefer to make a payment on-line, please email the Treasurer at stevepilcher@yahoo.co.uk for our bank details.

STEVE PILCHER

With little progress on No 34059 being reported of late, perhaps a report is long overdue.

Behind the scenes, 2021 has seen a great deal of progress in the engine's overhaul with both the boiler and chassis visibly and mechanically changing.

The engine has now been re-wheeled, with the overhauled front and rear bogies back under the chassis. After being re-wheeled, the new driving wheel springs have been mounted and the new Armstrong oiler pads are back in the axleboxes and recently the brake rigging and new brake blocks have been reinstated.

The lubrication pipework, removed and labelled last year, has been annealed and cleaned and now back in place and connected to the overhauled Wakefield lubricators. Annealing the copper pipework gives them more flexibility and simplifies the refitting of the pipes around the numerous angles required to reach the lubrication site.

The piston and valve bores have been measured and new valve heads, rings and spindles are now in place with the original cylinder heads used with new rings fitted, since the bores showed little sign of wear. The front and rear covers to the two outside cylinders are now in place and insulation and the cladding to the lower section of the cylinders has also been fitted.

Currently, the motion, cleaned and burnished, is being refitted with the combination levers and radius rods now in place. The middle cylinder, where access is somewhat restricted, already has an almost complete set of motion with the fitting of the connecting rod an interesting procedure aided by the use of the overhead cranes in the workshop.

The painters have been busy,

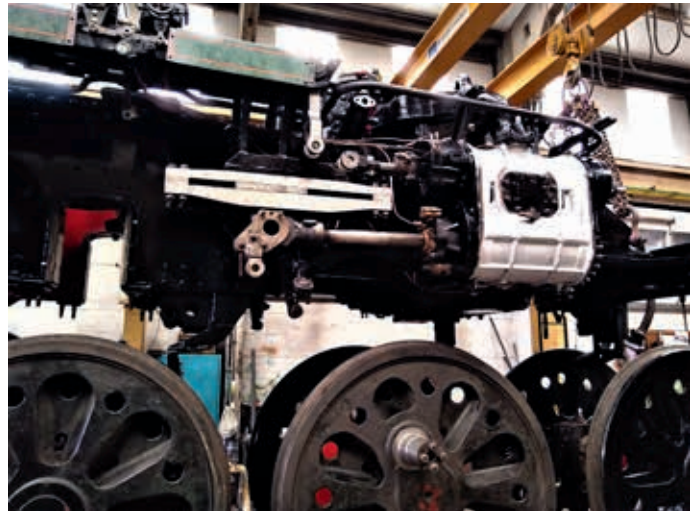
with the chassis cleaned and now resplendent in red paint on the inside of the frames and black on the outer side. Many hours were spent in cleaning the accumulated detritus from the driving wheels where the BFB wheel design's pockets act as a collection vessel for oil and grease.

The cab still resides on the engine and the tender is as yet untouched and both will require work along with the boiler cladding.

There has been much progress with the boiler and its associated fittings and all the welding associated with the firebox will be completed early in 2022.

The firebox required over 2,200 new stays, all individually measured for length and stay hole diameter and supplied by Statfold Engineering and QC Engineering as well as those made in house by Steve Heckford. Once in place, the stays require knocking or knobbling over to ensure a water tight seal between each end of the stay head and the firebox inner and outer steel plates, a noisy and energy sapping procedure. To allow easier access to the side stays for knocking over, the boiler will be rotated onto its back. The crown stays, providing attachment between the crown of the firebox and the outer wrapper, have been tapped, fitted and the knocking over of these is well underway.

The Bulleid firebox differs from other locomotive classes in a number of aspects, one of which was the two thermic syphons which are sited between the firebox crown and the firebox throatplate. The lower section of the syphons is attached to the throatplate by thirteen flexible stays, whose design can be seen on the photograph. All these are now finally in place and orders



Lifted for re-wheeling on 26 July 2021. JOHN FRY

for new washout and drop plugs will be placed in December.

Associated with the boiler and chassis overhaul has been the machining of new backhead fittings such as the gauge glass frames, which will be hydraulically tested and new sections for the main steam manifold shut-off valve are progressing. The new components of the regulator sited in the dome of the boiler have been machined from castings made from patterns produced by Richard Tanton, who has also improved the pattern for the Everlasing blow down valve, making machining of the components easier. The main manifold steam pipe, running from the external Klinger shut off valve to the backhead - known as the steam combine in Bulleid locomotive parlance - will be replaced with a new pipe in the New Year.

Progress on the overhaul could not have occurred without the input of Steve Czech, who is overseeing work on the chassis, Steve Heckford for the component machining and both Simon Blaker and

Henry Mowforth, boilerSmiths 'extrordinaire' and the volunteers who have laboured under their guidance.

Additional photographs are on The Bulleid Society web site at www.bulleidsociety.org

**SIMON BLAKER
and JOHN FRY**



Flexible stays fitted to base of the thermic siphon, with stay in foreground. JOHN FRY



Regulator main valve body. STEVE HECKFORD



Combination lever and radius rod. JOHN FRY



The firebox with the crown stays in situ. JOHN FRY

East Grinstead High Level, April 1968

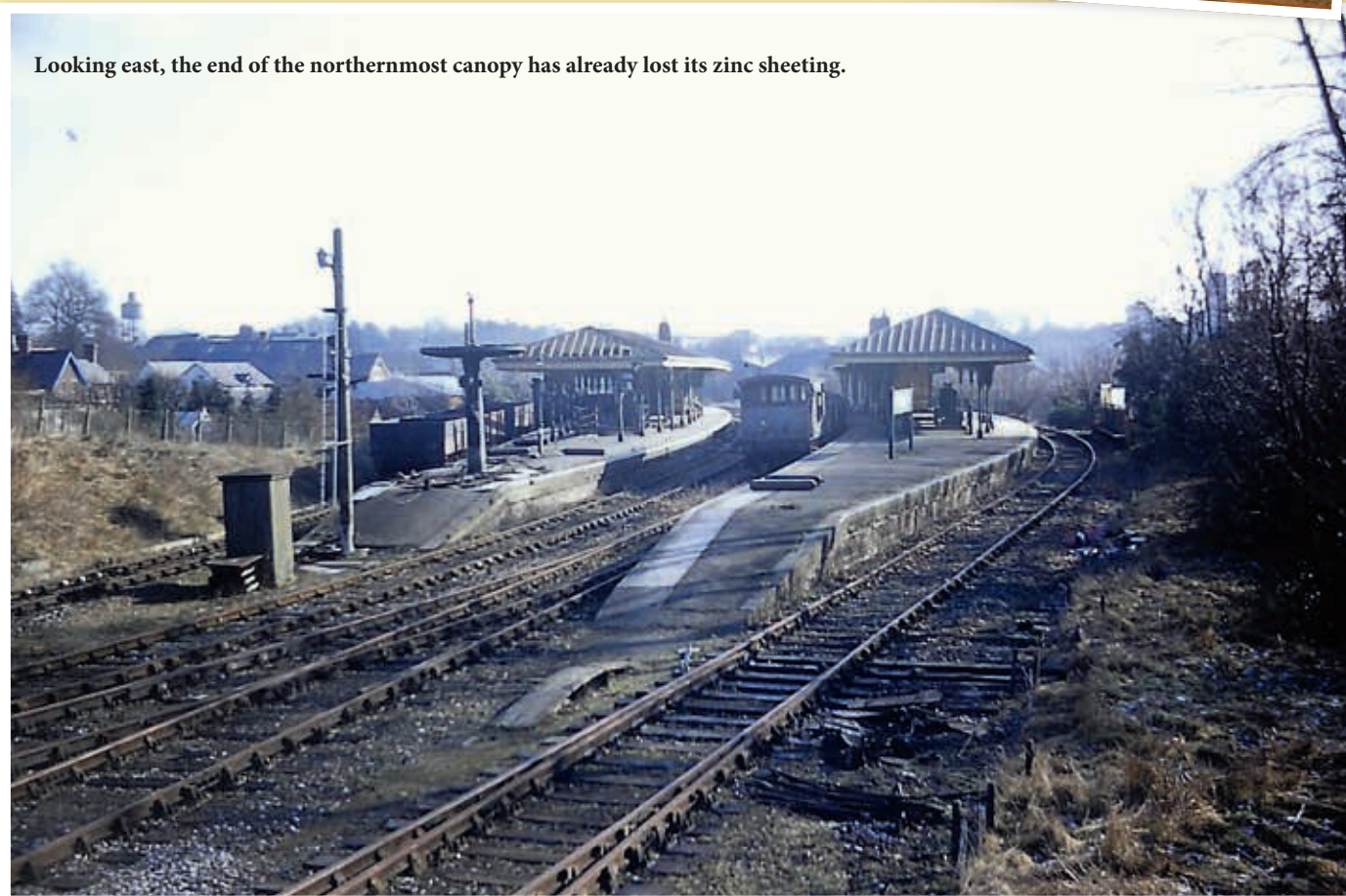


ABOVE: Engineers' wagons stabled at two platforms, ready to take away items of infrastructure. Note the gas bottles laying on the platforms.

We are grateful to member Patrick Pearce, who has donated ten slides taken at East Grinstead High Level just after closure and during destruction, to the Bluebell Archive.



Looking east, the end of the northernmost canopy has already lost its zinc sheeting.





The prototype seat base and back sub-structure for LBSCR Stroudley/Billinton full third 'Betty' (No 328) is being made by John Coleman, and is seen here prior to having upholstery applied by our trimming team.

LEFT: Stroudley Brake Third No 949 is coming on nicely in the paint shop, thanks to John Foulkes' brushwork.
ALL: RICHARD SALMON

The major activities on the maintenance side have been ensuring that the non-corridor set and side-corridor set were available for Santa Specials and Steamlights services, and rigging the lights on the outside of the latter set. With these sets (alongside the 'Wealden Rambler' catering set) also being very heavily used throughout the rest of the year, the intensity of

maintenance required is greater than normal, but deadlines have been met!

Following a couple of 'quick wins' reported in the last issue, the Goods Division are back on the longer-term graft of the two SR wagons receiving major and intermediate overhauls, which should see more visible progress soon with the side-planks for No 62002 and the floor planks for

No 12058 being ordered. Timber is expensive, so with donations to the projects via the Bluebell Railway Trust being match funded by the Trust up to £5k per annum, any donations are most appreciated, and they can be made via the new 'make-a-donation' page on the railway's web site by choosing the 'Wagon Repair Fund' from the drop-down menu.

The accompanying photos tell their own story about progress on the major overhaul projects currently in the Carriage Works.



The step boards are machined up and ready to fit on the corridor side of No 3687, which is seen in 'rubbed-down' topcoat.

RICHARD SALMON



Maunsell Hastings Brake No 3687 is up to fourth (and final) topcoat at the south end of the compartment side, so the first of the quarterlights have been fitted.



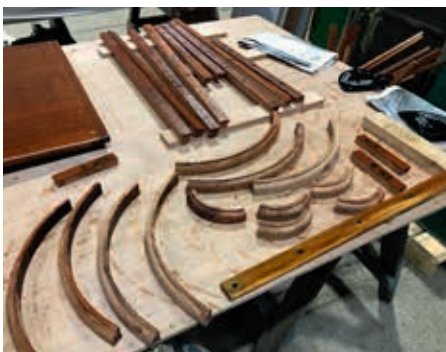
No 3687's gutter is also being fitted on this side.



On the roof of *Car 54*, following an abortive attempt to create a formed copper end cap by external contractors, the decision has been taken to create a GRP covering for the complex end shape, to which purpose scaffolding, seen here, provides access.



The exterior of ex-Bicester Mk. 1 TSO No 4754 is progressing to undercoat, always a good sign in any project, signifying that the structural repairs are effectively completed.



The original tables from No 4754 are being repaired, with new formica tops and wooden edge-trim (machined in-house by Paul Arnold) being fitted.



A wide view of the southern saloon of Pullman Brake *Car No 54* shows great progress.



The laying of lino means that the final interior fit of No 4754 can now proceed faster towards completion. The southern saloons, seen here, are largely complete, and the seat frames are also in place in the northern half. This is the first of our carriages to be trimmed in reproduction early-BR 'Boomerang/Aeroplane' moquette, appropriate to this relatively early Mk.1.

New vista across the valley

Those riding up on trains from Sheffield Park will not fail to notice a big change in the view to the west across the triangle as they approach Horsted Keynes station. What started out to be a further clearance of trees from ash dieback, has opened up a vastly improved vista across the valley where until recently there was just a line of very old stock in poor condition under tatty tarpaulins.

It is a general rule that trees that have suffered from ash dieback, a fungal infection, should be burned and not chipped in order to kill off the spores of the fungus, hence the number of lineside bonfires required. It can be seen from the photos, that before the trees have died completely, they have already started to rot out from the centre. The one in the centre of the photo was too dangerous to cut down normally, so it was gently pulled down using a rope from the bulldozer, falling across where the old rolling stock was.

Consequently, this work has to continue both here and elsewhere on the railway as it would be a significant safety issue if we did not do anything about it.

Just before the tree clearance started, the stock that was on the siding had to be moved out of harm's way. The top end of the siding (road minus 2) had been emptied during all the other shunting and swapping around for a film shot in OP4 earlier this year and so the stock could be just pushed further up the same siding and is now hidden. Therefore, no stock was harmed in the making of this vista.

Darren's giant nail clippers!

Along with the work going on removing many of the trees and



The new vista across the Ardingly triangle, yet to be improved. JON GOFF

scrub by the old Ardingly siding, the siding itself is also being lifted. The rail is life-expired even for a storage siding with the dates on many of the rail chairs being in the 1890s! The rail will be scrapped and with scrap prices being very good at the moment, we want to sell off as much as possible. A lorry load of scrap rail sent back to the foundry will raise enough money to buy all the sleepers, clips, pads and insulators to replace that piece of track. We only need to buy the new rail and some ballast, as we reuse as much of the old ballast as possible.

The best way of improving the new vista is to have new good condition track capable of running trains – even if only to the site of the removed viaduct. It's good for brake van rides and the new smart training area for the rail industry, from which we derive an income.

The old rail needs to be cut up to fit on a smaller lorry than that required for bringing in 60ft new rails, and this is cheaper as

haulage is expensive. Sawing up the rails is inefficient as it uses a lot of cutting disks, time, and is exhausting but necessary when a clean cut is required on new rail. Gas cutting is easier but requires heavy gas cylinders to be carried to every cut and still takes time.

A very much quicker and easier way is the 'giant nail clippers' or hydraulic rail cutter to give it its proper name. These come on site for training purposes from time to time like many pieces of equipment, and we can borrow them if they happen to be here. (We have to pay if we specifically ask for any plant of course.)

These cutters snip through rail as easily as snipping finger nails with a good pair of clippers, hence their nick name. Attached to a road railer, our ace driver/operator, Darren Poulton, can cut up a whole siding in minutes.

A short life for tunnel water shield

It never stops 'raining' inside the tunnel even in prolonged rain free warm sunny periods. Strange but true. Being up to 150 feet below ground, there is a lot of soil and rock above the tunnel ceiling, through which underground water courses pass. Some of this water drops through into the tunnel making for a very wet environment. This water falls onto the rails and causes a major shortening of the life of the rails and their fittings as well as severe ice build-up in winter. Consequently, seven years ago some corrugated iron sheeting was put up in the worst parts to guide the water away from the rails. However, despite being galvanised, the exhaust from steam engines, being sulphur rich, combines with the water to create a weak solution of



A national problem, the felled ash trees rotten inside. JON GOFF



Hydraulic rail cutter on Darren's road railer snipping through old rail. TIM CRUMP



Horsted Drains: Andy Palmer at the lowest point in 'Dingley Dell' tracing the outlet pipe. JON GOFF

LEFT: Cutting out the worst of the tunnel shield and lowering it to the ground. JON GOFF

sulphuric acid and this has eaten through the shield much quicker than anyone had anticipated.

As a result, we have had to remove the worst section after such a short life and are looking for a better, longer-term solution without costing an excessive amount. The removal work was carried out by Matt Crawford and Andy Palmer taking turns in the man-cage on the end of the road railer jib. Despite the relatively short life of the shield, it will have added a significant amount of life to the track under it as the tunnel track normally lasts a lot less time than the rest of the railway.

Site survey

This year there have been several surveys carried out in and around Horsted Keynes station. New Road Bridge was the subject of one such survey because we will be reinforcing one of the wing walls in the near future. It is adjacent to where we have already built a retaining wall at the foot of the embankment. This will force the closure of the line for a few weeks between Sheffield Park and Horsted Keynes while we dig out behind the retaining wall and some of the track bed. We can then investigate and reinforce the structure safely. This survey is to check for stability before and after but is being linked in with the other surveys of the area.

We want an entire 'end to end' plan of the whole Horsted site, including all the ducts, drains and culverts as well as the more visible infrastructure. This is to include the Ardingly triangle and

its embankment as far as where the viaduct used to be, the whole station area, up and down yards, the approach road, all the track from south of New Road Bridge and right up to Leamland Bridge and beyond to the points.

It is needed, amongst other requirements, to work out the route of new ducting for the power upgrade and the new inspection pit. Parts of it will be required for planning the rerouting of cables away from places such as platform canopies and the subway as part of the 'Jewel in the Crown' improvements. We also need to ascertain where old drainage runs are which are not recorded on any existing documentation.

Consequently, a lot of surveying is required, some by professional surveyors and some by ourselves. The combined survey will be of great benefit to any future plans or modifications and especially maintenance.

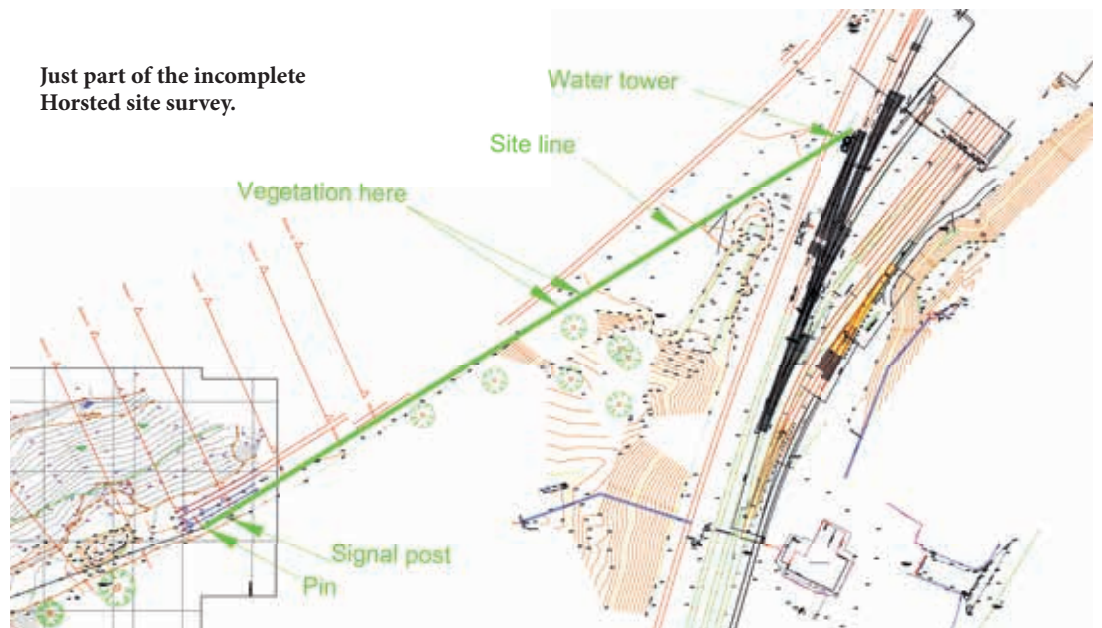
Some of the old drains/culverts have raised quandaries as to their current route, in particular the culvert draining water from Dingley Dell. We even resorted to divining rods to trace the possible routes but these cannot distinguish between old water courses and current drain ducts. Several very distinct routes were found, as divining rods work very well despite nobody knowing why. One route runs almost directly from inlet to outlet but

we know that there are bends in the actual route. The culvert has been modified several times throughout the history of the railway with bits added to both ends.

Another strong trace runs right under where we want to put the new inspection pit and so the pit may have to move a few metres south from where its position was indicated in the last Bluebell News. However, answering the question as to which routes are the ones currently in use will only be satisfied by having a modern drain survey done. This will also tell us the condition of the culvert and whether any remedial work will be necessary.

JON GOFF

Just part of the incomplete Horsted site survey.



80151's Hampshire Holiday



LEFT: The team procuring a spare buffer for No 80151 at Barry. Richard Hawkins is in the front and Chris Hunt is third man back. CHRIS HUNT COLLECTION



RIGHT: SOLD SVR: A proud day as the team poses next to newly acquired No 80151 in Woodham's yard at Barry.

No 80151 reunited with its rescuers after 45 years

FOR two Mid-Hants Railway Preservation Society members, the sight of the Hampshire line's October Gala visiting loco - BR Standard Class 4MT Tank, No 80151 - brought back some special memories.

No 80151 was built in 1957 and spent its entire working life on the Southern Region. It was based at Eastleigh when withdrawn from service in July 1967. In 1973, Chris Hunt and MHR Director, Richard Hawkins, were part of a team from the Stour Valley Railway Preservation Society (SVRPS) in Essex that rescued the loco from Barry scrapyard. They had selected No 80151 from a short list as being one of the best locos available. Locomotives from this class were only ten to 15 years old when they were withdrawn, and this particular loco had its boiler, cylinders and wheels in reasonable condition. Chris, Richard and the team were at the beginning of a long haul. In October 1973, the price was set at £4,950, subject to fluctuations in the scrap metal price. Chris, Richard and other dedicated members

formed the Anglian Locomotive Group (ALG), whose purpose was to raise money for the purchase, transport and restoration of the engine. The SVRPS had agreed to adopt No 80151 as its own loco. Meanwhile, the value of scrap metal soared, so the final price had risen to over £6000 and the preservation society agreed to fund the outstanding amount. On 8 June 1974, the team arrived at Woodham's Yard, cheque in hand. Chris adds, "When we were about to pay, we went into Dai Woodham's office clutching our cheque for £6250. In his Welsh brogue, Dai informed us that the price of copper had risen in the last two weeks and the loco was now £8400. Our hearts sank at this, as we admired the GWR nameplates that adorned his office walls. Having seen our dismay he then said "Well, as you've been at it for a long time, I'll keep to the price we originally agreed!"

Immediately we returned to our loco and painted SOLD on it. In March 1975, the loco arrived at Chappel & Wakes Colne station yard, which SVRPS leased from BR. But, after a few years, BR put the yard up for sale, and to fund part of the purchase price, No 80151 was sold to a group of SVRPS members who set

up a separate company. (The site now houses the East Anglian Railway Museum.)

Chris explains "Restoration had begun at Chappel, and as there was no prospect of the line to Sudbury closing, in 1998, they took the loco to the Bluebell, who offered improved facilities and a workforce."

No 80151 re-entered traffic in 2001 and is now permanently stabled and running at the Bluebell Railway. As for Richard and Chris, both joined MHR at the same time in 1977, having both changed jobs that brought them from Essex to the region. Chris looks back on those days and reflects, "As the 66th locomotive to leave Barry, only a handful had been returned to steam in the 1970s. The condition in which she was presented for our recent gala totally justified the decision by Kim Malyon, the loco superintendent at Chappel, to go ahead with the purchase. Her smart appearance and performance here at the MHR Gala, are a tribute to the latest overhaul by the Bluebell Railway and owning company, 80151 Locomotive Co Ltd. Let's hope that our Standard 4 Tank, No 80150, will one day perform a similar role to the Standards that have now been set."



Chris Hunt (left) and colleagues explore the smokebox. CHRIS HUNT COLLECTION



Chris Hunt (left) and Richard Hawkins reunited with No 80151 during the MHR Autumn gala. WILL STRATFORD

FRIENDS OF SHEFFIELD PARK – A DECADE OF PROGRESS

December 2021 marks the tenth anniversary of the founding of Friends of Sheffield Park. This milestone caused me to reflect upon our history and what has been achieved in the decade since we formed.

Friends of Sheffield Park (FOSP) was formally inaugurated as a BRPS sub-committee in 2011, after a few of us answered an appeal to paint the original woodwork on platform 2 buildings and canopy. This task had become urgent prior to the grand opening of our new museum. We completed the minimum necessary to present a good appearance just in time for the opening ceremony (some of the paint being still wet!), finishing the rest of the canopy in the weeks and months after.

Having made this start, it was suggested our small volunteer working group should continue to meet, as there was a great deal more work needed to reverse decay seen all around Sheffield Park station. And so a regular gathering of volunteers has taken place virtually every Wednesday since. The group quickly established itself and we have around fifty members, many of whom have been with us throughout. Not all are working volunteers, but our armchair members are nonetheless a vital element of the organisation – their subscriptions to the group contribute to fundraising and their ideas and support for projects drives us forwards. Typically eight to ten working volunteers attend weekly and at a conservative estimate we have probably contributed around 15,000 man-hours of input over the decade (not including tea and cake time!) Among the more memorable larger scale projects successfully executed, in rough chronological order, we have painted the whole station – some areas more than once, and many areas several times; extended the platform canopy on platform 1; replaced the zinc sheeting on both canopies; replaced the platform 1 running-in board; restored to original appearance the main entrance porch (for which we received a heritage award); and, most recently, built the external canopy for the Bessemer Arms.

Perhaps less memorably, but nonetheless vital to maintaining the appearance of the station, we have repaired or replaced most of the wooden paling fencing around the site; repainted a third of the footbridge when it was subjected to major repair (and we are ready to repaint the rest should refurbishment proceed further); redecorated various indoor areas (booking hall, ladies' waiting room, gents' toilet, staff lobby); completely refurbished the general manager's office; rebuilt part of the Newick siding walkway and built a new lighting-up wood store for the loco dept. On a weekly basis, we attend to myriad small defects when they crop up – from a sticky lock to a broken toilet flush (we get a lot of those). We have also gradually improved the workshop and storage facilities used by the group, and we are now based in the infrastructure compound behind the loco yard.

Current projects include replacing a rotten

and collapsing timber staircase behind the loco maintenance shed; preparing to rebuild the platform 1 running-in board (the second time in ten years: we have a more robust weatherproof design this time); new gates and fencing to install on platform 1 for the emergency exit next to the shop and a new secure gate to go in behind the catering block; all the heritage style finger posts are being renewed or refurbished. And we continue to deal with the regular snags, defects and 'can you just's' which present without fail week to week. One area to focus on this winter is platform benches. We were donated a set of cast iron brackets which form the basis of a Brighton 9-plank bench which is the correct pattern for the Sheffield park era. As the wooden slats were missing, we needed to source some new ones. Much research was needed – including consulting with our colleagues at Friends of Kingscote, whose equivalent benches are pristine examples of full restoration. Having identified potential suppliers and approached them with profile samples of what we needed, we decided to specify a hardwood called utile. This should give the best balance between durability and cost as well as being able to hold paint well (oak tends to swell and shrink when weathered, shedding paint as it does so; mahogany is stable but hard to machine and very expensive). It is probable that the original specification was for softwood, probably pitch pine, but experience tells us that modern softwood has very poor durability and we wanted a long-term solution. As we have at least two benches which are more or less life-expired, and with some suitable negotiation over price, we decided the optimal economic solution was to purchase five sets of new hardwood slats. A small dedicated team is now working diligently to ensure we roll-out what will effectively be



Preparing timber 'stringers' for the replacement staircase in the loco yard.

a fleet of brand new benches in time for the running season. This is not a cheap undertaking, but we anticipate a good long life for them. A number of later Brighton design benches will also be treated to a new coat of paint, so we will have benches to be proud of.

If any of this activity sounds appealing, please do get in touch – we are always on the lookout for new and enthusiastic volunteers (and armchair supporters too). Good basic DIY skills are really the only qualification, although those with a 'trade' (especially wood-working skills) would be especially useful. Contact may be made via our Volunteer Coordinator... or if you happen to be around on a Wednesday just come and say hello.

CHAS MELTON
FOSP Projects Leader



Finishing touches being applied to a repaired finger post.

What next for Horsted buffet?

Star of many films and television series, the well-known buffet on platforms 3 and 4 at Horsted Keynes has now served its customers for nearly 140 years! Senior Station Master Tim Baker considers its future.

It is very important to make two points before reading this.

Point One: There is no intended criticism of any past or present catering management team intended. This article is, however, deliberately designed to provoke discussion and concentrate minds on the future of Horsted Keynes buffet.

Point Two: To try and clear some misunderstanding within parts of the membership, catering is not a society matter. Its operation is not about preservation and therefore falls directly under the Plc umbrella. The society should however, make sure the buildings themselves, plus any catering rolling stock (Pullman and buffet cars) are restored and maintained in accordance with the Society's Long Term Plan. They may also wish to have a say with regards to any volunteer labour within the department.

Historic context

It was the wish of the Lewes & East Grinstead Railway Co to have three stations serving refreshments along the line;

East Grinstead, the junction at Horsted Keynes and Newick & Chailey stations were all given such facilities when they were built.

A licence was granted to Horsted Keynes and Newick & Chailey for the sale of alcohol without issue. Indeed, it is said that the magistrate noted, that after such a long walk from the villages to the stations, the passenger would have required some form of refreshment.

East Grinstead was another matter. The Blue Ribbon Army (a temperance organisation) was against the idea of alcohol being sold at the station. It took over a year for the matter to be resolved with the LBSCR arguing that as it was not generally open to the public you had to have some form of ticket to use the refreshment room. Also, unusually, they used the services of a former town publican to run the facilities.

A number of local stations had pubs nearby, but the two in Horsted Keynes village were over a mile away and similar at Newick & Chailey for The Kings Head at Chailey was

some fair walk. Indeed, there was a proposal to build a pub/hotel opposite the station but the railway fought against it for fear of losing custom at its own facilities.

It has often been said that on a Sunday, Horsted's bar sold more beer than the two village pubs combined as the workers in the fields found the station closer than the village. I suspect there is some truth in this, however, not for the locality, more for the fact licensing laws on a Sunday restricted pub openings, but not a station bar. One wonders how many platform tickets were sold on a Sunday? Horsted bar did have some regulars. One widow of a P.Way worker who lived in the railway cottages would visit the bar each evening for her stout whilst sitting at the bar.

Buffets were often contracted out. In the case of Horsted Keynes, its facilities were run by Bertram's. As we know, by WW1 the line was already losing money and savings were made. The facilities at Newick & Chailey were closed and Horsted Keynes lost its second refreshment room on platforms 1 and 2 when

the canopy and buildings were removed.

As a station that never closed, by late 1963 BR pulled out of Horsted Keynes and the Bluebell took over a refreshment room readily available for its passengers at its new northern terminus.

Little changed until the late 1970s. I joined the Horsted Keynes station team over 40 years ago in 1978 when Mollie and John Cawley, who had been running the buffet 'retired' and the Bluebell put out to tender its catering needs. Mayfield Catering became our new supplier. Things started well but after three years difficulties arose with what was a rather unpopular idea with the volunteers. By 1982 and the line's centenary, catering had returned to the fold and the railway developed the business to what we see today.

In the case of Horsted Keynes, a few volunteers restored the buffet to its present condition after Mayfield left and ran the outlet for a while themselves. As a terminus the buffet prospered but as the line extended the fortunes of the buffet and its station decreased as most passengers start and finish at one end of the line. This became even more noticeable once East Grinstead came on stream.

The Present

Today, the station is the centre of operations and particularly on a two train service, it becomes operationally very busy each hour as the two trains pass. Once the trains have departed you have a sense of what the station was really like throughout its existence, quiet, peaceful and enjoyable. For a buffet however, you need sales and a quiet station does not sell many meals and drinks!

It has long been the practice that the buffet is only staffed by the catering department at weekends and during school holidays when the peak train service is in operation. At other times the buffet remains closed or opened on request by the station staff for the odd cup of tea.



A famous visitor to Horsted Keynes buffet: John Betjamen exits the buffet after starting his famous BBC *Metroland* programme sat at the bar.

On normal train running days, the buffet is fine and serves a need. On special event days, the limited space and facilities struggle and you often find at lunch time a queue from the buffet stretching back to the bookstall. It simply cannot cope with demand. Some members of the catering team mooted the sensible idea of a mobile catering van which could be used on peak days and other locations as required. Unfortunately, this idea has never been taken up, a shame really as we could provide catering facilities at events off the railway for additional income. In fact, it is a pity we used various Covid-related recovery funds for the genuine 1930s ship containers in Horsted car park rather than earning additional income with a mobile van!

During Covid the buffet was

stripped out and closed down and did not open until Christmas 2020. A further lockdown in 2021 resulted in careful passenger movement and advance only bookings from Sheffield Park with Horsted Keynes effectively closed and not reopening to passengers until July and the school holidays. There was a plan to open the buffet on a limited basis for October half term with volunteers, however at the last minute, catering were able to provide paid staff but stock was so low, one observer noted "if you want a cup of tea and a Twix bar, you're in luck".

Things have moved on and a rethink is now required for the future of our buffet. The Bessemer Arms at Sheffield Park and the Golden Arrow Pullman are so busy and high earners they demand the full attention of the

catering team. What I believe, is that Horsted demands the full attention of someone like Mollie Cawley who will grab the buffet, hold it in their arms and love it in such a way it will receive the attention it deserves. Since the days of Mollie, it has always been (and rightly so) second best with a constant stream of casual staff who do a good job, but it is never managed and developed. Has the time come once again, that the railway should withdraw from Horsted buffet and place the outlet out to tender?

I am convinced Horsted buffet has a future. Perhaps if I was ten years older (cough), I would consider early retirement and take it on myself. I see it as a traditional Bertram's buffet. Fresh sandwiches, cake and tea, a bar that would open some summer evenings (what a setting to enjoy

a pint of Harvey's). No chips (I never liked the smell of them drifting down the platform and the new fire assessments now recommend no fat fryers in wooden buildings). Maybe we could include the main waiting room as part of the tender for more seated accommodation (Bluebell once put a hatch between the buffet and the waiting room to serve tea, etc).

I am sure there is a demand for a unique catering facility which would bring custom to the station in its own right. But this can only be done if someone has ownership of the facility and makes it happen. If the Bluebell struggles to provide a facility at Horsted why not rent it out to someone who has the time and energy, whilst Bluebell sit back and knows it has a regular income without the hassle?

Bluebell Electric Woodworking progress on 4-VEP

Members may have forgotten that the Bluebell Railway also has a former BR/SR class 423 4-VEP unit among its fleet inventory, so it's timely to provide a brief update on its progress.

The Bluebell-owned 4-VEP unit No 3417 *Gordon Pettitt*, based at Strawberry Hill and in the care of SETG (Southern Electric Traction Group) is nearing completion of Phase 1 of its overhaul which will see it return to service on heritage lines (hopefully in 2022) - Phase 2 will ultimately see a return to use under its own power on the national network.

The unit is in the safe custodianship of members of the Southern Electric Traction Group, who are based at South West Trains' Strawberry Hill Depot, near Twickenham in South West London.

The group are working hard restoring the unit back into operational condition and this unique project is taking time, with strict methodology and procedures. Naturally, any support whether financial or material is always welcomed!

The group, Steve Upton, Chris Buckland, Oscar Martin, Darren Franklin, Steve Trower, Lyn Abrahams, Margaret Abrahams, Doug Abrahams, John Denyer, Mick O'Connor, Tony Francis, Richard Salmon, Rob Milner and Matthew Randall are meticulous in their restoration programme with everything logged and recorded.

One of the last items to be undertaken is to add the step boards, and the purchase of the timber has been sponsored by Realtime Trains, in collaboration with the Bluebell Railway Trust.

Trust governor and Bluebell C&W man Richard Salmon allowed himself to be persuaded to machine the timber and prepare the step boards for fitting (which he's also simultaneously been doing for Maunsell carriage No 3687 at Horsted Keynes). Three days work at Strawberry Hill has seen the 39 boards machined with a router, rounding off the front edge (top and bottom), and cutting a rebate on the back edge to accommodate the electrical conduit which runs along the solebar.



RIGHT: A seasonal front end, but just admire that paint job!
ALL: ROY WATTS



Cushions and seat pads removed for safe storage.



Interior window frame repairs underway.



LEFT: Batteries old and new.



The good news was that the first two fitted perfectly. The rest of the SETG team have been impressed at Richard's ability to turn a stack of expensive timber into sacks of shavings!

On Saturday 4 December, Strawberry Hill Depot received a visit from railway historian, travel editor and TV presenter, Tim Dunn. Best known for his series *The Architecture the Railways Built*, Tim filmed the unit and some of the excellent progress being undertaken by the members of the SETG for a future programme.

Please note that the unit is securely located in an operational railway depot which is not open to the general public and access is by strict invitation only.

ROY WATTS

LEFT: The team meet TV presenter Tim Dunn for filming on 4 December: Steve Upton, Darren Franklin, Tim Dunn, Roy Watts and Richard Salmon.

A GRAND DAY OUT

(WITH APOLOGIES TO WALLACE & GROMIT)

It was something of a surprise to receive a letter from the National Transport Trust informing me that I had been given a Lifetime Achievement Award for my services to the Bluebell Railway.

Like the ancient Britons, I do not possess any modern means of communication such as a computer or smartphone, not even a dishwasher or tumble dryer and without these liabilities life is less expensive (submission received handwritten in fountain pen – Ed!)

It was back in 1959 at the Rally Day on 27 September when I presented my membership application form, along with the £1.10s fee to Horace May at the end of the day, as I could not find Edward Boxell, the Membership Secretary. I had become member number 32 but didn't receive a membership card and forgot all about it until March 1961 when I discovered the error.

From the outset I spent Sundays on the

permanent way, oiling fishplates and clearing out ditches, until Fred Carter became our full time ganger. It was then to station staff until 1966 when I started the carriage cleaning department and it was here I stayed until my retirement on 30 October 2021.

On 20 October for my grand day out I was due to be picked up from home by Chris Knibbs but he went down with a bad cold so Roy Watts picked me up in his posh Jaguar.

Roy's car was a new world to me – sat nav and hands-free phone!

A stop at Beaconsfield Services for coffee and then Roy took the scenic route to Fawley Hill, home of Lady Judy McAlpine. I'd been here before several times to visit Sir William's private railway and museum, taking BRPS members in a 56-seater coach.

On arrival I was introduced to Stuart Wilkinson, Trust Chairman and Lady Judy and met people from all over the UK. I was asked many questions about the Bluebell, a large number being impressed by our achievements.

I did feel a little out of place as everyone else receiving an award had restored something large and impressive (I did once refurbish a carriage oil lamp!). Around noon the sound of a helicopter announced the arrival of the Princess Royal to present the awards.

The chairman made a welcome speech and those who had restored items came forward one by one until at last my name was called and Roy guided me forward. This was only the second time I had met royalty since Princess Alexandra visited Bluebell many years ago. To meet Princess Anne was a great privilege and she asked me how old I was when I started with Bluebell; I was 19.

That five minutes soon went and after a pause for photos it was all over.

After refreshment, we decided to leave at 3pm to miss the M25 traffic, Roy dropping me home at the end of the best day of my life. I have no living relatives so the award will be on view in our museum.

CHRIS COOPER



Princess Anne in conversation with Chris ROY WATTS



Many people were surprised that Chris was receiving an award for 'just cleaning carriages', but sixty years is an awful long time! BLUEBELL ARCHIVE



ABOVE LEFT: Hudswell, Clarke 0-6-0ST No 31 *Sir Robert McAlpine* was in steam to welcome visitors at Fawley Hill. ROY WATTS

LEFT: One of the larger displays in McAlpine's museum, the former Brighton station indicator board. ROY WATTS

Sightings of USA 2-8-0 engines in the 1940s

FURTHER to Tom James' request in *BN* Autumn issue for information about S160s at work on the Southern in the 1940s, I have a photo of No 1688 passing Pokesdown on 9 October 1943 when working a Bournemouth East Yard to Eastleigh goods, a regular Eastleigh running-in turn at the time.

In addition, I saw one of the class running light engine through Boscombe station towards Bournemouth. Unhelpfully I did not record the number or date but it would have been on the same diagram as No 1688.

ALAN TRICKETT

I WAS FORTUNATE to live with a garden backing on to the Brighton main line from April 1941 until February 1957 at Thornton Heath.

One day in 1943 or 1944 my brother and I were surprised to see an unfamiliar large tender engine running light on the up main line.

As it ran slowly past us we saw that on its tender it carried painted lettering 'USA', I can't say what number it was because we were so shocked at seeing this lumbering giant that its identity did not register with us.

I never saw another one but at least I can confirm they were at large on Southern metals in the mid-1940s.

RALPH GILLAM

Forming a Southern Coach Group?

I WRITE in full support of D Martin's letter in the Summer 2021 edition of *Bluebell News*. For years now little progress has been made in tackling Southern Railway coaching stock as a group. Anyone wishing to support the preservation of these vehicles has nowhere to donate other than general funds.

The creation of a 'Southern Railway Coach Association' would give a focus for the eventual restoration of all remaining vehicles and pictures of further destruction (so neatly juxtaposed with the letter) need not be repeated.

The long-term plan notes a train of five Maunsell vehicles: those restored or being restored already exceed this number and we have 12 in total. Are we to sell or scrap the remainder (as suggested elsewhere) if they do not further our story?

MATTHEW COOME

I SHOULD LIKE to endorse the very sensible suggestion from D Martin of a SR Coach Association.

A neighbouring heritage railway has a number of interesting pre-grouping Southern coaches, in varying states of decay, stored in locations where they are clearly visible. I believe that there are more that are stored out of sight. Another neighbouring heritage railway has had a derelict LSWR Ironclad stored alongside the running line for years and this has now collapsed for much of its length.

Something needs to be done and that is why a SR Coach Association would be such a good idea. Perhaps it could be set up somewhere like a redundant building at Chatham Dockyard. Does anybody have ideas about any other suitable locations?

JOHN HUMPHREY

Rolling stock director Bob Pamment replies: The idea of a Southern Railway Coach Association certainly has merit - thank you for the suggestion. Indeed, if we are serious about preservation, we should plan to restore or securely store vehicles, or let another organisation do it if we can't, before the vehicles succumb to the elements. OP4 will help us in our quest to securely store vehicles but won't accommodate all that are out of use. I shall put the suggestion to the next meeting of the Rolling Stock Committee.

Lineside Photographic Passes

PERHAPS I could kindly ask for a policy statement from the Railway on the question of Photographic Lineside Passes? Recent communication with the Railway on the subject has been met with a deathly silence and whilst I am totally on board with the fact that the Railway has had more urgent things to worry about over the last 18 months, not least its survival, the current period of more stable operations may be an opportunity to elicit a response.

Perhaps the Railway is going to follow some other heritage railways in quietly shelving photo passes or is it going to continue to take a more progressive view acknowledging the income generated and the free publicity gained across numerous monthly magazines and social media platforms. This helps to attract more visitors to the Railway which is what we all need.

For the many of us who held passes up to 18 months ago, the current silence is a tad frustrating. Hopefully a decision can be made in the not too distant future one way or the other so we can all move on.

PETER HOLLANDS

Safety Director Martin Cresswell replies: The board is very aware of the desire of some members to reinstate the issue of lineside photographers' passes.

As Peter suggests, there have been other more immediate concerns over the past 18 months and with only one of two safety posts filled over this period as a cost-reduction measure there has been a lack of resources to deploy on non-core activities. This remains the case.

However, the principal issue here is the clear message from our regulator that we must be totally professional in our safety management and compliant with current regulations which means we need to understand all risks associated with our operation, assess these risks and eliminate them where possible or, if they cannot be eliminated, implement controls to reduce them to as low as reasonably practicable.

Having a person who is not in any way essential to the core operation accessing the lineside alone and unsupervised is seen by many heritage railways as a risk that is best eliminated as controls likely to be acceptable to the regulator will entail significantly more resources than previously deployed.

The Plc, in liaison with BRPS, is currently re-examining our policy on lineside photography to see if we can find a way to reintroduce permits that meets our regulator's expectations whilst not putting our operation at risk and being a financial burden at a time when every penny counts.

Connecting at East Grinstead



I DON'T KNOW who is responsible for organising our timetables, but why do Bluebell trains interconnect so badly with the main line service at East Grinstead? I want to visit by travelling from Clapham Junction but would have to wait ages for the Bluebell service at East Grinstead, assuming that both services are on time.

DENIS ROSE

THERE EXISTS an enormous rail connected Greater London catchment area from where the recent Real Ale Festival participants may have only wished to use the Bluebell Railway to reach the event at Sheffield Park station.

I noted that the 'on the day Adult Rover ticket' cost non members £25. "This allows one to hop on and off trains throughout the day to explore all Bluebell Railway has to offer". However there were only three day time return trains and if you get off at Horsted Keynes you will have to wait there two hours for the next onward train, or just over an hour to return back to Sheffield Park!

Someone who came from say, Upper Warlingham, would pay an additional £9.50 making a total travel cost of £34.50 to reach Sheffield Park.

Someone else coming from say, Dorking, on the Saturday would only pay £8 for a 75 minute ride on a special bus to and from Sheffield Park. This seems inequitable.

Personally I feel a cheaper East Grinstead - Sheffield Park return ticket might have been offered during the day, with a premium rate ticket for the evening train.

I beg to highlight that there is only a maximum of ten minutes to change trains at East Grinstead. On 6 August I observed there was a substantial queue of customers for the 11am service, some of whom were required to exchange downloaded paper tickets for Bluebell card tickets.

Also the Southern weekday service to and from East Grinstead has been reduced to 'one an hour' between 09.50 and 14.50.

Overall I believe this situation highlights a continuing 'under use' of the link with

National Rail which so many strove so hard to implement. An earlier departure from East Grinstead at peak times and events must be considered by 2022 timetableers.

DAVID HEWETT

Timetable consultant Graham Aitken replies: Being an 11-mile-long single-track railway, with two passing loops, it is not possible to provide 'ideal' connections at East Grinstead, out of and then back into, Southern trains which operate to a different service frequency to ours resulting in some good connections and some not so good. For our major events next year, we will be operating earlier trains from East Grinstead plus enhanced timetables.

Commercial and marketing director Paul Lelew adds: Beer festival tickets and arrangements for 2022 will be on sale during the early part of the year. This is our second beer festival and we learnt a lot of lessons from our first festival. We will look to take on board your observations on pricing.

Does 'Skippy' need to go official?

CONGRATULATIONS on another fine magazine which arrived today - one of the many I receive but one of the few that is always worthy of a long read. The only request I would make is "I'd like to see more about telephones" (*that's done it! Ed*) after fifty years as a telephone engineer.

That aside, I was admiring the Carriage & Wagon Department's shunting locomotive 'Skippy' in the magazine - complete with furry dice - which caused great mirth for me and Mrs P, and I wondered why it does not have nameplates. I was therefore considering paying for them as it is a) my nickname as well, and b) the day you received it was 7 May which is my birthday! I have no idea what it is likely to cost or indeed even if plates are desirable, but I'd thought I would enquire.

JOHN PENNY

Rolling stock director Bob Pamment replies: Personally, I think that an official nameplate on 'Skippy' is an excellent idea. Our preferred provider is Newton Replicas of Nottingham. If Newton's prices are acceptable to you, John, then I will consult with my illustrious C&W colleagues and confirm whether this would be welcomed.

Should Horsted benefit from filming revenues?

MANY heritage lines are used by movie makers. Given the huge budgets these films have, are the lines they use charging a realistic figure?

Surely £1.4m for the use of, say, Horsted Keynes for a few weeks would be reasonable and just look what that sort of money could do for the station's fabric.

NIGEL BIRD

Commercial and Marketing Director Paul Lelew replies: Filming revenues have been impressive this year. The profits made from these activities will be a valuable contribution to the Plc's bottom line. The ticketing and events income was hit substantially this year as we were unable to operate until mid-May due to the pandemic. I think it is difficult to invest film revenue in just one area of the business and should contribute to the whole of the railway.

Cranes sixty years apart



I WAS INTERESTED to see the review for the Bachmann 00 gauge 45-ton breakdown crane, based on our own Bluebell example, in the Autumn issue of *Bluebell News*.

I bought one of these as I also have the Hornby Dublo version, which was launched in 1959 - I believe exactly 60 years before the Bachmann version.

The Hornby original retailed at 32/6, that is £1.66 - with inflation that is £40. So the Bachmann version is five times more expensive but much, much more detailed.

ROGER KELLY

LEFT: The Hornby Dublo steam crane, launched in 1959 but without the level of detail of the modern Bachmann version.

Hornby 00 gauge SR 2-BIL



The signalman at Horsted Keynes receives the single line staff from the driver of 2-BIL No 2309 as it approaches the station from Ardingly. The driver will now have time to read his newspaper, propped up against the window, before returning to Seaford. BLUEBELL ARCHIVE



The 2-BIL comes with its own instantly recognisable distinctive box.

My poor dad, he must have had the patience of a saint! Every summer holiday we went down to Angmering for a week's holiday, staying at the Three Crowns Hotel. We all piled into mum's Ford Anglia which was packed to the gunwales. Sis and I were almost mummified in the back and the journey took forever. As we finally drove that last mile we were often stopped at the level crossing by Angmering station and this is where it all started for me and my long-suffering dad. This was his annual break and every day I nagged him to forget mum and sis on the beach and take me to watch the trains. Gosh it was all so exciting there waiting by the gates. We stood almost opposite the signal box and could clearly hear the gongs and bells and see the signalman turning the giant wheel. Slowly the gates would close to road traffic, followed by the clunking of levers and more bells. Signals now raised, something was coming! More often than not it would be a local electric train, which I now know were those classic 2-BIL EMUs - they made quite a hum. In the flow of trains there were some fast electrics not stopping at Angmering, but the most exciting were the dark shapes of a steamer heading my way. There was always one big one that rumbled through the station with a long passenger train, that Brighton to Plymouth service usually had what I know as a West Country or Battle of Britain. The noise and vibration was totally intimidating and intoxicating ... I just wanted more, dad didn't, but he stayed for a few more trains and there was also a flow of goods trains. These produced some strange shapes as they grew from a smokey dot on the horizon. The apparition of a Frankenstein was a sight to behold as fear and fascination would compel even the most disinterested of men, my dad, into commenting on its sinister disfigured appearance. There were some 40 of these Q1s on the Southern and seeing these really broke the monotony of 2-BILs and more 2-BILs.

In its day the Southern was the largest electrified system in the world with its roots dating

back to LSWR days. Following in the footsteps of first electric dinosaurs, the 2-BILs were designed for 60 mph running. When built in the mid-1930s to work on the newly extended electrified routes to Seaford and Hastings from Brighton, they were two coach units, with each coach having a lavatory, hence Bi-Lavatory abbreviated to 2-BIL. Several were destroyed by enemy action during WW2 but the majority had longevity lasting till the 1960s when displaced by newer trains. They worked into Horsted Keynes station's westernmost platform via the third rail Ardingly branch, sometimes attached to a 2-HAP unit, until 1963 - sharing the embryonic days of our Bluebell Railway. This diagram was conceived to allow the Seaford to Haywards Heath service an opportunity for a crew change and 'turn round' beyond the confines of the congested Haywards Heath station. The passenger traffic to Horsted Keynes hardly covered the operating costs of this branch. Only one 2-BIL set survived into preservation which is now with the National Collection and a long way from home at its Locomotion outpost at Shildon, Co Durham!

Years ago, when today's Hornby traded under the name of Tri-ang, there was a model of a 2-BIL and any lad visiting Hamleys toy store in Regents Street would remember the original train set with lots of tracks as the centrepiece. I was but a mere mite and had to stand on tip-toe to watch the trains, and sometimes up on the stairs to look down. The Tri-ang model was distinctive



Look at the electric pick-up shoe and highly detailed bogie.

with its working illuminated headcode panel. I had an affinity with it as these were those same trains I watched at Angmering. That Tri-ang model would be a collector's piece now, some 50 years since they were made and in those days models were made in much smaller numbers.

A new model was introduced by Hornby a few years ago and this one will stand the test of time, for its accuracy and level of detail will never be surpassed in OO scale. Handling the model one becomes aware of the number of rivets and I can't think of anything that bristles with more. *Old Rivets* would have been an appropriate term of endearment, but that title goes to the first Pennsylvania Railroad GG1 electric locomotive, the first of 138 which were built at much the same time, for working between New York and Washington. One of these is also preserved. Hornby's 2-BIL model is based on the sole survivor



The cab ends are crammed with jumper cable detail.

from a fleet of some 152 units. To run one of these accurately on a model railway one would need to have to lay a conductor rail, components for which are available from specialist suppliers. However, 'modelling license' can be applied as it will run on

an ordinary train set without any of the sparking and arcing that went with the real thing. The model looks fabulous in its SR livery - rather dignified and antiquarian... and those cushions were the best ever!

CHRIS KAPOLKA



The painting, lining, rivets and window transfer detail are exquisite.



The 2-BIL has more roof detail than most other carriages.

Membership matters

You will have read elsewhere in this edition the outcome of the AGM/EGM held in October.

As part of the application to become a Company Limited by Guarantee, we had to submit our Articles of Association, which took our old rules and reformulated them to comply to the Companies Act. At the same time, we took the opportunity to make some changes to the types of membership. A draft copy of the draft AoA was sent out with *Bluebell News* earlier in 2021 and was passed at the AGM.

The following changes will take place from the 1 January 2022.

In the old rules junior membership was up to 16 years of age. Members over 16 years could vote at the AGM. Under company law to vote at AGM you must be over 18 years. Therefore, Junior Membership will be raised up to 18 years. Date of birth must be given.

Student Members: with be 18 years to 23 years. Date of birth and proof of study must be given.

Family Membership: Has increased from three children up to four children under the age of 18 years. First name and date of birth of each child must be given.

Adult, Joint, Life, Joint Life Membership: From 18 years up to 64 years.

Senior, Joint Senior, Senior Life and Joint senior Life Membership: from the age of 65 years.

Current members who hold senior memberships who are under 65 will

continue being seniors. Membership fees remain the same. Rates can only be changed at an AGM. Membership numbers have slowly recovered following the fall in numbers last year.

Why not change your payment to Direct Debit? It helps us save money and will save you money as well, as there is a £2 discount on the membership, you will find a mandate on the reverse of the reminder form and the date by which the form must be returned to the Membership Office - not to your assigned assistant membership secretary as you will miss the processing date.

I would ask that when you email or telephone, you give as much information about yourself, your full name and if you have your membership number. Not the very long number on the address label for *Bluebell News* - this is a code for delivery. The membership number is the number next to your name and is a maximum of five numbers. Include your current address if you are notifying us that you have moved. We would like to thank you for your continuing support through 2021 and hope to see you during 2022. A happy New Year to you all.

The draw for this quarter's prize of a free year membership took place on 28 November - the winning ticket was drawn by Mrs Macson of Peacehaven. The winner is Mr Duebell of Gravesend. Congratulations, your new cards will be with you shortly.

DON BREWER

Membership Secretary

Email: membership@bluebell-railway.com

USED AND UNUSED STAMPS FOR BLUEBELL FUNDS

Stamps, albums, picture postcards, phone cards, etc.

Please do not leave at Sheffield Park
BUT SEND DIRECT TO:
Tony Pond, 26 Hesketh House, Cawte Road,
Southampton SO15 3SN Tel: 0792 300 6375



The Bluebell Railway Preservation Society will formally change to a Company Limited by Guarantee from 1 January 2022, and is seeking candidates for the role of

RETURNING OFFICER

The person undertaking the role will be required to assist the Society board of Trustee Directors in the processes of administering and overseeing the voting procedures for EGMs / AGMs, including Proxy Voting facilities for Society members in the future.

The ideal candidate should possess good administrative and compliance skills, and also have a sound level of I.T. competence. He / she will work closely with the Society Company Secretary and the Membership Secretary, and will be supported by Election Observers at EGMs / AGMs.

It is not a requirement to provide a fully detailed CV, but we would like to know a brief profile about you, your experience and capabilities for the role.

If you are interested in assisting the Society Board in this important role, and would like to receive more information about it, please email Gavin Bennett, the Society Company Secretary, at gavin.bennett@bluebell-railway.com by 31 January 2022.

RAY BELLINGHAM

It is with deep regret that we note the death of Ray Bellingham, on Thursday 18 November, aged 90, after a period of illness. Ray had been Chairman and Chief Mechanical Engineer for the Maunsell Locomotive Society for over 40 years.

Ray was a skilled engineer who had trained at GEC turbines and followed in the engineering footsteps of his father. He joined the team at Tenterden restoring U class No 1618, the first ex SR loco to be purchased from Barry scrap yard. He became Chairman of the group and in 1977, No 1618 moved to Bluebell in order that the loco could be used in service, rather than confined to the sidings at Tenterden, due to the line's weight restrictions.

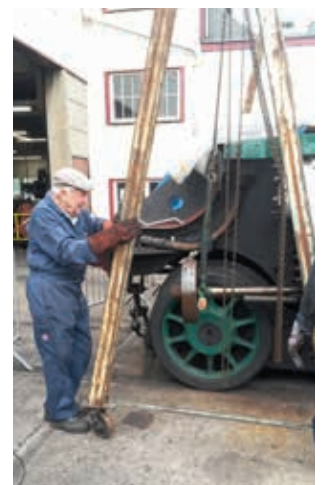
Once at Bluebell, 1618's owners changed their name to the Maunsell Locomotive Society, in order to widen

their interests and tackle other projects. The late 1970s saw the owners of S15 No 847 and Q class No 541 merge with the Maunsell Locomotive Society. Under Ray's leadership and with help from the Bluebell Railway, No 541 was restored to working order in 1983 and No 847 in 1992, both becoming useful and reliable locos.

After completion of No 847, the society's directors decided to tackle the restoration of U class No 1638, which was owned by the Bluebell Railway and placed on 50-year loan to the MLS. It lacked a tender, most of its motion and the boiler was in poor condition. With the help of the Bluebell Railway, who oversaw the boiler overhaul, No 1638 returned to action in 2006 and the society was awarded the Heritage Railway Association's John Coiley Award for locomotive projects. After completion of No 1638,

Ray oversaw the subsequent major overhaul of No 847 which was concluded in 2013 and was leading the current major overhaul of Schools class No 928 *Stowe*. Ray machined many parts himself (including connecting rod forgings for No 541) and set a high standard for all the projects he was involved with. He had sound judgement as to what work was required and how to complete a job, safely, in the minimum time and cost.

His skill and ability 'to get things done' encouraged the formation of a small and loyal team of workers to assist on the projects, and he developed a mutually beneficial working arrangement with Bluebell which also provided significant input into these projects. The MLS locos have been a valuable asset for Bluebell. Since 2006, Nos 30541, 847 and 1638 have clocked up 200,000 miles in service for the railway. Ray also led the



RIGHT: Ray Bellingham overseeing a piston being drawn out of *Stowe's* cylinder block. STEVE PILCHER

fundraising exercise to enable *Stowe* to be purchased from Montagu Ventures in 2000. He was awarded the Transport Trust - Lifetime Achievement Award for his work in 2018.

STEVE PILCHER

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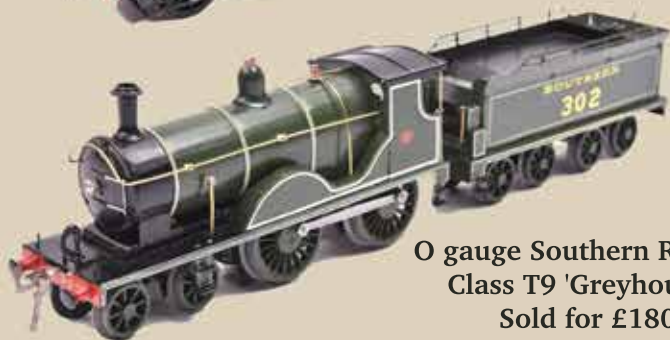


A pair of 5 inch gauge LBSCR
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O gauge Southern Railway
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Sold for £180



O gauge Southern Railway
Class D3/12 Shunter.
Sold for £110



A selection of Corgi toys offered in our recent auction.

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