

COVID APPEAL HITS £350,000



Easing out of 'lockdown'

Steam on test! 24 June



Provisional Reopening - 7 August

JOURNAL OF THE BLUEBELL RAILWAY



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

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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 main: Just prior to
lockdown, Q Class No 30541
passes New Road Bridge with
the 9.30am Breakfast Pullman
on 8 March 2020
PETER EDWARDS

Rear cover: We're all looking
forward to these pastoral
scenes once again. E4 No B473
passes Freshfield Lane with
the 2pm train from Sheffield
Park on 27 November 2011.
MIKE ESAU

Bluebell News is published quarterly
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not necessarily those of the society or
company.

This issue, along with the Spring
2020 issue, has purely been published
electronically while the Railway is not
running. We hope to be 'in print' once
again from the Autumn issue.

BLUEBELL RAILWAY

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



BLUEBELL RAILWAY PLC

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Chris Hunford
Company Secretary Graham Flight
C&W Director Bob Pamment
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Provisional reopening date – Friday 7 August

Dear members and friends

I hope you're all well and your family and friends are continuing to stay safe. Since I wrote to you at the start of June a lot has happened across the world and our country. We've seen protests in support of the 'Black Lives Matter' movement, the daily number of deaths from Coronavirus continues to fall and the first major breakthrough in the fight against the virus has been discovered in the form of a low-dose steroid. Alongside this, it's pleasing to see some of the lockdown restrictions are starting to be eased and the talk of tourist attractions starting to reopen is also very encouraging, especially as attractions such as zoos and gardens have already reopened.

So, how has the Bluebell Railway been preparing to reopen? The generosity of our members, shareholders and others has meant our appeal target of £300,000 has been met and exceeded and now stands at more than £335,000. This is a fantastic achievement and thank you to all those who have contributed. This success, plus a review of other funding sources, has allowed the Board to produce a very detailed financial model for the remainder of 2020. This model includes all the reopening costs, predictions on revenue for the remainder of this year and a detailed review of all costs. Using this model alongside several other measures the Board have taken, I can now proudly announce a provisional reopening date of Friday 7 August 2020.

As you know this also happens to be our 60th anniversary and what better way to celebrate that milestone than to reopen for business. I'm also pleased to announce that the first train on 7 August will be for members only, pre-booked on a first-come, first-served basis. Further details in due course.

Our phased reopening will start on 7 August and for the foreseeable future we will run at weekends only. This will allow us to gauge the potential demand, take small steps and follow the Government guidance. Having carefully reviewed what we can offer and taking into account the layout of our station sites, our service trains will run from Sheffield Park to Kingscote only (not stopping at Horsted Keynes). East Grinstead station will remain closed due to the restricted nature of the site and to adhere to social distancing rules.

In addition we plan to run three or four dining trains per day, with our daytime services starting at Horsted Keynes and our evening services starting at Sheffield Park. This avoids any potential conflict between our public trains and our dining customers at Sheffield Park. As we take these small steps, all of the above will remain under constant

review and should public demand be there, we will add further trains mid-week starting on a Friday and working backwards.

To provide the public with the very best offering while also complying with the latest Government guidance, our service trains will be formed of compartment stock. Compartments will be sold as a whole and all tickets will be pre-bookable – our intention is to have these available for purchase about two weeks before the reopening. There will be no 'turn-up-on-the-day' ticket sales available on any services for the rest of the year.

In line with other transport bodies and following best practice, face coverings will be required to travel on our services. This includes travelling on dining services although coverings can be temporarily removed while eating. All our carriages and station environments will receive an enhanced cleaning regime including door handles. The Railway's priority will be on providing everyone with a safe and enjoyable day out.

At Sheffield Park we will have dedicated entry and exit lanes for our customers. In line with Government guidance, the Bessemer Arms at Sheffield Park, Horsted Keynes buffet and Kingscote kiosk will remain closed. Our SteamWorks! exhibition and museum at Sheffield Park will be open employing a one-way system. Our catering services will be provided via a take-away service from the Bessemer Arms which can be pre-booked when purchasing tickets and our shop will be open with social distancing in place.

All of the above remains provisional at the moment and dependent on Government advice and guidance, in particular about the next phase of easing lockdown which we'll be watching carefully. As our plans move from provisional to confirmed, we will keep you updated.

The above sets out what we plan to do but how do we get there? As you'll all appreciate, there is a huge amount of work to complete to prepare the railway for reopening. Tasks such as 'Fitness to Run' exams across our locomotive and rolling stock fleets, line-wide structures and track inspections, testing of our signalling & telecommunications systems, re-stocking catering outlets and reopening our sales office. Our staff and volunteers are key to making this happen and from the mid-July, our safety critical staff and volunteers will return in a phased manner. This will allow the critical work to take place as outlined above, while volunteers such as our Friends groups and others across the railway will also return to support the reopening.

As we progress throughout August and into September it's our intention to incrementally increase our staff and volunteer input but

again, in line with the Government advice and guidance at the time. The Railway will contact volunteers to ascertain their individual personal circumstances and availability so that they return when they are able to do so.

The Board, BRPS and Bluebell Railway Trust all look forward to us fully reopening and our dedicated staff and volunteers returning as soon as possible.

A large part of our reopening plan has also focused on the remainder of 2020, including reviewing all those events in the calendar. These events will remain under review and at the moment we still hope to offer something special in October as well as our Christmas service.

I hope this has given you an idea of our thinking and further announcements will be made as our plans are confirmed. Finally I'd like to thank you all for your support and patience. For now stay safe and I look forward to seeing you all very soon.

CHRIS HUNFORD
Bluebell Railway plc chairman



**Did you miss our
Spring issue?
It is still available to
view at www.bluebell-railway.co.uk**



Progress again on OP4 cladding

Our contractors were on site again post-lockdown in mid-June to complete the task of cladding the walls around the OP4 carriage shed and adjacent Heritage Skills Centre at Horsted Keynes. A volunteer team look forward to when they are allowed to return to the works in order to progress the fit-out of the Trim Shop.



The Heritage Skills Centre and carriage shed end wall cladding progress on 16 June 2020. COLIN TYSON

Dame Vera Lynn

We were saddened at the passing of Dame Vera Lynn on 18 June aged 103. The 'Forces' Sweetheart' was a keen supporter of the Railway and had attended many of our Poppy Days along with local detachments of the Royal British Legion forming the colour party. She also launched our 50th anniversary appeal in 2009 to fund the extension. A close friend and near neighbour of our late president Bernard Holden MBE (they first met when Bernard was on war service in India) who died in 2012 aged 104. There must be something in the Ditchling air! Full tribute next issue.



LEFT: Bernard Holden and Dame Vera Lynn at Sheffield Park in March 2007. COLIN TYSON

Membership matters

At the time of writing the Railway is closed to all staff, volunteers and visitors. However, your membership secretaries are still working from home. This article is shorter than usual while I just cover some points that you need to be aware of. The quarterly draw for a year's free membership will be held over to the Autumn printed edition of *Bluebell News* as the assistant membership secretaries have not been able to leave your renewal forms in the membership office.

For those of you who renew your membership in July, you will notice that the renewal letter has been modified. The front now has a printed date that you

should aim for in getting your renewal, stamped self-address envelope and payment back to your assigned assistant membership secretary. On the reverse there is a Direct Debit mandate for you to fill in if you wish to pay via this method. There is also a date near to the top of this part of the form by which we must have the completed form returned to the membership office. This allows us time to carry out a check to see if the information is correct and set up the collection and send your new card(s). Late payments cannot be collected by Direct Debit as the quarter's collection file would have been closed.

The request for your email addresses

produced quite a few responses. If you have not done so yet, please let us have them via the address below – it makes it easier to keep in touch.

I'm very pleased to report that from lockdown in March until the end of May the Society has gained 97 new members. On the downside we have been notified of quite a few members who have passed away, including seven returned appeal letters marked 'deceased'.

Do take care and keep yourselves safe.

DON BREWER
Membership Secretary
membership@bluebell-railway.co.uk



CV EMERGENCY APPEAL SUCCESS

In the winter months of 2019/2020, a small team comprising Steve Bigg, Paul Bromley, Roger Kelly and myself started planning to run a fundraising campaign with the strapline 'The Jewel in the Crown' as part of the overall Diamond Jubilee celebrations. The campaign was to raise funds to carry out restoration of Horsted Keynes station that has served the Bluebell Railway and its predecessors so well since 1882. In truth, the station was in remarkably good condition but, like many of us, was beginning to show its age.

Ironically, preparations were almost complete and we were 'ready to roll' when the world changed dramatically upon the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic. Suddenly, there were no trains, no employees, no volunteers and, above all, no visitors.

The Diamond Jubilee plans were quickly put on hold, followed by the suspension of the fundraising appeal.

In the space of a few days, a new fundraising campaign, dubbed the 'CV Emergency Appeal' came into being. The

first tentative step saw a low-key funding campaign using the online portal of Virgin Money Giving with an initial target of £25,000. At the same time, a mass mailing was initiated that resulted in around 10,000 letters being sent to shareholders, members and friends of the railway to seek donations - not for the 'survival' period during lockdown but to help fund the 'recovery' period when income from fares and other income would be slow to return.

An ambitious target was set at £300,000 amid some trepidation and even doubts as to whether we could achieve such a figure. We need not have worried though, because in a matter of just a few weeks, donations flooded in by cheque, bank transfer and through Virgin Money Giving. Much publicity was also gained in local (even as far as Yorkshire!) and national media as well as the railway press. We reached the initial target of £300,000 by the end of May but, because of the continuing uncertainty about when the lockdown is lifted and what conditions may

be imposed to enable safe operations, we decided to keep the appeal open with the very strict condition that every penny will be spent on the recovery phase.

At the time of writing there have been a staggering 2,300 donations totalling £350,000. That is a quite phenomenal response - not just from shareholders and Society members but also from many members of the public. It has shown the enormous regard in which the railway is held and must make us all determined to re-build and continue the 'Bluebell' for the future.

So a massive three-hundred thousand thanks to all of our donors and to the fundraising team behind the scenes who make it all happen. The Emergency Appeal can be accessed online from Bluebell websites, along with instructions on other ways to donate.

TREVOR SWAINSON
Funding Governor
Bluebell Railway Trust



Publicising the appeal 'on the buses' courtesy of Steve Wallis and his bus company Southdown PSV.



LOOKING AHEAD TO REOPENING

Welcome to the second joint communication in *Bluebell News* from the Society and Plc Chairmen. We sincerely hope that you and your families are managing to keep well and stay safe during the recent challenging and worrying months we've all been experiencing.

We are already halfway through 2020 and what a roller coaster year it's been so far – not only for the world, our nation and ourselves as individuals but also for our Railway. The year started with a feeling of great anticipation and promise as we looked forward to the exciting prospect of celebrating the huge achievement of Bluebell being the first standard gauge passenger heritage railway to achieve the 60th anniversary of train operations. However, on 23 March everything changed dramatically when the coronavirus lockdown was announced. All but essential workers had to isolate at home and come to terms with the most severe government restrictions since the Second World War. For the Bluebell, as well as countless thousands of businesses large and small, our revenue stream was abruptly severed for an indeterminate period. This serious and unprecedented situation required immediate and decisive action.

It's during challenging times when it's particularly important that an organisation has in place a cohesive and effective management structure to provide stability and leadership to ensure the best possibility of survival and successful emergence from such an unprecedented event as this Coronavirus pandemic. Over the past few months we have seen a number of changes within the Plc Board and Society Committee, including the sudden and sad passing of Chris White after many decades of commitment and service to the Railway, and also the resignation of Graham Aitken as Society Chairman after nearly four years in the role. We have also welcomed a number of new directors to the Plc Board, each of whom brings significant and relevant experience. They have all had something of a 'baptism of fire' brought about by the pandemic, but with the breadth of experience they bring, together with the tangible input and support provided by the Society Committee and the Trust Governors, we have a management team able to collectively provide the effective planning and decision-making required in the headwind of very challenging circumstances. This has been greatly assisted by the attendance of both the Society and Trust chairmen at all fortnightly Plc Board virtual meetings, providing a genuine 'One Railway' approach to current policy-making.

Over the sixty-year history of the Bluebell one aspect that has endured is the fantastic and consistent support our members and other supporters have provided, both in the good times as well as during the more challenging ones. Indeed, elsewhere in this issue of *Bluebell News* you will be able to read an article by the previous Funding Director Roger Kelly in which he reflects on some of the most notable fundraising milestones and achievements over the past decades. The recent Emergency Appeal, ably led by the Trust's Funding Governor Trevor Swainson, has proved yet again the tremendous support the Railway continues to attract. As this edition was released, the Appeal had reached a total of £350,000, a really tremendous figure and on behalf of the Plc, Society and the Trust we want to convey our sincere thanks and appreciation to all those who have already contributed so generously. The funds provided will be hugely beneficial in helping the Railway survive the enforced lockdown, and you have our assurance that it will be very carefully and wisely spent in this endeavour. Owing to the continuing uncertainty concerning the future effects of the pandemic, and the resultant and serious national economic challenges that will inevitably emerge, further donations to the Appeal will be of enormous assistance towards securing the survival and future



sustainability of the Railway. As you will have read in the letter that accompanied the Emergency Appeal mailing, as part of our survival plan we have also utilised the government job retention scheme and other appropriate funding sources.

A post-Covid business plan is in development, based upon the cornerstone objectives of 'Survive – Rebuild – Grow'. This plan will provide the basis upon which we can emerge from the pandemic shutdown as a more focused, resilient, creative and effective business, and well-equipped to take on the new challenges and opportunities ahead. Successful delivery of these aspirations could then be viewed as a fitting and positive legacy from the upheaval of the Coronavirus experience.

Looking ahead, you can be assured that much work has taken place to investigate the safe and sustainable opportunities to reopen the Railway for our staff, volunteers, members and visitors. As you can imagine, this is a complex task given the uncertainty on future government guidance affecting our sector of the leisure industry, as well as the gravity of the national economic outlook. We are currently working towards a reopening of train operations on 7 August, with a schedule of special pre-booked services through to the end of the year that will reflect the likelihood of some form of social distancing regulations continuing for some time to come.



BR No 80151 approaches Deans Crossing with the 11am train from East Grinstead on 8 March 2020. PETER EDWARDS

Included in this service schedule we are planning a couple of special events, as well as a 'Santa Special' programme and a new seasonal attraction in the lead-up to Christmas. The details for these, as well as the other services following reopening, will of course be subject to review in the event of changing circumstances, and at the appropriate time will be widely announced and promoted. Whatever we are able to do, the priority objective will be to fully comply with the government's Covid-19 regulations applying at the time, and to ensure our staff, volunteers and visitors will feel safe and comfortable whilst at the Railway.

Earlier in this review, reference was made to the significance of this year as the Diamond Jubilee of the commencement of heritage train operations at the Bluebell Railway. A lot of people had spent many months planning a big celebration this August that's befitting of such a milestone achievement. When it became clear that mass gatherings and social distancing restrictions were unlikely to be fully lifted by that time, the decision was taken to postpone the event until August 2021 to ensure the maximum number of members and visitors will be able to come to the Railway to enjoy the celebrations. We will, however, commemorate the significance of the actual anniversary on 7 August this year, but on a necessarily low-key basis as the Covid-19 restrictions will clearly still prohibit the gathering of large numbers of people. We will of course ensure the commemorations are filmed and

widely publicised, so the significance of the actual anniversary date will not be lost.

So, in conclusion we not only reiterate our sincere thanks for the generosity shown by the donations to the Emergency Appeal, but also our deep gratitude for your patience, support and forbearance as members during the difficult months we've all recently experienced. It has frustrated the Bluebell management team as much as we're sure it has you that the Railway has been forced to close for an extended period, but in circumstances such as this the safety and health of the population is of course by far the greatest priority of all. We still have many challenges ahead before some form of normality returns, but with careful planning and focused decision-making we remain optimistic about the future prospects for the Bluebell. We look forward to welcoming many of you during the remaining months ahead this year, and trust that circumstances in 2021 will be such that we can see even more of you at the Railway to share the enjoyment of a year of celebration...even if it's in our 61st year!

Above all, keep well and stay safe.

STEVE BIGG
Acting Chairman, BRPS
CHRIS HUNFORD
Chairman, Plc

Diamond Anniversary update

The much-anticipated 60th anniversary of the first steam-hauled passenger trains operating on the Bluebell Railway is now in sight on Friday 7 August. This is not only a significant milestone for the Bluebell but 'Steaming through 60' is also significant for the heritage railway movement in the UK. Hopefully you've been following the 60-day #SteamingThrough60 countdown across our Facebook, Twitter and

Instagram profiles that started on 8 June. The posts include fun facts, archive videos and photographs from yesteryear as we count down the 60 days until our big birthday.

You'll recall from earlier reports that planning for the big birthday started back in 2017 to celebrate the several 60th anniversaries associated with the Bluebell Railway. So it is disappointing that we will not be able to hold the three-day event

that we had planned this year because of the restrictions placed on us as a result of the Covid-19 global pandemic. However, it's merely a postponement, not a cancellation, as we do plan to celebrate with an event in 2021 and will announce the date as soon as we can. Celebrations for the 60th birthday this year will be limited to a 'virtual' event; details are on the website at www.bluebell-railway.com/steaming-through-60/

What can be recorded now as part of the ongoing history of our railway is that these 'Diamond' anniversary events started with the 60th anniversary of the closure of the Lewes & East Grinstead line that was commemorated on 17 March 2018 with a special train and the operation of the four-train 'sulky service' that reflected the actual timetabled service on the line prior to closure in 1958. Then almost a year later we celebrated the formation of the BRPS on 15 March 2019 with a formal dinner 60 years to the day that the Society was inaugurated.

The work for the Diamond Anniversary event planned for this year has not been wasted; it included some of the best aspects of past events plus some new ideas to appeal to both enthusiasts and families. Whilst most of what we had planned to do will still go ahead, we have the opportunity to develop those plans with some new opportunities possible in 2021 that were not previously available. However, that's all subject to Bluebell being able to operate as we would like it to next year.

The countdown has started to the anniversary and as we Steam through 60 we can reflect on earlier milestone celebrations such as those shown in the photos here.



Our flagship engine No 323 *Bluebell* heads 'The Pioneer' at our 35th anniversary gala on 6 August 1995. PHIL BARNES

ROBERT HAYWARD
Trustee & Chairman -
Diamond Anniversary
Steering Group



No 541 sports its recreated 'Victory' headboard as it runs round for the 3.30pm train to East Grinstead at Sheffield Park flanked by Nos 1618 and 847 at the 60th anniversary of closure event on 17 March 2018. PHIL BARNES



Sights we hope to see again at the Diamond Anniversary: Crowds enjoying the 50th anniversary celebrations on 8 August 2010. COLIN TYSON

The birth of *The Bluebell Times*

About two years ago, in the spring of 2018, Nick Comfort – the then editor of *Points & Crossings* – indicated that he wished to stop editing that publication, and that those interested in taking over should put their names forward. *Points & Crossings* is the Bluebell Railway's internal newsletter for staff and volunteers. By that time, Nick had edited more than ninety editions, transforming it from a printed publication to electronic publication. His desire was to stop at issue 100 to allow more time for his other volunteering duties at Kingscote and East Grinstead.

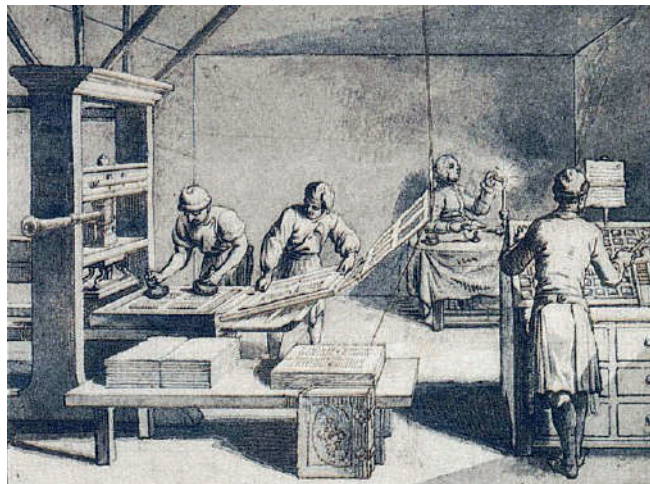
As 2018 wore on, the appeals for a new editor grew steadily more pleading in tone. Eventually, I reasoned that if no-one else would come forward, maybe I could do it myself. "I can't think of anyone better for the role," I was told, though that may have been more a reflection on the size of the field than the quality of the candidate!

So in January 2019 I set out to produce my first issue, having had a lot of very useful handover information from Nick. The first issue contained half a dozen or so articles, arranged in a plain Word document. Casually one evening, I passed it to my wife (or 'Mrs P&C', as she became known to certain people around the railway). On waking the following morning, I found a beautifully produced file on my laptop: she had transformed my rough notes into a properly designed newsletter to be proud of. Thus Issue 101 went out in mid-January. I was lucky enough to have a really stunning dawn photo of *Camelot* in the loco yard taken by James Reeves that I used as a cover image, and which set the tone of always having a striking, but topical, photo to start each issue.

After a few issues, I got into a good routine of production, with an issue of P&C appearing round about the third Friday of the month. Later in 2019, Roger Garman – the then Communications Director – stood down and was replaced by Paul Bromley, who made some useful suggestions about style and content, but production continued as before. (I must acknowledge here the very useful help given by Roger Garman with the first issues I edited, without which I don't think they would have appeared). P&C carried on unchanged into 2020, with Issue 115 published on 13 March 2020. At that point, I had two main Bluebell-related concerns. One was how I would produce – given a packed personal schedule in April – a 'special issue' P&C, due out in conjunction with the planned announcement of the 60th Anniversary appeal. The other was how I would break the news to Mrs P&C that that packed personal schedule was actually 11 days of loco duties rostered for April, including all three days of Branch Line Weekend and a whole week immediately after Easter.

Then our world changed. Stories of a strange and deadly new virus in faraway China suddenly became home news. On 16 March the Government announced a ban on non-essential travel and large gatherings: the operational railway as we know it ceased to function. A few days later, Paul Bromley rang me to ask about producing some kind of general newsletter, as a means to keep in contact with the Bluebell family during the lockdown period. "A bit like *The Wipers Times*," he said, and I imagined a clandestine raid into the quiet streets under the cover of darkness to try to find an abandoned printing press and the last few reams of yellowing paper.

Thus, *The Bluebell Times - A Newsletter for Bluebell Railway Members, Staff and Supporters* came together quite quickly. To speed production, I took the *Points & Crossings* template, just changing wording



The imagination: The editor and his minions hard at work on *The Bluebell Times*. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

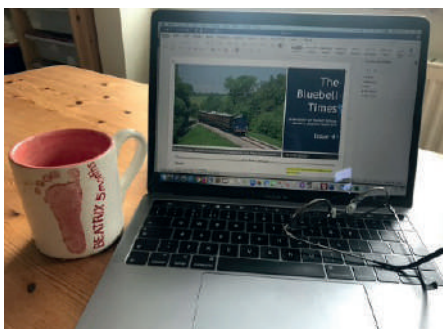
where appropriate. Paul sourced most of the content while I did the layout; Issue 1 was distributed on 30 March 2020, just over a week after the railway formally closed. Notification was in as many places as we could find that didn't generate actual cost. Issue 1 seemed to be well received, which then led to the inevitable question about Issue 2: "When can you produce another one?" "Well, I haven't got any footplate commitments, so let's keep the momentum up." So a date was set for Issue 2 to come out two weeks later: *The Bluebell Times* was thereby officially a fortnightly product. To date we are up to Issue 7, with Issue 8 being planned. Along the way we've had some punning fun with article headings: if we want to highlight press coverage of the railway, it has become 'Railway Cuttings', while much-needed promotion of the online shop is 'Along the Commercial Road', a suitably Victorian-sounding name. 'Society News' is sadly not about the comings and goings of the high fashion set of West London. Inevitably the back page has become Tail Lamp.

What of the future? With very little actual 'news' to report, it has been refreshing to carry a mixture of articles that either look at less visible parts of the railway – such as the production of our Edmondson tickets – or looking back at events in our history: 2020 is after all a very significant year, even if it doesn't feel that way at the moment. We've also tried to give a more human feel to the railway, with articles such as 'Five minutes with ...' and 'A Photo's worth'.

A newsletter such as *The Bluebell Times* stands or falls on the quality of its content. Thus far we have been blessed with many

excellent submissions, but if you feel you have an article or photograph of interest, please send it in – the editorial email address is on the back page of each issue. At some point though, the railway will resume operating: a key part of that will be to ensure there are sufficient volunteers available to run the planned service reliably and safely. So volunteer recruitment and retention is important, and there will be information to support that in upcoming issues. Will *The Bluebell Times* continue after lockdown finishes? We'll just have to wait and see!

TOM JAMES



The reality: a laptop, a cup of coffee, a flaky WiFi connection and a kitchen table.

RAILWAY CUTTINGS

Despite the railway's closure during the lockdown, there has been a lot of publicity in the local, regional and national media for the Bluebell Railway. Many of the articles have helped to publicise the emergency fundraising appeal.

MARCH

● *The Express* listed, before the closure, "the very best spring days out" for families and put "Beautiful Bluebells" at No. 1. The article said the Bluebell Railway was "renowned for its historic carriages and enchanting stations, redolent of another age".

● *Surrey Live* reported on the fact that people can get married at the Bluebell Railway. It said: "If you fancy getting married somewhere a bit different to your typical church or registry office, then this charming venue could be right up your street – or rail line."

● *Jonathan Fenner* a Blue Badge tourist guide for South East England, posted on Twitter: "The story of our heritage railways is

one of phenomenal passion and achievement. The Bluebell was the first standard gauge line to be rescued - a real gem that has captured so many imaginations!"

APRIL

● *Sussex Chamber of Commerce* published a blog post entitled "Keeping the home fires burning" about how the activities of soldiers in the First World War had inspired the railway to produce its own morale-raising publication. The post said: "The one thing we've never lacked is people who are passionate about what they do and the contribution they make. It's what helped to get the wheels turning on the Bluebell Railway in 1960 ... and it's what has helped it steam along for the last 60 years."

MAY

● *The Telegraph* published a photo of volunteers Heidi Mowforth and Mick Blackburn outside their railway cottage at Horsted Keynes. The caption

You can get married on a train station platform at this vintage railway near Surrey

Looking for a quirky wedding venue? You can tie the knot at Bluebell Railway in East Grinstead



If you fancy getting married somewhere a bit different to your typical church or registry office, then this charming venue could be right up your street - or rail line.

Bluebell Railway in East Grinstead just over the Surrey border allows couples to get hitched right on the platform. The ceremony takes place in a charming Waiting Room on Platform 1 before your very own private train pulls in to take you gently through the delightful countryside to enjoy your special wedding breakfast on board.

said the railway "has launched an appeal to raise £300,000 after temporarily closing during the lockdown".

● BBC News, in the Sussex section of its website, reported the fundraising appeal and the railway's links to filming under the headline: *Bluebell Railway:*

Appeal to help save railway 'to the stars'.

● *Yorkshire Post* newspaper also mentioned the filming connection with photographs of *Downton Abbey*, *Poirot* and *The Railway Children*. It said "A steam railway dubbed the 'line to the stars' because of its many

Family holidays: All aboard for the very best spring days out

SPRING is here, with the welcome return of more daylight, warmer temperatures and flowers in bloom. Here are 10 great family days out to enjoy the splendour of the new season...

By VICKY LISSAMAN
PUBLISHED: 10:02, Sun, Mar 1, 2020 | UPDATED: 10:03, Sun, Mar 1, 2020

SHARE f TWEET in



The Bluebell Railway (image: SUNDAY MIRROR)

1. BEAUTIFUL BLUEBELLS

The Bluebell Railway, Britain's oldest preserved standard-gauge railway, is renowned for its historic carriages and enchanting stations, redolent of another age.

As the name suggests, the Sussex woodlands bordering the line are at their best in spring, a mass of deep blue among the trees.



KEEPING THE HOME FIRES BURNING

Share f in

It's all too easy when the physical shutters come down to shut down all marketing and communications at the same time.

After all, the primary focus is on dealing with staff matters and taking a long hard look at the finances to see how long any company can survive. That planned ad campaign or that great marketing idea has to take second place to staying in business.

Like all other companies – and all other leisure and tourist attractions in Sussex – we've been working flat out at the Bluebell Railway to handle personnel and pecuniary matters.

But we were also determined to keep the flow of information going during the closure period.

Alongside the paid staff, we have more than 10,000 members of the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society, more than 750 volunteers and hundreds of thousands of visitors a year enjoying a day out, luxury dining and a steam train ride through the lovely Sussex countryside.

The one thing we've never lacked is people who are passionate about what they do and the contribution they make. It's what helped to get the wheels turning on the Bluebell Railway in 1960 as the first standard gauge preserved passenger railway in the UK and it's what has helped it steam along for the last 60 years.

Jonathan Fenner @jdfennerguide · 7 Mar

The story of our heritage railways is one of phenomenal passion and achievement. The Bluebell was the first standard gauge line to be rescued - a real gem that has captured so many imaginations! @SEBestGuides @bluebellrailway

Naomi Daw @Naomi_Daw · 6 Mar

The Bluebell Railway is one of my favourite places, and will be celebrating its 60th anniversary this summer with a special weekend celebration. Lovely to see them being featured in the Brighton & Hove Independent! brightonandhoveindependent.co.uk/news/people/ft... #birthday #trains



The Daily Telegraph

PROVIDING THE BEST QUALITY NEWS



Tea break Mick Blackburn and Heidi Mowbray, volunteers at Hersted Keynes Station, which is part of the Bluebell Railway heritage railway line in Sussex. It has launched an appeal to raise £300,000 after temporarily closing during the lockdown.

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NEWS

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England Local News Regions **Sussex**

Bluebell Railway: Appeal to help save railway 'to the stars'

27 minutes ago

Coronavirus pandemic



The Bluebell Railway needs £300,000 to recover from its losses caused by the coronavirus pandemic

A steam railway that featured in Downton Abbey and Poirot needs £300,000 to help it recover from lockdown.

Yorkshire Post 13 May 2020

NEWS



Heritage rail 'line to the stars' in fundraising appeal

CALL FOR SUPPORT: The Bluebell Railway, the steam line that has starred in Downton Abbey, Poirot and the TV series The Railway Men is in the Tier 2000, needs £300,000 to help it recover from lockdown.

A 57-mile railway that has been the backdrop for some of the most iconic British TV series is in the Tier 2000, needs £300,000 to help it recover from lockdown.

The Bluebell Railway, which has starred in Downton Abbey, Poirot and the TV series The Railway Men, is in the Tier 2000, needs £300,000 to help it recover from lockdown.

film appearances is appealing for backers to keep it on track through the coming months."

● *Heritage Railway* magazine in issue 267 featured the 60th anniversary fireworks wagon 00 gauge model with the branding 'Bluebell Fireworks - setting fires for 60 years'. It pointed out that the wagon had 1960 as a number on one side and 2020 on the other.

● There has been widespread press coverage of the appeal reaching its initial £300,000 target with the story reported on *More Radio*, *East Grinstead Courier*, *Uckfield News* and the Sussex Chamber of Commerce, among others.

PAUL BROMLEY
Communications Director

NEWS **HERITAGE MODELLER**

Bluebell launches anniversary wagon

WELL-KNOWNERS of the Bluebell Railway can celebrate the line's 60th anniversary in the comfort of their own home during the Covid-19 restrictions, thanks to the release of a commemorative OO gauge wagon.

Carrying the branding 'Bluebell Fireworks - setting fires for 60 years', the wagon is the fourth in the current series of limited edition models.

"This is a slightly more tongue-in-cheek version compared with the first three, but we still wanted it to fit in with other wagons and only close inspection will show the really cheeky touches," Paul Bromley, communications director, Bluebell Railway, told *Heritage Railway*.

"The idea for all the wagons came from a fantastic collaboration between shop staff and volunteers Robert Mitchell, Dave Sueri and Nicholas Fyfe. We have great fun coming up with ideas and eventually we settle on one for each year, perhaps based down a little from the original concept.

"Once the idea is decided on, Robert goes away and does the design work on the templates provided by Dapol and then Dave scrutinises them for scale and authenticity. Robert is then given the go ahead to send the designs through to Dapol, who quickly come back to us with the proofs and final questions about the colour scheme, quantities and delivery dates."

For this extra special wagon to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Bluebell Railway, a slight change was made to the usual design as, instead of having the same wagon number on both sides, it has 1960 as the number on one side and 2020 as the number on the other.

This time the design was taken to the Weyley Model Railway Exhibition last November to gauge interest and it was going to be launched in April at the Crawley Model Railway Show at Tanbridge School in Horsham, West Sussex, and take pride of place at the Branch Lane Weekend, but because of the coronavirus pandemic, these events were cancelled.

"We were extremely lucky to take delivery of them before the railway went into lockdown and have been selling them on the website www.bluebell-railway.com/shop where we sold 51 in April alone," added Paul. "The run of wagons was 115 and we are hoping to have more made once Covid-19 restrictions are eased."

Paul concluded, "We have had a foray into the N gauge market as well, but so far have only produced the Sheffield Park Ash Wagon (a Garsington) in this gauge."

"The team of Robert, Dave and Nicholas have a lot more ideas for future wagons and carriages and want to thank Dapol for their help and patience with our design process."



Priced at £19.99 and based on a gunpowder wagon, the OO gauge model is a little tongue in cheek but fun way to celebrate the first 60 years of the Bluebell Railway while also supporting the line financially. It's

60th anniversary



A 'first train' recreation on 17 May 2010, at the fiftieth anniversary of the Bluebell's first locomotive LBSCR 'Terrier' No 55 *Stepney* arriving on the line, together with one of the original carriages SR No S6575, with both loco and carriage repainted in 1960s condition. ANDREW STRONGITHARM

The year that led up to opening day

Sixty years ago our pioneer volunteers were preparing to re-open their railway to the public, becoming the very first standard gauge former British Railways line in the UK to do so, says Colin Tyson



The four founding students that called the first meeting to save the 'Bluebell Line' at a reunion in 2004. From left: David Dallimore, Alan Sturt, Chris Campbell and Martin Eastland with (centre) Society chairman Roy Watts. Alan and Martin have since passed away. COLIN TYSON

Friday August 7 2020 marks 60 years since the Bluebell Railway ran its first public train. At 2.30pm on 7 August 1960, LBSCR 'Terrier' No 55 *Stepney* headed a train consisting of two coaches - LSWR Third No S320 and Maunsell Brake No S6575 - with SECR P Class No 323 at the rear, from Sheffield Park to a makeshift halt just outside Horsted Keynes, running in push-pull mode. For the rest of the 1960 season this train formed the railway's entire rolling stock.

The Bluebell thus became the first society to show to BR's Southern Region management at Waterloo that volunteers could take over and operate a section of its former line – something that would be followed by several others around the UK

before the end of that decade. What happened to get to that momentous stage in the history of railway preservation?

The little-used former secondary route between Lewes and East Grinstead remained a rural backwater and in 1954 BR proposed the closure of the line, with the date set for 28 May 1955. Closure was originally scheduled for 13 June but an ASLEF strike brought the line to a premature close.

The local press had caught on to the 'Bluebell' name after a resident suggested that the trains were slow enough to get out and pick bluebells, although enginemmen and railway staff had also used the nickname 'Bluebell and Primrose Line' to describe the route.

51, BERNERS ROAD,
BRIGHTON,
SUSSEX.

Ref. IV/E/01 2.

Dear Sir/Madam,

You may recall our past communications with respect to the LEWES - EAST GRINSTEAD RAILWAY.

We wish to inform you that we are holding a meeting in the G.L.B. Hall, Gower Road, Haywards Heath, Sussex in the afternoon of Sunday the 15th., March, 1959, starting at 2.15 p.m. We hope to discuss with you and any other persons interested, the problems involved in the operation of the above railway by a preservation society. A sketch map is appended for your guidance. We hope at some time during the afternoon to inaugurate the "Lewes - East Grinstead Railway Preservation Society"

If you, and perhaps some of your friends and colleagues, could come we should be happy to see you and would enjoy your company.

Thanking you for your past interest in our scheme and hoping that it may continue, we are:

Yours, faithfully,

DAVID C. DALLIMORE,
MARTIN H. EASTLAND,
ALAN R. STURT.



The CLB Hall in Gower Road, Haywards Heath, since demolished.
ANDREW ZVIRBULIS

LEFT: The letter from the students, inviting folk to the inaugural meeting of the Society in Haywards Heath in March 1959. ALL: BLUEBELL ARCHIVE, UNLESS STATED



The new committee stand on the down platform, probably wondering "What have we taken on?"

LEFT: The new committee entering Sheffield Park station for the first time in June 1959.

But BR had reckoned without local Chailey resident Miss Rose Ellen Margaret (Madge) Bessemer – granddaughter of Henry Bessemer, famous for introducing his process for making steel from pig iron. She was chair of the fighting committee against closure of the line and had spotted a flaw in the closure procedures followed by the British Transport Commission. The Act of Parliament that had authorised the opening of the line had not been repealed through subsequent ownerships to provide four trains a day each way – and was therefore illegal. The discovery proved a sensation and the press lapped it up. BR reluctantly began running trains again from 7 August 1956 and

Miss Bessemer was besieged as a celebrity on the first train by the press. BR replied by acting in the spirit of the original Act of Parliament by just providing four trains a day at inconvenient times for either work or leisure purposes and was dubbed the 'Sulky Service'. This service was only required to stop at the stations mentioned in the original Act – Newick & Chailey, Sheffield Park, Horsted Keynes and West Hoathly.

In March 1957 a Bill was presented to Parliament by the BTC to repeal the original 1878 Act. This meant that BR could now close the line legally and following a three-day public inquiry, it was announced that the last trains would run on 16 March 1958 for the second and

final time. The final trip of the day, the late-running 4.28pm departure from East Grinstead, saw three extra coaches added to the six-coach formation amid much fanfare.

And that would have been the end of it all, had not four Brighton students - Chris Campbell, David Dallimore, Martin Eastland and Alan Sturt - arranged for local enthusiast and professional railwayman Bernard Holden to chair an initial meeting to form the Lewes & East Grinstead Railway Preservation Society. Bernard was born in the station house at Barcombe on the Bluebell line during the period that his father was SM there and he knew the line well. This meeting, open to all those interested in running the line

privately (utilising a GWR diesel railcar!) was held on 15 March 1959 at the Church Lads' Brigade Hall in Gower Road, Haywards Heath. Kingscote Station Master Richard Clark recently enquired on the Haywards Heath History Facebook pages if anyone had a photograph of the hall and Andrew Zvirbulis kindly responded with the photo shown here. Says Richard "The hall itself was a tin tabernacle affair dating from the 1900s and used by many local groups and societies up to the end of the 1960s. It housed gymnasium equipment and a below standard pool table! It's believed a local band called the Bee Geez played there in the 1960s – pre-dating, but not to be confused with - the world famous band fronted by the Gibb brothers.

60th anniversary



Sheffield Park - bereft of name and high in weeds.



Looking south from Sheffield Park station as volunteers arrive to clear the tracks of weeds – by hand!

The hall no longer exists and its exact location on Gower Road is unclear as it was either behind what is now WH Smith or Poundland (former Sainsbury's store) on South Road."

A committee was chosen at the meeting and subscriptions were subsequently taken. Member No 1 was Charles Hudson, who headed up the line's S&T Dept and is now one of our Society Vice Presidents. Charles said: "I went by bus and arrived at the hall after the meeting had started so I took a vacant seat in the immediate back row by the door. Behind me was a card table which, after the meeting, became the new membership secretary's table and I was able to turn round in my seat and place my pound note on the table and thus became 'member No. 1' in the receipt book!"

A further committee meeting held at the same location on 1 June changed the name to the 'shortened' Bluebell Railway



The Bluebell's first fundraising railtour, from Tonbridge to Horsted Keynes, passes the now-closed West Hoathly station with C2X class No 32535 on 12 July 1959.

Preservation Society – a name that had now 'stuck' – and concentrated its efforts on the section from Sheffield Park, based on a main 'A' road and where there was readily available water for engines, to Horsted Keynes. The connection to the outside world from Horsted Keynes, the junction for the branch to Haywards Heath, via Ardingly, was to prove invaluable in bringing redundant engines and rolling stock to the line before its closure in 1963.

The newly-formed committee paid a visit to a very neglected and forlorn Sheffield Park station in June 1959. BR was asking for £34,000 for the 4.8-mile section and the Society had £89 in the bank! A five-year lease on the line was later arranged with BR in order to gain some breathing space to raise funds.

On 12 July the Society ran its first fund-raising railtour, starting at Tonbridge, to East Grinstead and down to Horsted Keynes,

where the Society chairman addressed the audience before the train continued via Haywards Heath and Lewes to Tonbridge. The Society had 400 members "and it was hoped to increase this to 1,000."

This was followed on 27 September by a 'Rally Day' at Sheffield Park station, at which a pump trolley was used to demonstrate the recently reinstated signalling equipment and pointwork.

Membership had risen to 600 by the end of 1959 and at a meeting held in the grand surroundings of the Royal Pavilion in Brighton on 19 February 1960, a gathering of 200 members were told that the five-year lease will not become operative until a Light Railway Order is granted. Rolling stock needed to be acquired, a halt needed to be constructed at New Road, Horsted Keynes (for trains to terminate a few hundred yards south of the BR station)



Crowds line the platforms at Sheffield Park to witness *Stepney* depart on Opening Day 7 August 1960. No 323 is at the rear of the two-coach train. Note the TV cameraman on top of the platform canopy.



The makeshift terminus constructed in 1960 just south of Horsted Keynes station for Bluebell trains.

LEFT: Children scrutinise David Wallis operating the signal frame at Sheffield Park in 1960 whilst their parents wait at the station house window to be served cups of tea.

and a loco shed and inspection pit needed to be built at Sheffield Park.

On 7 May the BRPS acquired its first locomotive, LBSCR No 55 *Stepney*, arriving from Brighton under its own steam to Horsted Keynes, together with coaches S320 and S6575. SECR P Class No 323 arrived on 27 June.

The Ministry of Transport Inspection took place on 9 July and was passed with flying colours to enable a Light Railway Order.

Thus the Bluebell Railway was formally opened on 7 August with more than 2,000 people present at Sheffield Park, along with press and TV cameras. A major landmark in British railway history had been achieved.

Four months later, at the end of 1960, 12,000 people had travelled on the line, gross receipts exceeded £2,000 and membership stood at more than 1,500.

Bearing in mind that the public and enthusiasts would still be able to find pockets of steam on the Southern Region for another seven years, would the novelty value of riding on a private line quickly dissipate? The 1961 season would prove as important as the previous year. The season was boosted on 2 March by the arrival of the 'Chesham' coaches purchased from London Transport at a cost of £65 each and immediately pressed into service.

The season started on 1 April and, with the recently-arrived SECR No 27 *Primrose*, trains ran with *Stepney* and *Primrose* at the front and *Bluebell* at the rear, behind the four new 'Met' coaches. An appeal for funding

was launched to secure North London Railway No 55850 and LSWR Adams Radial tank No 30583. The 'Adams' arrived on 12 July, which had arrived in steam from Brighton via Ardingly.

From 29 October the Bluebell was finally given access to Horsted Keynes station by BR, sharing the station with the electric service from Haywards Heath. Many early visitors to the railway recall arriving by train from Haywards Heath in this way, prior to mass car ownership.

92,000 passengers were carried in 1961. Since then of course the railway has never looked back.

After much tin-rattling and careful budgeting, the freehold of the line from Sheffield Park to Horsted Keynes was purchased for £43,000 in October 1968, which included the two stations and ten railway-owned staff cottages – six at Horsted Keynes and four at Sheffield Park.

The early part of the 1960s also saw delivery of locomotives to the railway that had nowhere else to go at the time. Whilst the list included several industrial examples that have since moved on to more appropriate locations, it did include such gems as GWR 4-4-0 'Dukedog' No 9017

Earl of Berkeley.

The planned special long weekend to celebrate our sixtieth anniversary in early August will not now happen of course but the milestone will certainly be celebrated next summer within our sixtieth year of running. At the time of writing, a provisional date of 7 August has been set for resuming public services post-lockdown and we thank all of our supporters who have given so generously to ensure that the railway met its Covid-19 Emergency Appeal £300,000 target and beyond.

COLIN TYSON



Stepney takes water at Sheffield Park on 21 August 1960. The new engine shed in the background is sufficient for two locomotives.

No 928 Stowe

As with all other groups, and the Bluebell Railway itself, the MLS working party ceased work at Sheffield Park on week ending Friday 20 March. We had 'sensed' that the site might be locked down – and various members of the group gathered at Sheffield Park on Wednesday 18 March to do what we could to 'batten down the hatches'. Melvyn Frohnsdorff kindly provided a new tarpaulin which was positioned over *Stowe's* cylinders to ensure the steam chests were protected. Other items were put away and some protective paint applied to certain items that were going to stand outside.

Ray Bellingham took home the new brass gland packings in order that he could continue to work on them at home and Melvyn took home some sheet metal covers he had started to make for the tender and timber footplate.

Prior to the 'lockdown' Frank and Melvyn had continued to progress overhauling the steam heat and vacuum pipework, it is now complete from the

front buffer beam to the cab.

In addition they had 'looked over' some of the large diameter copper pipework and sorted out those lengths that would require replacement and which could be repaired and started annealing and cleaning sections that can be re-used. Andy Sparkes and Peter Short had continued to maintain progress on painting some of the boiler cladding which had started to deteriorate after being left outside. Melvyn has made some new hinges for the cab fall plate which Andy has painted ready for re-assembly.

The sanding gear has been re-assembled and Ray is organising the manufacture of new nozzles as the existing are not fit for further use. Simon Blaker had kindly obtained an acceptable quote for the work required to the piston rods and they will be sent off to the contractor, once 'lockdown' is lifted.

At the time of writing, all the working party are well and we hope it will not be too long before it will be possible to return to Sheffield Park and recommence work with renewed energy and vigour.



Painting work on the boiler claddings in March 2020.
STEVE PILCHER

S15 Class No 847 and Q Class No 30541

Nos 847 and 30541 were in use in February and March. As mentioned in our previous report, it is hoped that No 847 would be used on a limited basis as its tyres are getting worn and are unable to undergo 'turning' and would need to be replaced if they get to the wear limit.

U Class No 1638

Still 'in store' at Horsted Keynes.

U Class No 31618

In store at Sheffield Park, after completion of a limited amount of repainting in order to keep the cladding in good order.

Fundraising for Stowe

I am pleased to confirm that the Maunsell Locomotive Society is in a financially healthy position and we intend continuing with the overhaul of *Stowe* as soon as it is safe and practical to do so. Unfortunately the closure of the railway has left the railway with ongoing costs and little income. Therefore we urge all of our usual supporters to contribute to the Bluebell Railway's emergency appeal – to help tide it over this crisis.

STEVE PILCHER



New sheet metal corner plates for *Stowe's* footplate woodwork. MELVYN FROHNSDORFF



O1 Class No 65 approaching Town House Bridge with the 2.15pm train from Sheffield Park on 8 March 2020. PETER EDWARDS

No 65 - the untold story

It is reasonably well known that when the South Eastern Steam Centre at Ashford closed in 1976 SECR Class O1 No 65 was dismantled and spirited away to prevent it being seized by creditors and sold in lieu of rent owed.

The story of its re-emergence on the Bluebell some 20 years later is less well known. When it disappeared, there was only one person that knew the whereabouts of all of its component parts - Esmond Lewis-Evans. He was the rescuer of the locomotive at the eleventh hour in 1964.

When the Steam Centre closed there were four Pullman Cars there; *Sapphire* an SECR operated car which went to a restaurant in Tyne & Wear; *Orion* an ex-Golden Arrow 1951 car which was returned to its owners Peco in Beer, Devon; *Lucille* a 1928 steel car which was sold by Esmond Lewis-Evans in May 1985 to VSOE and *Phyllis* - a class mate of *Lucille*.

Phyllis was spirited away at the same time as the O1, along with one of the two surviving Bulleid 4DD double deck EMU cars (a third car being cut up at Ashford post-closure) and No 950 - an SECR 'birdcage' brake from the 1907 boat train - to a farm near Molash in Kent.

As time went on it became necessary for *Phyllis* to be sold but there were complications around the site at Molash and the car therefore needed to be in a place that VSOE could be certain that if they purchased the car that they could easily take possession of it. This led to an approach to the Bluebell - initially exploratory and unofficially - to see if the car could be transferred temporarily to the railway.

Funding was needed for the move and for other expenses and behind the scenes a package was put together that would allow *Phyllis* to come to the Bluebell and the O1 to be effectively mortgaged and brought to the railway, thereby providing the funds to facilitate the move and a way to bring No 65 back together and into steam.

Once the deal was agreed and funded privately by a member, the parts of the locomotive began arriving at Sheffield Park. The boiler and cab came from Sellindge, the tender from another Kent location, the engine wheels and frames from Royston and various components such as the steam reverser, wheel splashers and the like came from multiple locations - some even still being at the then still extant Steam Centre buildings.

MARTIN LOCK



The saviour of the O1, the late Esmond Lewis-Evans, on No 65 at Sheffield Park. BLUEBELL ARCHIVE

Abandoned engineering – Bluebell in Lockdown

We all know that Covid-19 has had a devastating effect on our railway in every department. All departments have had to cut their financial outgoings as close to zero as possible and save cash towards the reopening when it comes. Departments that need cash to purchase materials to operate are likely to be the last to get going once the railway does reopen with operational requirements coming first. Departments with ring-fenced budgets should get going relatively quickly within their funding allowance but other departments that require cash for non-immediate projects will take some time to resume normality. None more so than the infrastructure department.

The photographs here show the abandoned state of three separate, but linked, projects:

Stopped mid-build are the 'A' road points which are required to complete the entrance to the down yard at Horsted Keynes. This is the last set of points needed for full access to the OP4 building, together with realignment of the track as shown in the digital spring edition of *Bluebell News*. It connects 'A' road in the shed to the running-in line and requires a small amount of plain track around it. Also 'B' road requires a little further plain track to complete its reinstatement. All plain track in the yard is, or will be, on concrete sleepers and only approximately 70 are required to finish this section.

All the bullhead sleepers in the yard are reused concrete sleepers from the relay of Freshfield Bank. However we have used up every one we have including some

refurbished ones for 'H' road into OP4. In addition we need more old bullhead sleepers and rail to complete all the track within OP4. 'H' road only reaches half way down the shed and now that the firewall between the shed and the Heritage Skills Centre is complete, 'J' road can now also be laid *and the shed filled!*

In order for all this to happen we need more bullhead concrete sleepers from Freshfield Bank. Therefore we need to get on with the next section of track relay there. To this end, we already have the flat bottomed sleepers for the relay and they have been laid out on the long siding (former head shunt) ready to be assembled into 60 ft track panels.

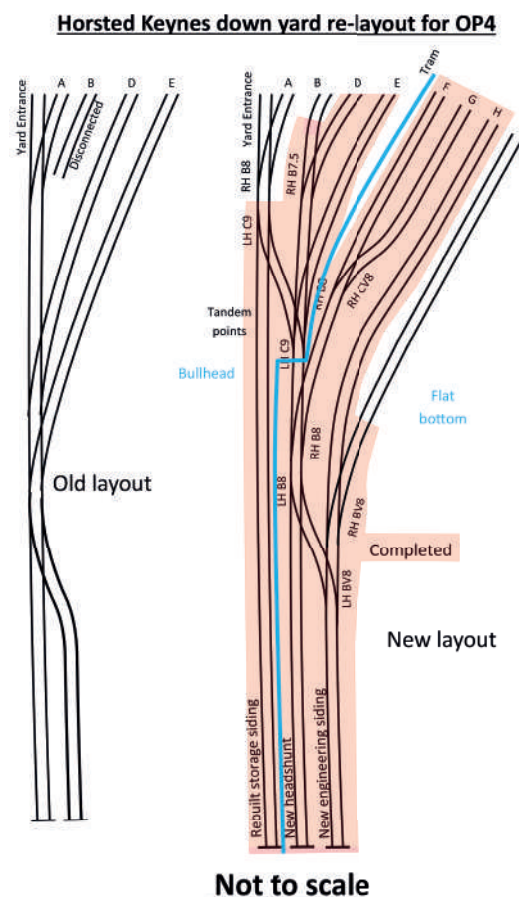
Just before lockdown day, Matt Crawford obviously had the correct crystal ball in operation

and cancelled the delivery of the rail for the job, thus saving the railway in the order of £20,000 at this critical time. So this job is abandoned until we are all back AND there is enough cash to fund the rest of the materials (clips, insulators, pads, fish plates, bolts and ballast.)

Recently we have done very well with the cost of new materials, especially ballast, thanks to Matt 'Arthur Daley' Crawford swinging some good deals. Exchanging training time on the railway for Balfour Beatty trainees for ballast instead of cash has significantly reduced the cost of the relay and down yard track work. This has been a very good deal for both parties and Balfour had planned to do more training this year - again paying us in ballast for them to tamp. However with Covid-19



The abandoned 'A' road point.



Not to scale

The old and new track layouts for Horsted Keynes Down Yard.



LEFT: Sleepers laid out in Horsted yard on lockdown day, ready for the Freshfield Bank relay.



RIGHT: The first castings for redecking Palmers Bridge on lockdown day. ANDY PALMER

who knows if this will happen again. This next relay will take us down over Palmers Bridge which is planned to have a new deck. Moulds for the concrete sections have been built and the first two sections cast. These castings need to be finished and left to harden for at least a month, preferably two before use. It was intended to get all sections made over the spring and summer and install them in

November. This obviously cannot now happen. With only one of the two sill beams and one of the three deck sections cast and the edge retainer section moulds not yet made there is no chance of getting the relay and Palmers Bridge completed this coming winter let alone funds for the rail and so completing the down yard entrance and OP4 track will have to be put off for at least another year.

It was hoped that track could be relayed as far as Palmers Bridge thus releasing enough old track to complete the yard and OP4 before the 'original' 60th celebrations. The track would then be safe enough for the public to pass over, possibly for brake van rides from the platform to right inside OP4.

Clearly Covid-19 has eliminated all of the infrastructure plans for an

unknown period. As significant funds are required to carry out these works, the time taken to build up the required cash depends totally on the railway's ability to recover when we do finally reopen. Let's hope that we can recover quickly enough to get the work done by the '60th plus one' celebrations next year and show everyone what we as a railway have achieved.

JON GOFF

Other infrastructure activities



The new top field ditch and hedge at Horsted Keynes. BRUCE HEALEY

Just before lockdown, the top field at Horsted Keynes was enclosed by a ditch and a screen of hawthorn and hornbeam whips. Fortunately during the lockdown, someone has been in to water the plants and so hopefully most of the whips will have survived the very dry weather. The field has been notoriously wet in the past and the ditch has proved effective at taking away at least some

of the surplus ground water. The work is not yet finished as some adjustments to the ditch will need to be made.

Access to the field is now controlled by a newly installed padlocked gate. This gives security to future events that may be held in the field and will prevent unauthorised use of the field at all times.

BRUCE HEALEY

TUESDAY GANG

Given our lack of activity, plans are a little vague at present but initially we will work at Sheffield Park with various jobs to be tackled around the station including strimming of the picnic area, clearing growth around the bridges and around the signals. We will then work northwards tidying around signalling equipment, clearing sightlines and culverts where necessary. We have been advised that there is a need to remove a large amount of ivy growth at Imberhorne Viaduct and some clearance work is needed around one of our favourite spots at Sloop Bridge. The beech hedge at that location always grows well at this time of year and we try to keep the wide lineside well mown there too! A lot of this work will depend on the availability of the Wickham trolley which is again out of action so plans may change.

KEITH LAWRIE

When Camelot reached 107mph!

I WAS THUMBING through my old STEAM DAYS magazines recently and stumbled across an article relating how No 73082 reached 107 mph in 1964, so I wondered if the fine folks who look after *Camelot* today were aware of the exploit.

The issue in question was No 19, from Aug/Sep 1990, and the article was written by R.D Carrell when he was a fireman, prior to emigrating to New Zealand. Attached is a scanned extract (of rather poor quality because my mags are bound).

The run on Christmas Eve 1964, was not formally timed, but if the speedometer got to 107, it's a fair assumption, is it not, that the old girl (well, young girl back then) easily surpassed the ton?

Either way, it makes for an interesting tale, and Mr Carrell has a wry turn-of-phrase.

MALCOLM
TAYLOR

Steam Days No. 19
Aug - Sep 1990

Cleaning Days to Firing Days

Photographs by
K. Pullen unless stated

R. D. Carrell



Christmas Eve 1964, I was booked with a non-permanent driver to work a goods to Salisbury and, after servicing at that shed, returning to Basingstoke with a parcels.

We had a Standard Class 5MT; No 73082 and on the way down FO was moaning about missing a party at his house and, after such financial expense, he was not going to allow his relatives to drink all his plonk. He advised me that, under all cost, he intended getting back to Basing' before midnight. As we were not booked to arrive back until 1.00am, I thought this was going to be an interesting evening.

Upon arrival at Salisbury MPD, Fred asked me to give a little more attention to cleaning the fire and ash hopper. (These locomotives had self-cleaning smoke-boxes.) As was to be expected, with little traffic around, our train arrived early so we quickly attached, upon release of the Salisbury-based Pacific. Fortunately, for

Above:
A general view of Basingstoke depot in May 1956 with 'Lord Nelson', 'King Arthur', and 'U' class on shed as well as a diesel shunter.

me, *Camelot* had proved a good steamer on the run down and now with a clean fire, I had every confidence in her. This was an unpredictable era.

We got the 'right-away' at about 11.14pm. Fred consulted his fob watch and asked if I was all set. I assured him that I could match his demands. We had five on, fortunately a mixture of BGs and GUVs (no four-wheelers to restrict our speed) and with such a light train, we fair 'lifted' them out of the station and around that notorious curve akin to a 1906 boat train! Speed was kept around the maximum allowable until we were clear of Tunnel Junction, then began the climb to Grateley after which I expected things to liven-up a little.

Things, however, livened-up long before Grateley. In fact, at full regulator and 50% cut-off, Porton was passed at 60mph and I found myself working harder on this stretch than I ever had before, even with 15 bogies on! 'Perhaps reason will prevail', I thought, 'and an easing would be experienced between Grateley and Andover allowing me to roll a smoke?' We flew over the top at Grateley doing 80mph and I sat down, but Fred, with a gleam in his eyes, did nothing, not even an adjustment to 45%! With a 'Rizla' flapping between my lips, I grabbed the shovel again. After a few more rounds of coal, I decided to play Mother and clean up the deck with my hand brush. While I was bending over looking at the floor, I noticed that the locomotive was taking the easy curves down to Andover as if they were a roller-coaster. I grabbed my seat and, using it to straighten myself, glanced over at the 'clock': 98-99-100!

I began feeling giddy and crashed into my seat. The experience of riding a rattling, lurching monster at such a speed is a trauma I will remember for as long as I live. I staggered to my feet and, bracing myself against my backrest, threw in 20 pounds before dropping back to my seat again. 'Is F okay?' I wondered, but the glow and aroma of his Old Holborn indicated he was, and gave me tremendous withdrawal symptoms!

I managed to roll a smoke which, with baking hands, resembled a reefer. I took 10 long drags and, through swimming eyes, was relieved at the sight of the lights of Andover, after which there is a stiff climb to Hurstbourne followed by a steady climb to Battledown and Worting Junction.

I realised that Andover would mark our fastest obtainable speed and a glance at the clock revealed 107mph, being the fastest I had ever travelled on rails! We dropped to 85mph by Hurstbourne and only recovered to 103 by Oakley before easing for the tight curves at Battledown to arrive at Basingstoke at 11.42pm having accomplished 36 miles in 28min, start to stop!

Fortunately, for Fred, the Nine Elms men must have had the same festive desires and were ready to relieve us at the platform. I gave *Camelot* an affectionate pat, not for the speed she had accomplished but, just for keeping her knees straight during the whole event! As I handed her over to my Nine Elms contemporary, his face turned to bewilderment when I muttered, 'She's a good-un, did a hundred-an-seven thro' Andover, Merry Christmas!'

When I dropped to the platform, Fred had vanished. Of course, he had a party to go to. I wandered down the platform past the train, trying to collect my thoughts and re-establish the sequence of events which had made this a night to remember. I do not recall seeing the Guard. Maybe he was easy being air sick!

STEAM DAYS

NUMBER NINETEEN



MORE THOUGHTS ON OP5

MY ATTENTION was grabbed by the coincidence between the excellent article on Horsted Keynes station and the letter from Phillip Jemmison about OP5 in the Spring issue of *Bluebell News*. The article comments on the unique nature of the station and certainly the view south from Leamland bridge and the picnic area, is incomparable to any other railway I can think of. And this is the main reason for not ruining the view with a prominent cream and green shed. The station may well be listed, but can you list a view? You should be able to!

I do appreciate the need to ensure that the rolling stock currently in the up yard is protected and surely OP4 will accommodate most of the 18 carriages that I counted on the current Google Maps image. This does leave over 30 wagons a number of other carriages and locos to be housed. The ideal, and least obtrusive, solution would be a transparent glass building, examples of which exist in several major cities. I very much suspect that the cost of such a construction would be prohibitive. An additional cost, in terms of volunteers, would be staffing such a building so that visitors could see close up what was inside. I doubt that they would understand the logic of having such a building and then not opening it.

The possibility of using land north of West Hoathly is worthy of exploration, as it would not compromise the view of trains emerging from the tunnel, but may affect the view to the north. The idea does have many advantages as long as security is assured. However, looking at Google Maps, the space is limited, so may not be able accommodate every item. So what are the choices to make up the difference in space needed?

One might be a low cost steel framed building 'round the bend' on the Ardingly Spur, but this would be a problem should the railway

extend along the branch. The other possible site for such a building would be the Pump House Sidings at Sheffield Park. This would entail some track alterations so that the A, B and C carriage sidings could access the Newick Siding direct, but I would imagine a good amount of covered accommodation could be provided. There would not be a need for permanent visitor access or staff, nor would the building need to blend in. The area is adjacent to industrial premises so would not be out of place, plus it's far enough from the station not to affect the view. There seems to be a reasonable supply of used steel framed building that could be purchased, and these may still be more economic, even if alterations are needed.

While my suggestions may be a little fanciful, I am firmly with those other members who feel that the proposal for Horsted Keynes would be detrimental to the location and would urge the 'powers that be' to consider all options very carefully.

DAVID JONES
(Romford)

Reply

One of the reasons for considering OP5 at Horsted Keynes is to provide an additional 'must see' attraction, to encourage visitors to stop at HK and linger a little longer. Simply providing more storage (whether at Horsted, Sheffield Park or West Hoathly) doesn't fulfil this criterion. Whatever is planned for Horsted must sit comfortably within the historical context of the existing station. However, before the Railway starts any new 'OP' projects, it needs to finish OP4, fitting out the Heritage Skills Centre so that it can be brought into use.

A single policy for cycles please

HOW the Bluebell has changed over the years. In the 1960s we all cycled down to Sheffield Park and featured regularly on our cycle runs. Be it supporting the Bessemer Arms for lunch or a tea stop, having paid the reasonable price for a platform ticket – now seriously inflated or reduced rates for our elderly or local members – now discontinued.

We would often take a train to the other end of the line with our cycles in the guards van for a day out and train back later, on which we were conveyed at reasonable cost and be made to feel welcome too.

But on more recent visits we were made to feel like 'intruders'. The charges for a cycle

to be carried now vary from day to day, even from ticket seller to ticket seller. So now the Bluebell Railway has been dropped from our club ride as a destination, or a lunch or tea stop. We were told by one member of staff that "refreshments were not for us but serious passengers!" Whatever they are. I read from time to time that other concessions have been discontinued too, which seems short-sighted to some of us.

The quiet solitude that could be once enjoyed on the stations as we awaited the sound of the approaching train, is now lost to totally uninterested children screeching in 'playgrounds' or noisily charging up and down carriage corridors.

At another heritage railway, platforms are free entry, the tea hut also sells sandwiches and hot pasties and our cycles are carried free of charge on trains – we are always welcomed or asked if one of us was missing – an atmosphere just like the Bluebell ONCE had.

R GEORGE
Member 14402

Reply

There has always been a charge for carrying cycles and this is a flat fee as set out on the Railway's website. Cycles can only be carried where there is space in the guard's van. We will look at all the issues raised in this letter.

Diesel traction on the Bluebell

I CANNOT disagree more with the view of Michael Welch (BN Summer 2019) advocating the introduction of diesel traction to the Bluebell Railway. The reason given is that it is 'commercially desirable' – in other words, money talks.

I visit the Bluebell from Sunderland in the knowledge that I am guaranteed a steam only ride. Too many other heritage lines have succumbed to running diesels with the same 'commercially viable' excuse. Steam only on the Bluebell please!

BRIAN BARRY

Reply

The Railway has no plans to substitute its steam services. Having a larger diesel however could rescue a train in the event of loco failure or substitute for an early morning steam failure, as well as hauling trains if steam was banned in a high fire risk scenario. But it would have to be powerful enough to pull six coaches up our ruling gradient to East Grinstead. Ed.

Filming on the line

Two filming jobs sneak in prior to lockdown

24 February

Agatha Christie Documentary, Channel 5

Broadcaster and travel writer Simon Calder was at the railway making a programme focusing on the part played by travel and railways in the life of Agatha Christie and how those things inspired her writing.

He explains that the 1920s and 1930s were the Golden Age of travel in general and railway travel in particular, with intense competition for passenger traffic between the Big Four. It coincided with the Golden Age of female crime writers, notably Agatha Christie, Dorothy L Sayers and Margery Allingham. Christie herself enjoyed train travel - always First Class - and used train journeys as inspiration in several of her

murder mysteries. In Poirot's *ABC Murders* (filmed at Horsted Keynes) a railway timetable, left at the scene of each murder, provides one of the main clues. In *The 4.50 from Paddington*, a woman witnesses a murder very briefly from the window of her train in the dark as it passes another on an adjacent line - but nobody believes her because no actual body turns up. In *The Mystery of the Blue Train* the murder of an heiress takes place on the prestigious train from the Riviera, and in the most famous train murder of all, *Murder on the Orient Express*, the train is stuck in a snowdrift with all the suspects trapped aboard at the mercy of Hercule Poirot.

The Golden Ages of steam and murder may be past, but the novels of Agatha Christie and the



The fashion shoot at Horsted Keynes in early March.
MICK BLACKBURN

other Golden Age writers and the atmosphere of the Bluebell Railway, once we are up and running again, can recapture them.

Simon Calder was filmed at Sheffield Park boarding the train, and travelling in Maunsell coach No 1365.

4-7 March Fashion Shoot

Just before the lockdown, a prominent Italian fashion house chose Horsted Keynes station as the setting for its Autumn / Winter children's collection.

An intricately detailed plan of shooting for four days was drawn up, and soon abandoned because of constant heavy rain, which put paid to many of the outside shots. Not that the weather was the only problem. At this time, Covid-19 was yet to hit Britain in a big way, but Italy was going into lockdown and travel restrictions were in place, so the top guns of the fashion house were unable to leave the country, and had to do their bit and keep an eye on the shoot via video link.

SECR O1 No 65 and the Metropolitan coaches provided the backdrop and set for the children in a variety of smart, weird and wonderful attire, surrounded by vintage toys and a large numbers of plants - the haul of what appeared to be a fairly haphazard raid on the local garden centre. Shots were taken in front of the engine, around the station and booking office, and beside a teetering pile of vintage luggage, some pristine (courtesy of the fashion house props dept) and some battered (courtesy of Horsted Keynes station).

After a final cheerful picture of all the children peering out of the same carriage window and waving, with wooden engines and hobby horses piled on the platform, the shoot was wrapped. That was the last film job on the Bluebell before lockdown, and the last time, for a while, that children would be able to cram together at a train window and wave to the assembled crowds.

HEIDI MOWFORTH

SAVE THE DATE!



Celebrate

**60 years of the Bluebell Loco Dept.
Saturday 24th October 2020**

A reunion for all those who have been connected with the department over the years. Open to current and former loco department members, family and friends. Further details to follow.

All of the books featured are available from Sheffield Park shop. Order online at www.bluebell-railway.com/shop/ The shop will be open to visitors on running days from 7 August.

Bluebell Railway Sixty Years of Progress 1960-2020

By Colin Tyson, Amberley Publishing, softback, £14.99

Opened in 1960, the Bluebell Railway was the very first standard gauge former British Railways line in Britain to be taken over by volunteers, having seen the success already achieved at the narrow gauge Talylyn and Ffestiniog Railways in Wales.

Starting with a leased line of just under five miles and one steam locomotive and two coaches, the railway has grown over its sixty years to amass 32 steam locomotives; 91 carriages; 83 wagons; 750 volunteers; 10,500 supporting members and an annual turnover of £3.6m, being one of the top tourist attractions in the South East.

This book charts sixty years of progress year-by-year as the railway celebrates its diamond anniversary. The 1960s were dominated by raising funds to purchase the freehold of the line from BR, after which it never looked back. The 1970s to 1990s saw growth in supporting infrastructure and tentative steps to extend the line north a further six miles to join the national rail network at East Grinstead – an ambitious project successfully completed in 2013.

Recent developments have included more undercover accommodation for its heritage assets and secondary railway-themed attractions to continue its appeal to families and enthusiasts alike.



LBSCR Carriages Vol. 3 Bogie Stock 1879-1907

By Ian White, HMRS, hardback, £29.95

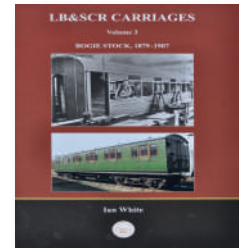
The third of four volumes providing illustrated coverage of the bogie carriages of the LBSCR, a company with a large and diverse fleet despite its limited route mileage; previous volumes (Kestrel Books, 2014, 2016) described the 4 and 6-wheeled stock. This new work makes substantial use of the HMRS drawing collection where the author is a volunteer. New drawings are provided where needed, and examples of planned but unbuilt designs are included showing that the ambitions of the designers far outstripped those of a conservative management. There is extensive photographic coverage with some previously unseen views, and extensive train formation data.

On opening, the reader is presented with a chapter describing bogie carriage structures, illustrated with new drawings and extracts from original engineering drawings, as well as photographs, some provided by carriage restorers. There are seven descriptive chapters, starting with the 8-wheeled Cleminson and bogie carriages of the Stroudley era, the main line and suburban arc roofed carriages constructed between 1894 and 1905, and the clerestory carriages of the late 1890s. In 1905 the LBSCR embarked on a brief period of constructing elliptical roof carriages, which were of a remarkable height, closely matching the American Pullmans and earning a nickname of 'balloons'. Three chapters cover these carriages, which include the City Limited corridor stock and the first LBSCR motor trains. The latter chapter also includes the steam and petrol motors.

The final chapter describes significant discoveries made after publication of previous volumes, including an analysis of the LBSCR's pioneering use of electric lighting in the 1880s. The book is completed by a list of engineering drawings; facsimile reproduction of an 1890s carriage specification; lists of running numbers; and indices to diagrams and subjects.

The book will appeal to model makers, historians and restorers of LBSCR, SR and other carriages, and like previous volumes, all royalties will be donated to the Bluebell Stroudley Coach Fund.

The forthcoming Volume 4 (pre-order available from the shop) will complete the series, covering the remaining arc roofed and motor carriages, AC electric stock, saloons, and ambulance trains. Unlike any previous work on LBSCR carriages, it will also describe the fleet of over 60 Pullman cars that were an integral part of the passenger services.



Southern Coaches Survey Pre-Grouping & Mk.1 Stock

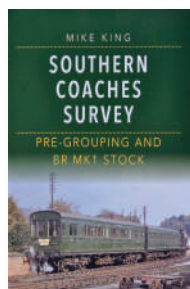
By Mike King, Crecy Publishing, hardback, £25.00

In series with the author's previously published and acclaimed volumes on Southern passenger stock, this book covers both pre-grouping stock and BR built vehicles used on the Southern Region and is heavily illustrated with photos and scale drawings.

Those interested in the SR and the Southern Region of British Railways will know of Mike's previously published volumes, *An Illustrated History of Southern Coaches* and *An Illustrated History of Southern Push-Pull Stock*. This addition to that series focuses on coaching stock inherited by the SR from the pre-grouping companies from which it was constituted, some of which was very long-lived, and BR stock used on the Southern from the 1950s.

Among the many vehicles covered are LSWR 2-coach branch and 3-Lav sets, SECR 3-coach Birdcage sets and 60ft 10 compartment Thirds, LBSCR Balloon stock, six-wheelers and vans, Bulleid and Maunsell designed vans for passenger train use and BR Mk.1 corridor and non-corridor stock.

The detailed text is supplemented by information on set/coach numbering and details of the services on which the various vehicles could be found. This is an essential addition to the reference library of all those interested in the Southern and a must-have for those modelling both the Southern Railway and the Southern Region of BR.



Railways of Mann Scene & Unseen

By Phil Barnes, Mainline & Maritime, softback, £9.95

An illustrated album by well-known photographer and Bluebell member Phil Barnes, showcasing all the railways of the Isle of Man in 2019 as a result of his attendance on Roger Price's Bluebell-led party in September.

Because the publisher likes narrow gauge, Phil sent him some images of the trip, not knowing that they would make a booklet from them!

But it's in a good cause - for every copy sold £2 will be donated to the Groudle Glen Railway, supporting the island volunteer-led railway through the coronavirus Lockdown.



60 YEARS OF FUNDING

Much is being written at the moment about the many achievements of the Bluebell Railway over the past 60 years in terms of the creation of the Railway, preservation of its assets and the operation of its train services. Little has been said about how these achievements were paid for, yet the financial support given to the Railway and its success in raising money has been outstanding. The large sum raised for the CV Emergency Appeal is simply the latest demonstration of the financial support given.

In 1959-60 the £2,250 cost of annual rent for the Railway, according to the Bank of England's inflation index, is equal to £50,000 today. This does not sound so much until one realises that back then £2,500 would have bought a house in West London and a good salary was £1,000 per year. The line was purchased in 1968 for £43,000 (£751,000 today) from fundraising.

Individual locomotive purchases have been the subject of appeals over the years and following the line purchase, 1971 saw the first major appeal for the initial four-road carriage shed at Horsted Keynes.

For many the sums raised were often a pleasant surprise. For example, in 1975 the members

came up with the money to buy the former West Hoathly station site, in short order when many in management did not think it was possible. In fact, the speed at which money has come in has often been a feature of Bluebell fundraising. In 2002 Barry Coward, then BRPS General Secretary along with others, ran an appeal to buy the Woodpax site on which to build the carriage running shed at Sheffield Park. There was little time but the £300,000 (£500,000 today) required was achieved within three weeks! The first £126,000 (£200,000) actually arrived within three days and after six weeks the total was £450,000 (over £700,000 today).

Between 2011 and 2017 I ran a series of appeals - usually termed a 'Double Donations Dash' - where donations from supporters were matched by money from other sources for a limited period. The first of these in 2012 raised over £20,000 online (£25,000 today) in four hours.

On the other hand some appeals have run for long periods. Perhaps the longest-running is the fund to build a replica of Brighton 'Atlantic' class locomotive No 32424 *Beachy Head*. Over two decades this fund has raised more than £1.25

million, much of it from several hundred dedicated donors who have given year after year.

The generosity of a large number of people has been a regular feature of Bluebell fundraising. In addition to the three plc share issues of 1986, 1991 and 2008, the Northern Extension to East Grinstead was made possible and partly funded by £2.5 million raised from a number of appeals and activities. There were usually over 1,000 donations at an average of more than £100 each, although they varied from £5 to five figures. During my time in office I once opened an envelope and to my surprise a cheque for £25,000 fell out from someone who had never donated before and who was unknown to us. I was though equally delighted and deeply touched by the £10 that came from a pensioner with a letter apologising they could not afford to give more. To me their contribution was just as valuable as all the others.

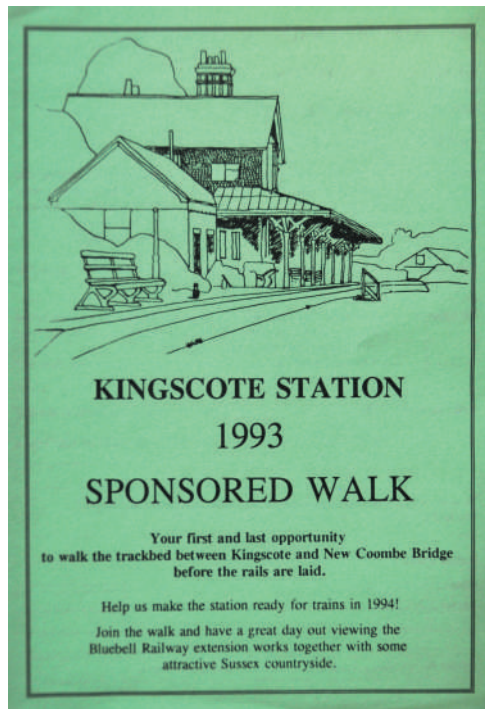
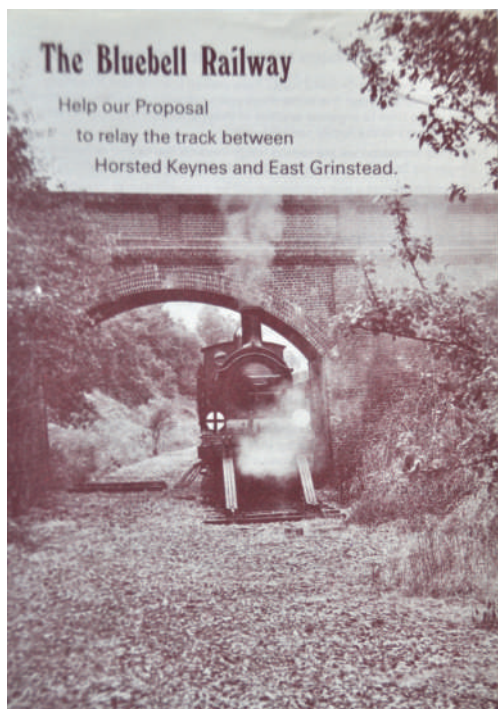
Another feature of fundraising has been teamwork. A team of 13 people travelled on virtually every train from 2009 to early 2013 from Sheffield Park to Kingscote. They were collecting money for the Extension Project; anyone donating ten pounds

received a 'Tenner for the Tip' certificate which confirmed the bearer had paid to remove several hundredweight of domestic waste from Imberhorne Cutting. The team raised £330,000 in four years. The record for collection by a single team member in one day was £1,300. Sometimes total strangers in a carriage would club together to buy a certificate, whilst some frequent visitors purchased so many certificates, they papered the smallest room in their house with them!

Since 1989 most donations have been made via the Bluebell Railway Trust, the charity that supports the Railway. Over the past 30 years the Trust has received donations including Gift Aid (which increases their value by 25%) of almost £10 million. Whilst donations have provided most of the Trust's income it has also received gifts from people in their wills of more than £7 million. These bequests have been particularly valuable as, whilst most donations which are received are for specific projects, most legacies can be used for whatever Railway purpose has the highest priority at the time; over the past five years legacies to the Trust have provided the bulk of more than £1 million which has been spent on the vital task of replacing worn-out track on the original five-mile line, some of which was more than a century old.

In addition to the over £17 million that has been raised one way or another through the generosity of the public, the Railway has also received support from other sectors in terms of grants for capital projects and equipment purchases. Getting external grants can be hard work. Nicholas Pryor laboured pretty well single-handed for five years to get the £3.3 million (£4.4 million today) grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to build the Sheffield Park carriage shed and adjacent museum. It took a team of eight volunteers and me three years to secure the £1,250,000 HLF grant for the ASH project which provided SteamWorks! and the new locomotive maintenance shed at Sheffield Park.

Another success from National Lottery sources was £50,000 received from the Big Lottery as part of their 'People's Millions' project in 2009. Compared

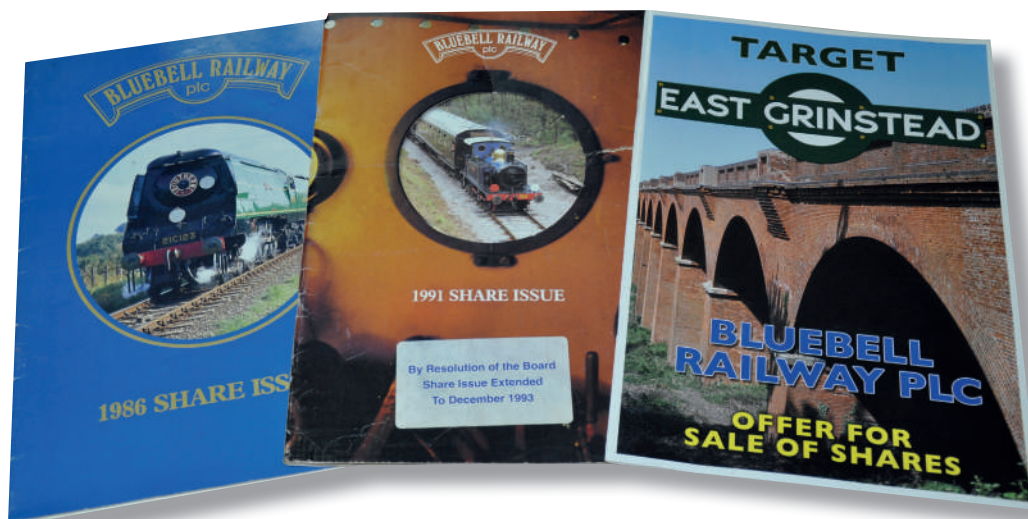


Sponsored walks (now termed 'Track Treks') have always been popular fund raisers over the years, such as these examples from 1987 and 1993.

with the HLF grant the sum is small and was awarded to restore SECR coach No 3360 for disability access. To get this grant the Railway was subject to a telephone vote by Meridian South East viewers when it went head-to-head against another charitable project. It won by getting over 10,000 votes when the other side polled less than 1,000.

Other awards include the Arts Council Resilience Fund, with £87,500 received towards the cost of converting the 1949-built SR Scenery Van No 4601 (originally used to carry elephants) into the 'Elephant Van' Children's Play Carriage which is berthed at Horsted Keynes.

Over the years we have also received money from a number of charities and both local and National Government. Mid Sussex District Council was particularly helpful with the Northern Extension. At national level, a couple of years ago we received £75,000 from the Dept for Transport for the restoration of Pullman Car No 54 to include disabled access. East Grinstead Town Council has made several small grants. Every town mayor since 2008 has supported the Railway in one way or another. Many have taken part in the sponsored walk Track Treks



The three company share issues, the last being to purchase the tip and remaining land.

including the current mayor Cllr Danny Favor in the Virtual Track Trek in June. Mayor Cllr Ginnie Waddingham drove the huge mechanical digger when work started on clearing Imberhorne Cutting. Cllr Bob Mainstone through his Mayor's Charity produced all the funds required to build the children's playground at Kingscote.

In addition to fundraising activity the Bluebell Railway Plc has raised over £8 million through the three share issues since the company was formed in 1985. Of this circa £2 million has come from individual members of the public buying

shares whilst the remainder have been purchased by the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society, predominately from membership fees. Whilst not strictly fundraising where donors receive nothing in return for their money, buyers of shares that are not tradable and provide little return have made an extremely valuable contribution to the Railway's finances. Today around a third of shareholders are not members of the Bluebell Railway Preservation Society.

Perhaps most remarkable despite all the effort and fundraising success there has been since 1959 it is only since

2002, when Nicholas Pryor took on the role of Funding Director, that there has been a senior officer of the Railway whose sole responsibility has been raising money from non-revenue sources. I succeeded Nicholas in 2008 until 2018 when the Bluebell Railway Trust and their Governor Trevor Swainson took over the task of leading fundraising. I wish Trevor and the team continuing success.

The finances of every heritage railway are such that fares and other trading income are only sufficient to cover immediate operational expenses; they are not sufficient to pay for expensive capital items let alone the expansion of the Railway. The Railway has never to my knowledge received revenue grant funding. As the locomotives, carriages, track, buildings and infrastructure age and wear out they become increasingly expensive to maintain and overhaul. The need to raise funds will inevitably therefore have to continue for the foreseeable future. The current CV Emergency Appeal replaced one we were planning with a target of £1.25 million to fully restore Horsted Keynes station. Even more important though is that, as we celebrate our 60th Anniversary albeit under the current unfortunate circumstances, we express our huge appreciation for the many who have given us money time and again when we have asked for it.

Without them there would not be a Bluebell Railway. Therefore on behalf of all Bluebell Society Trustees, Plc Directors and Trust Governors over six decades, I wish to say THANK YOU.

ROGER KELLY

Making Projects Happen

BLUEBELL RAILWAY TRUST

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR AUTUMN 'WALL-TO-WALL' CASH FOR COVER £250,000 CARRIAGE SHED APPEAL

DOUBLE DONATIONS DASH!

Until 30 November 2018 every £10 donated, eligible for Gift Aid, will be worth £22.50 to the project.

The 2018 appeal to complete the walls on the OP4 carriage shed.

THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN

Putting the sparkle back into Horsted Keynes Station

BLUEBELL RAILWAY 60th ANNIVERSARY APPEAL

Please help us with the restoration of our Grade II Listed station at Horsted Keynes

YOUR DONATION will be MATCH FUNDED until 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

The aborted 2020 Diamond Anniversary Appeal for Horsted Keynes station, which by necessity was replaced with the CV Emergency Appeal.

LIVES REMEMBERED

CHRIS WHITE

The railway was shocked and saddened to learn of the passing of Chris after a short illness. When the Railway needed an infrastructure director to complete the extension northwards from Kingscote to East Grinstead Chris rose to the challenge. The main obstacle was the excavation of rubbish from a filled-in cutting. Whilst the logistics of removing the waste material was hard enough, the planning, environmental and financial elements were equally difficult but his leadership saw us through to the end of the project.

On leaving school, Chris became a probationer (nowadays a trainee technician) at Exeter on the Western Region where he soon got to grips with the rudiments of basic signalling and telecoms but also modern technology with the Bristol Power Box project.

On completion of his

apprenticeship, Chris specialised in telecoms and moved to Slough as a maintenance technician. He later became a telecoms works engineer and was involved in the provision of the Bristol-Paddington 4MHz transmission system.

In 1976, he became telecoms maintenance engineer for the Southern Region where he created a regional telecoms fault control facility in Croydon. Staffed around the clock, it quickly revolutionised how telecoms was managed with the control room staff being able to prioritise faults and direct the telecoms technicians around the region.

In recognition of his achievements, he was promoted to the top telecom maintenance post at BR HQ, where he set about introducing the same standards for fault controls on a national basis.

During the mid-1980s, Mercury became a competitor to BT with Mercury installing its own fibre cable network on the railway and maintained by BR. The maintenance regime stipulated strict times for the repair of faults and financial penalties imposed if these times were not met. Chris and his team had to significantly improve the response times, and he was instrumental in the telecom group being BS 5750 registered.

With BR being privatised, a new division was created – BRT (British Rail Telecoms). He retired from BRT before its sale to Racal Electronics, but Chris took the opportunity to use his undoubted skills in other ways. Working for Atkins, one of his first tasks was to assist Railtrack with the Year 2000 millennium data problems. Other projects included provision of a quality management system for Irish



Rail, telecom documentation for the Channel Tunnel route from Waterloo, support to Metronet for the design of new telecom systems on LUL, advice to Network Rail in Scotland on migrating the track-to-train radio system to GSM-R, telecom systems for a major rail upgrade project in Denmark and, lastly, assistance and advice to Crossrail on telecom issues.

RailStaff magazine

Just when Chris joined the locomotive department is unclear, until we can all get back to Sheffield Park and start rummaging around in filing cabinets, but what I do know is that I was first booked with him, shortly after I passed for firing in 1976. We were fireman and third man on No 592, during a hot summer week of that year working with Keith Gays, who left us shortly after to concentrate his efforts on the NYMR.

That morning things proceeded well enough, so running round at Sheffield Park I offered him the shovel as one does to new recruits and asked him if he had fired before. This was a lesson in asking the right question and listening very carefully to the answer. Taking the shovel he said he hadn't fired 'this' before; so not picking up the nuance we got back to basics about which end of the shovel was which, and how to stand, and where the front of the fire was. Thanking me he started to pile coal in as though he had been doing it all his life; which by and large he had, and being somewhat taken aback I said I thought he hadn't done this before. The response was typical, he said he hadn't fired a C class before but had cut his teeth blagging rides round South Devon on Halls, Prairies, Panniers and whatever was going at the time he was starting, what was to become, a very lengthy and distinguished career on the 'big' railway.

I asked him why he had told me that, to which his answer was that he might have learned something. Well it certainly taught me something, about not taking people at face value, but it was also a highly revealing incident about the character of someone who I was to learn to know and respect very well. A reserved man, but who had a great sense of humour once you got him to open up to you. Our paths did not cross very much on the footplate after that, but once he got to the dizzy heights of driver, he acted as mentor to many novice footplate staff, and was without doubt a railwayman of the old school, safe, but willing to 'tap them along' when required and rarely willing to take the credit for what he achieved.

We were all very sad to learn of his sudden passing after a short illness and send our best wishes to his husband Neil.

Russell Pearce
Driver

JOHN SCRACE

John was a former loco man (as was his father) and a renowned and hugely knowledgeable railway photographer. He passed away peacefully on Friday 24 April at his care home in Balcombe, having been ill for some time.

Until recently he had been providing help remotely on a monthly basis in support of the work of our museum's photographic archive in his home town of Horsham.

His legacy will be his many hundreds of now-historic photographs, many of which have been published in books and magazines over the years.



KEN DEANS

Ken Deans passed away in his nursing home in early April. Already an experienced signalman at the KESR, he passed for the original 'temporary' Kingscote Signal Box in July 1999, soon adding SP and HK to his list. He gave up HK on account of the stairs when he was having joint trouble and wasn't sure about the 'new' Kingscote, but did do a conversion and passed with flying colours.



Joint replacement surgery and recuperation in 2018-19 meant that he had to take a break from signalling but was fully intending to return. Whilst the joints were 'running in' he had a stair lift fitted to ensure he could get upstairs at home without assistance. He called this his Mountain Railway. Unfortunately he subsequently suffered a shoulder injury which prevented him raising his arm beyond horizontal. He then submitted his formal resignation in the latter part of 2019.

He has expressed the wish that when the time comes his ashes be placed in the firebox of a Bluebell engine - his preference being U class No 1638.

Our thoughts are particularly with his son John.

Adrian Lee
Chief Signalman's Inspector

JOHN WOODS

Horsted Keynes Station Master and Guard, John Woods passed away during the last week of March. John always had a witty dry comment to make, usually with impeccable timing. He was a regular participant on the Bluebell overseas tours organised by Roger Price and great company, with a knack for sniffing out beer dispensaries! I remember when John, Dave Devlin and I were wandering around Enkhuizen in The Netherlands and he happened to spot a craft beer bar. Naturally, we had to sample its wares.



Gavin Bennett

I have known John throughout my 15 years as a volunteer and fellow member of Horsted Keynes Station Staff, as a good partner on the Santa Specials, as a fellow Guard and moreover as a founding and solid member of the Rail Ale Team. Very sad indeed. He will be much-missed. His funeral was held on Friday 3 April at South West Middlesex Crematorium.

David Morgan

RICHARD MAXWELL

Richard was a longstanding member of the 73082 Camelot Locomotive Society: he joined us in the 1980s and was a regular participant at our AGM – always good company and happy to chat about all sorts of subjects!

Richard initially helped us with our covered carriage truck (CCT) S2531 just after it was delivered to the Bluebell in the early 1980s. It had been withdrawn by BR 'needing brake adjustment', and one of the first tasks was to remedy this, to make it safe to run.

A number of regular *Camelot* volunteers became interested in US steam era railroading around the late 1990s, and this shared interest with Richard, combined with his railroading interests and knowledge, became a source of much pleasure. Richard was also involved with selling brass US railroad models on behalf of UK members of the NMRA, (the UK arm of the US based National Model Railroad Association), and would have a sales stand at their UK events. His sales stand experience benefited the Society after he retired from Bluebell's C & W dept, as he offered to help on Camelot sales stands. Having an additional pair of hands (and a second trolley) to take sales stock across the crossings at Horsted Keynes or Sheffield Park was always greatly appreciated!

Following the overhaul of *Camelot* in 2015, the Society committed itself to restoring our CCT, which had been languishing in the siding at Kingscote for many years. At our AGM in 2015, Richard offered to assist with the mechanical and running gear aspects of the overhaul of the CCT. In the autumn of 2019 the bodywork repairs on the CCT had been finished, and Richard set about re-instating all the components needed to make the van fit to run again, using his many years of experience. By year end everything had been done, and checked to Richard's and Rowan Millard's satisfaction. Richard hoped to attend the test run of the CCT this year, so that any tweaks or adjustments could be made. Sadly, this was not possible before he passed away. When the CCT runs again, S2531 will be testament to all that he accomplished in keeping it, and Bluebell rolling stock, in sound running condition.



Richard Maxwell.



Richard's last project: CCT S2531 outside the paint shop upon completion of the mechanical overhaul on January 11 2020. JULIAN HEINEMANN

Richard Maxwell first arrived in the C&W Dept in 1992 when he participated in a job scheme run by what was the Job Centre. Following this he became a member of staff in 1993, becoming the first dedicated maintenance employee in the department whose work concentrated on the rolling stock from the sole bar down. As such, he developed his own methods for ensuring that the stock was kept in a manner fit and safe to run.

He enjoyed working on his own, and it is widely appreciated that he worked hard outside in all weathers and under all

conditions without complaint for many years until his retirement in 2012. The conditions for undertaking this type of work have since improved by a huge degree.

He was known for speaking his mind, much to some people's discomfort, but if anyone needed a helping hand, Richard was there to offer assistance. He also had an enormous sense of humour.

In the early days Richard was a member of a volunteer team which travelled the line standing in a wagon, cutting back overhanging branches from lineside trees. More recently he helped as a volunteer on

Stroudley carriages, helping to fit the new canvas to First Class No 661 and cleaning the door hinges for Brake Third No 949. He was also a generous supporter of the Stroudley Fund.

His pride and joy was a classic car - a 1971-built Alfa Romeo Giulia saloon - which had been previously owned by his father.

He was an enthusiastic supporter and trustee of the Terrier Trust, based at the KESR. Apart from the Bluebell Railway, he was a member of several other heritage railways and loco-owning groups.

Sheina Foulkes

