

JOURNAL OF THE EAST ANGLIAN RAILWAY MUSEUM



50 YEARS OF RAILWAY PRESERVATION





▲ On a rainy afternoon in March, No. 5562 heads towards the Museum from the A1124 at Chappel ahead of the Spring Steam Gala on 7th March 2020 - Norman Tenner

▼ Quadruple-headed train formed of AMW 144, Number 23, the WD and the 04 at the Diesel Event on 29th September 2019 - Greg Kiteos



STOUR VALLEY STEAM EDITORIAL

What a difference a month makes!

A month ago when we started to compile this issue of the Magazine it seemed to be a "good news" story. Attendances were up at the major events and work was proceeding apace on various projects, including MiniRail and the restoration of the Diesel Railbus.

However, in common with the whole country we have been affected by the shockwaves radiating from the Coronavirus pandemic. This is likely to have long-term effects unknowable at present. As I write this piece, the Museum is closed to visitors and the planned events for the next few weeks are cancelled. Volunteer work currently continues but will be severely curtailed by restrictions on the over-70s and some developing Health & Safety requirements. We must hope that normal life can return as soon as possible, but we are in uncharted territory at the moment.

Turning to the Magazine itself, you will notice a few changes. In order to save on printing and even more importantly postal costs we have decide to dispense with several features such as "Branch Lines" and "Chappel Through the Years". A fuller explanation for this change is given inside the Magazine on Page 30. We hope that you appreciate the reasons for this decision in the current difficult climate.

Thanks to the generosity of a member we are able to have full colour in this issue which will hopefully allow you to appreciate fully some of the good things which have happened here in recent months and give us "reasons to be cheerful".

The emergence of the Diesel Railbus from the depths of the Restoration Shed to being tantalising close to running condition, and the recent visit of the ex-GWR Prairie Tank come to mind. Also work on the new MiniRail setup has reached the stage when it is beginning to look like a railway, following many hours of volunteer effort.

David Reeve - Editor

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Front Cover:
Nearly Complete - the DRB
stands near the North Box
on 22nd February 2020 -
Alastair Holmes.

Estates and Mini Rail 2 Update -

Tim gives us an update as to what he has been up to since the last issue of the Magazine.

By Tim Rice

Interesting time of year on the Estates front - no one told me we run a water park for three months of the year! Having said that, the rain has been a persistent problem on site for some time. If you would like to know more on estimated rainfall over East Anglia speak to Allan Robinson, you will most likely find him canoeing down the EARM estuary in the front Car Park!

Plans are afoot on several fronts to make substantial investments in our infrastructure for us to be better equipped to manage and operate around the ever-changing climate and increased footfall that we see. This year should see a re-modelling of the front car park to improve its usability, crucial in providing ample parking for our growing number of all-the-year-round visitors. Also work is currently underway via external contractors to convert a disused store room next to the Platform 2 café into an accessible WC. We hope this will be well received by the public as this area of the site can become very busy on events, especially around lunch time!

Groundworks were hit and miss over the Christmas period on the new Running Shed, but flat base has been excavated ready to accept a sub-base for the flooring and track work. Unfortunately, poor weather has kept us from completing the earthworks to enable the track to be re-laid from the siding into the shed, but these things cannot be helped.

The recent winds and back-to-back storms have seen some of our roofs being put to the test. I'm pleased to say only moderate damage was caused during these periods and

work is underway to repair damage where required.

The site in general continues to improve in appearance with subtle enhancements being made in various areas. As always, my thanks go out to the various teams and individuals that continue to support the preservation, maintenance and enhancement of the site.

Mini Rail 2

Firstly, I'd like to give thanks to Martin Gibbons. As Volunteer Coordinator his role has been instrumental in spreading the word on current jobs and working parties on site and harnessing new members. This has proved to be a real driving force on the project and has been a massive help in getting the track work installed. Thanks to all that have come forward to help and join the team. It is really appreciated.

Miniature railways are a great place to start to learn about the fundamentals of railways, whilst being able to enjoy the various roles in operating. I'm pleased to be able to say that unofficially we have rolled the first sets of wheels along our new railway.

Much attention will be paid now to enhancing the landscape surrounding the railway and adding the finishing touches like fencing, flowers, finishes to buildings and furnishing the station. Thanks must go to Mike Nicholls, who has been transplanting saplings from within the orchard to form a row of trees along the long stretch of railway behind the Thompson Building. It is great to see existing

resources being used to enhance our scene.

Work on a station canopy, previously mentioned, has been shelved whilst we finish off the essential elements of the project. This project will be revisited further down the line once we are up and running.

Before long, as we transition from the building work to testing and commissioning, invitations will be announced for training for any who may wish to take part in running this new railway.

There are various roles involved in running the railway much like any other one. Initially, we will have one electric and one steam locomotive.

I for one am very proud of what we have achieved together and look forward to enjoying our new railway later this year.



▲ Lesley Pennell, Robert Guest and Niall Thorogood undertake ballasting works on the new Miniature Railway on 26th January 2020 - Tim Rice

Membership Matters

by Darren Johnson and Linda Robinson

The Trustees wish to extend a warm welcome to the following persons who have become members of the Museum since the last Magazine was published:

Michael Bradley, Ronald & Sarah Davies, The Davidson Family, Ian Gibbs, Louise Glass, Ann & John Hampshire, Ian Harper, David Horsley, Tim Hurst, James Moxley, Philip Murray, Tony Platt, Martyn Prince, The Quay Family, Charlotte Saint, John Smith, Robert Squire, The Thorogood Family, Tom Watts, Emily Webb, Callum Williamson and The Wren Family. We also welcome back Roly Shaw, and his son Dominic as returning members.

Best wishes to all those members who are recovering from surgery or who are otherwise unwell.

The Trustees are very grateful to all those members who have made donations to the Museum during the current membership year; either directly or by including a cheque with their renewal form. We look forward to your continued support in this respect.

If you need to contact us regarding Membership Queries, please contact us via email membership@earm.co.uk

Team Wednesday Update -

Our regular update from everything Wednesday at the Museum

By Tony Foster

Most Team Wednesday (TW) volunteers have now been involved in some aspect of the creation of Mini Rail 2 infrastructure, as it gradually takes shape.

Mini Rail station, now known as Thompson Green station: A tremendous amount of work, led by Gordon Humphris, has gone into creating the station from the old A2 building. All the exterior Tongue and groove boarding has been fixed in place on the front and side elevations, with feather edge boarding at the rear of the building. Work has now finished on the roof of the building, and felt shingles have been fitted to make it waterproof; the canopy over the platform is still to be erected. TW members continue to be involved in fitting out the interior of the station, including the creation of a Booking Office. The original customer window with a speaking porthole from the old MR1 booking office has been refurbished with new glazing and reinstalled in the newly created space.

Skirting boards, dado rails, and decorative panelling are currently being completed. Work is ongoing in the area that will be the

► *The Tongue and Groove Construction on the West End of the Mini Rail Station - Tony Foster.*



▲ *The Ticket Office Window in the Station Building - Gordon Humphris*



Waiting Room, including the creation of a corner fireplace. Once the interior fit-out is complete the building will have to be painted both inside and out. The interior and exterior

will be painted in a scheme similar to that used on the Signal box and Station on the Epping and Ongar Railway - white ceilings, light cream upper walls, Dark brown lower walls, doors and window frames.

The interior of the signal box has now been painted in the colour scheme mentioned above. The exterior will be painted by TW when the weather is more clement and the wood has had an opportunity to dry out.

The Mini rail engine shed in addition to the internal tracks, a series of work benches have been built along one side of the container constructed so that rolling stock can be parked underneath. A fair amount of battening has been installed by TW to carry a 13 amp power supply, and also overhead strip lighting. The electrical work has been completed by Rod Terry. A servicing area in front of the shed was created in part by TW who prepared all the shuttering and formers for the two tracks leading into the shed prior to concreting. This work created a lot of stress on septuagenarian knees! TW also laid an

► *Chris Wright, Paul Daines and Mark Evershed contemplating the restoration of a trolley outside the Storage Shed on 12th February 2020 - David Reeve.*

all-weather path from the Mess Room to the apron.

We did a fair amount of work stripping out the interior of the soon-to-depart Gresley coach. A number of large display plywood boards taken from the coach were recycled and have been used on other projects; we were ably assisted in this task by Bob and Colin from Team Thursday.



The large wooden bench known as the Thompson Bench has been painstakingly refurbished by Nick Hazell. (- See separate article -Ed) The varnished hardwood which took many coats now looks very good. When finished it was placed on display on Platform 5/6, but owing to the lack of proper shelter from North Essex's new stormy climate, it was considered unsuitable to display it here in the long-term. Eventually, after discussion between some Trustees a home was found for it in the foyer of the Thompson building. From experience it is a very heavy bench to move.

To further assist Tim Rice/Rob West in the creation of their new Mini Railway, we were given a rolling flatbed chassis of MR gauge and asked to design and fabricate a wooden-sided ballast hopper which will be used in track laying tasks and future maintenance. TW have also been renovating a number of general-purpose trollies which will have a repaint and have floors added.

Finally, three historic trollies from Platform 3 and Platforms 5/6 were dragged into the Storage Shed recently, allowed to dry out and are now being repainted.

Festive Times

Special thanks go to Margaret Nutbeem who has retired from seasonal duties. For more years than most of us can remember, she has been arranging in conjunction with Retail in more recent times, provision of presents, storing, and wrapping gifts. After all those efforts, long days on her feet presenting to the children. In her time Margaret has also been known to stitch together Father Christmas outfits (or both large and small proportions) for those who in the past have served in this capacity.

Thompson Bench Restoration -

The bench now known as the "Thompson Bench" is believed to have originated from the former Thorington Station on the Clacton branch. It was then in a very run-down condition, but was researched and restored by Mike Stanbury to its original colours.

By Nick Hazell

However, ten years on, the North Essex weather was beginning to get to it again. I began working on the bench early last summer when I noticed the neglected state it was in. First, I dismantled it into its component parts, stored the cast iron legs in the Thompson Building and started sanding the woodwork down to a level suitable for re-varnishing. This took an age given that the bench is twelve feet long and consisted of four pieces, with the seat taking longest to prepare. Additionally, none could be taken home so work progressed slowly, on Team Wednesday days.

coats of exterior metal paint. The GER lettering had more than that and I lost count of how many were applied. The wooden foot blocks were stripped back to bare wood and given about four coats of varnish, including underneath, in order to give extra protection when out on the platform.



▲ *One of the Cast Iron Legs - Nick Hazell*

Reassembly took place on Wednesday 22nd January. I didn't return it to its original site but placed it under the Platform 5/6 canopy, by the Passimeter. It would seem a shame to let the full force of nature spoil it after the colossal amount of time spent on it! It has since been moved to

When the final fine sanding was completed I began applying a clear wood preserve followed by several coats of yacht varnish to each piece. Again, this took many weeks as only one coat could be applied each Wednesday. The seat had six coats in all although I applied nine to the back rail with the nameplate due to the weathered fine splits in the grain in order to ensure more protection for it over time.

a more appropriate position in the lobby of the Thompson Building, where it will be better protected from the elements.

I hope to start work on the smaller GER bench shortly, having protected it under a tarpaulin behind the bus. That one really is knackered but I'm sure that I can do it justice!

I then began work on the cast iron legs after Christmas; they prepped easily and I took them home to carry out a paint job. A metal primer was applied first, followed by two

► *The restored Thompson Bench on Platforms 5&6 - Nick Hazell*



Click 'n Bash *...the journey continues* By Brian McGennity

On Thursday 17th October 2019 at 10-48 and 34 seconds, a telephone call was made to 01206 242524 (the Museum). The number rang and was quickly answered by Stacey in the Visitor Reception Centre, in her usual professional manner. The call lasted about 24 seconds then both parties hung up. Normally a call like this would simply be one of the many received by the Visitor Reception team over any given day.

But this one was different. This was the call that launched the Museum well into the telecoms of the 21st century. It was the first call over our new digital telephone lines.

These lines, known as VoIP - "Voice over Internet Protocol (Yuk!!!) - converts the voice into computer bits and delivers them to their destination precisely as they began their journey. The upshot of this is that we can now enjoy crystal clear incoming and outgoing telephone calls.

The new arrangements provide, initially, 4 circuits in to and out of the Museum. While this setup may seem extravagant, it must be borne in mind that the four circuits will provide capacity for other numbers for services and features running alongside our main line. Our three old analogue lines have each been costing the Museum some £27-50 a month EACH. The four new digital circuits will cost us £2-50 per month each – less than 10% of the previous system. Additionally, we may increase circuit-by-circuit, when we need to, also at that monthly rate and, without the need for extra hardware, adding up to a total of 30 circuits. Work is continuing with BT to transfer the numbers from our Earls Colne lines (known as 'porting') but this should not disturb the new setup.

I am pleased to report that the transfer of the Museum's main telephone line to digital working is bringing rich rewards in terms of cost and superb voice clarity. At about 12:30 pm on Saturday 28th January 2019, the Museum Exchange was transferred from 2 to 3 digit working. For most extensions, this involved simply prefixing the original number with a '2'. Thus 34 became 234 and 25 became 225. Some extensions have been given new numbers in line with their significance in the Museum. For example, Marketing was 30 and is now 300, the Curator was 32 and is now 500, the Thomas World shop was 40 and is now 400. Visitor Reception was 22 and is now 200. The existing services available on each extension have not been affected by this upgrade.

New extension lists, available from the Visitor Reception Centre and from David Reeve in Archive Filing have been issued and indicate the changes that have taken place. It has long been known that we were steadily moving to the point where we were running out of numbers and the decision was made to upgrade the telephone system.

The upshot is that, despite one or two tiny bugs in the Exchange database, the change-over went very smoothly and we now have enough spare numbers to see us through to the next Ice-Age; - in the meantime, happy dialling!!!

Marketing Report -

We are getting busier and busier in the Marketing and Events Department with an ambitious events programme agreed by the committee last August; we now face the pleasurable challenge of marketing and delivering, along with Operations, a full calendar of events in 2020.

By Catherine Harrison

My work began on the 2020 promotional leaflet last October and our talented designer, Paul Bennett, has produced another cracking design, including re-working our logo to add colour and clarify our location a bit better. The design is eye-catching in a leaflet rack and I'm confident will promote the Museum well throughout the region. The website, re-designed a couple of years ago, is still looking fresh and events are updated here all the time. Online ticketing really took off in 2019 and now a significant number of our Museum visitors are booking this way; particularly for events. One great advantage of online booking is that, once the ticket is bought, the visitor is committed to coming, whatever the weather!

Talking of events, our annual figures were published in January (for 2019) and I am delighted to report that we experienced another big increase in event attendance, up 26% in 2019! On top of a significant increase in 2018, event visitor numbers have increased by more than 50% in two years.

On the one hand, it's great to be celebrating an increase in visitor numbers but this inevitably contributes to the 'wear and tear' of the site. However, the development of the events programme, parties and corporate hire brings in a significant amount of income, some of which, I hope, will be reinvested into the visual appearance of the site. Remember, all our collective hard work comes to nothing if we're attracting many more visitors to the Museum only for them to come and find the site to be unkempt with obvious signs of damp and deterioration, chipped and peeling paint work,

crumbling walls and brickwork and neglected flower beds, window boxes and half-barrels.

It goes without saying that the upkeep of this historic site is like painting the proverbial Forth Bridge and no one is criticising our hard-working volunteers who do a sterling job in their specific areas. However, the day-to-day maintenance of our Museum must be prioritised more if these visitors are to return and, more importantly, tell others about us. I understand that a 'Site Manager' is soon to be appointed and it is my sincere hope that he is given the support and most importantly, the budget, to implement the much-needed improvements and achieve the quality standards that are required in order for us to stand alongside our competitors.

On a more positive note, the Museum 'Family Trail' is nearing completion and should be going to the printers in the next couple of weeks. It has been quite a challenge creating this however, I am confident now that it will bring something special to our family offering which engages youngsters and encourages them to enjoy and appreciate our Museum.

► The revised logo as used on the 2020 leaflet and marketing publicity.



Words from the Works -

By Allan Robinson

The following is a brief report on recent work in the Engineering Department-

Lampport :-

The mechanical lubricator has been overhauled and fitted to the chassis and a start has now been made on annealing and fitting of all the pipework. Excessive wear was found in the valve spindle guides, which required their removal to be machined and the fitting of bronze bushes. These tasks are now done, so assembly of the motion can now proceed. Repairs to the boiler continue; the new back-head plate has been welded in, along with the two bottom corners and the two large side plate patches. The next main task is to remove the foundation ring in order for it to be sent away to aid with the manufacture of the new inner firebox.

Simplex:-

Work on this vehicle is temporarily halted until a new starter motor and ring have been located.

The service engines continue to perform well, with various routine and improvements to them being carried out as required.

No.54 is having a new vacuum exhaust ring fitted, and No.11 is having modifications done to the drain-cock operating lever.

Jubilee will shortly be having new gauge columns fitted as, due to excessive wear, the originals are now unserviceable.

A large amount of restoration has been carried out on the Hi-Bar wagon to return it to running condition so it can be used in the demonstration freight train.

At present the main push is work on the DMU to tidy up the body-work, which requires a lot of patches to be welded in and some doors to be changed. The floor also requires work to replace rotten floor boards, and once structural work has been completed it will receive a paint job; hopefully prior to Easter.

Over the period a lot of the efforts of the Engineering Department have been spent supporting other departments around the site, including the new Miniature Railway (MR2), S&T, Estates, Permanent Way and Plant Maintenance. Tasks here have included re-decking of the Flatbed Truck and overhauling its brakes.

► Kevin Watson working on one of the doors of Number 308 on 27th November 2019 - David Reeve



EARM Express News - Small amounts of Museum news, delivered to you in bitesize chunks.

Have anything to add? Email your news to svs@earm.co.uk

CHAPPEL NEWSLETTER

The newsletter, which is distributed by email, plays a vital role in providing information about the Museum outside the longer timescales needed for Stour Valley Steam. If you are interested in getting the newsletter, and are not already on the list, please contact Phil on : news@earm.co.uk.

THE MUSEUM PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

It has been a while since we gave an update on the Museum's Photographic Collection, which continues to grow inexorably. It includes photographs not just of Chappel but also the stock and carriages we have, together with some of the varied and rich variety of people who have made Chappel what it is today. On a broader note, bearing in mind we are the East Anglian Railway Museum, we have a lot of photographs of railway stations, locomotives and other area of interest from throughout East Anglia. To give an idea, we have in excess of 500 photographs of Manningtree station and trains passing that area alone.

The Collection numbers in excess of 25,000 images, and more are being added regularly. With the demise of the Members Area of the website, as an interim measure listings are included in the Chappel Photographs group on Facebook: these lists are periodically updated. Special thanks must go to Dave Peck and Ian Rushbrook for all the scanning they have done so far - there will be more to be done as further photographs are catalogued.

History is being made all the time at Chappel, and we therefore welcome present day pictures (be they digital, prints or slides) just as much as older pictures. Do you have any pictures of Chappel taken over the years - not just vehicles and buildings, but of special events as well? Can you take some now as well? We would love to have copies for the collection: if you can scan them or send them in digital format it is great, but if not we can scan them. We welcome all contributions! If you can put them on a CD or e-mail them to rob.boyce@earm.co.uk that is great, or leave them at the VRC marked for the attention of Rob Boyce. With your help we can continue to grow the collection.

MUSEUM PLANT

All our heavy plant continues to do sterling work in aiding projects around the site. The latest addition to the fleet is a light weight "Kango" breaker useful for chipping, chiselling and chasing out masonry. The dumper truck has also received some TLC of late, and is now sporting a new ignition switch.

MUSEUM EVENTS

Thanks to Anne Brown for sending her list of planned events for 2020, which included details of what each event is to involve and how people could either get involved or how the events

would be expanded from last year. However, at the time of the magazine being compiled Government advice is to limit large gatherings and social activity on the back of the Coronavirus issues world-wide, we had also been informed that the first few events for the season had been cancelled. We have therefore taken the decision at this stage not to publish this list, please see the Museum website for the latest information about upcoming events and plans. We would like to express our thanks to Anne for her hard work on the proposed events this year and hope that most of these events will get to go ahead as planned.



Letters to the Editor

This time we have two letters regarding the future of Stour Valley Steam, which we print below. We thank David, Simon and Diane for their letters and draw your attention to our statement regarding this elsewhere in this issue of Stour Valley Steam.



Dear Editor,

Thank you for another excellent read in the Autumn issue of Stour Valley Steam. I have always admired the content, both in articles and photos, of Stour Valley Steam over the last few years. I feel a magazine like this is by far the best way to keep the peripheral membership interested; I hope it will be possible to keep it going even if it is half (or even a quarter) of its present size, or comes out less often.

An email newsletter is good but really cannot replace the magazine – who is going to read a 50 page email?

Thanks for all you have done – very best wishes.
David Petterson

Dear Editor,

I am sorry to read that you and your colleague Darren Johnson are planning on retiring after 10 years of editing "Stour Valley Steam".

I joined the former Stour Valley Railway Society in 1973 and was an active regular member until the 1980s and I have a lot of happy memories of those days. In 1989 I moved to Yorkshire but I regularly visit Essex and always stop off at Chappel to view progress.

I have no internet but look forward to receiving the twice-yearly magazine which enables me to stay in touch with EARM affairs. I feel the magazine is very important to all Members, but especially so to those who live all over the country.

Keep up the good work!
Simon Shelley (Membership No 137) and Diane Kayley

Curator's Update -

Read about the developments in the Curatorial Department.

By Adam Culling

I'm pleased to report that the Lavenham Guildhall Railway Exhibition, which featured many items from the East Anglian Railway Museum collection, was by all accounts a complete success. In fact, it was so well received that the Clare Castle Country Park Trust has requested a similar loan for their railway exhibition over the Easter weekend. This is once again a great opportunity to display objects and archive material from the Reserve Collection, possibly reaching new audiences and encouraging new visitors to the Museum.

The Model Railway Event in 2019 provided an ideal occasion to set-up and display the Len Wilkinson's Wickham Bishops Trestle Bridge model railway that had been donated to the Museum earlier on in the year. Not only was Len's family thrilled to see it displayed and working, but many of those attending the event were impressed (and rightly so) with the detail and level of skill and detail lavished on this wonderful model.

The Museum is still receiving a fair number of donations, ranging from signs; clothing; commemorative tankards; manuals; photographs, to name a few. A couple of donations of particular notes are: a large collection of archive materials (8 archive boxes worth!) associated with Takeley station; and a Union Sash donated by EARM member Andrew Fullerton.

soon as these images I have provided won't do Andrew's working justice.



▲ *The Union Sash donated by Andrew Fullerton - Adam Culling*

Our new 'Local Lines' display boards, and several others, are with the printers and will be installed in the Heritage Centre very soon. There will also be another display installed in the Heritage Centre very soon. As Thomas & Friends are celebrating their 75th birthday this year, we will be setting up a temporary exhibition for the Easter weekend on the history of Thomas & Friends, including new information display boards and revamped family interactives. The exhibition will run from Easter to December 2020.

One small change in the Heritage Centre is the inclusion of a small 'Object of the Month' display (currently in the 'Local Lines' room). This is a simple way of showcasing some of

the wonderful items that are in the Reserve Collection, that do not necessarily 'fit' the story we currently tell in our other display cases. It is also a great place to display some of the new arrivals to the Collection before they find a permanent home.

► *The Repaired Romford Station Model - Adam Culling*



Some Thoughts on Railways

By Ian Bates

A while ago when I was showing my Matchstick Models in the Goods Shed, a newspaper photographer asked if he could take a picture of one model. He said it would be better outside in the sun.

I picked up my "L1" 2-6-4 tank and was just taking the track along when he said "Don't mind the track". My reply was: "When did you ever see a locomotive that is not standing on rails?" He conceded the point.

It made me think about the various types of track we have seen over the years. First of all were stone blocks with grooves in it, then perhaps wooded rails. Next to come were cast iron rails, followed by steel.

Of course the latest is magnetic levitation (Maglev), and what of the future?

In the next issue of this publication I will discuss the incredible future of land-based transportation, so "watch this space".

Volunteer News

By Martin Gibbons

Volunteers are the life blood of the Museum; and without them we would not be able to keep going. We have volunteers that come to the Museum every week and some who live as far away as Australia who come and help out on the odd day when they visit their families in the summer. As a Museum member, it is free to become a volunteer. All you need to do is email volunteering@earm.co.uk and your email address will be added to the list of volunteers that receive the monthly email update. There is no obligation, any time you can give would be great, from a spare day or morning to becoming a member of one of our weekly teams.

Some of the projects our volunteers have been helping with over the last few months are as follows:

- *Installation of the South Ground Frame.
- *Relaying of the track, including the installation of new sleepers.
- *Continuing work on the new Mini Rail system, including installation of the new track, Station Building and Engine Shed. It is hoped to be ready to run trains later in 2020.
- *Continuing work on the new standard –gauge Running Shed. Later in 2020 we should be able to get the roof on the building and the track installed. (Weather permitting!)
- *Re-routing of the mains water feed into the site via the Footbridge.
- *Running the car park on Event Days and checking tickets.
- *Helping build and run the Winter Beer Festival including putting everything back afterwards.

So as you can see we have a lot of opportunities for you to help us so please email volunteering@earm.co.uk to request to be added to the Monthly volunteering update and see how you can help. There is also a continuing need to help with maintaining the gardens and open spaces as part of the never-ending effort to keep the site tidy.

Archived Records

By David Reeve & Graham Wing

The archiving of the Museum's records has proceeded steadily along the well-established lines that have been detailed in past issues of "Stour Valley Steam". Over 500 updates to the listings have been made to date, and posted to the Museum's shared computer drive since this project started some years ago.

Our current focus is on getting the more recent Trustee's minutes into order but relevant documents can be added into any appropriate category as they come available. Recently, such information that we had on the topic of Fire Safety has been re-organised as a review of the Museum's policies, led by Phil Ainsley, has taken place.

A very recent change to our usual routine, still on-going at the time of going to press, has been that Graham has been assisting Adam to sort out and catalogue the Museum's extensive CD and DVD collection, which covers many topics.

Finally, I would like to repeat our usual plea for Museum –related records or ephemera to add to our Collection.. If you have anything you would like to donate, ideally contact David Reeve (d_e_reeve@hotmail.com) or please leave at Visitor Reception marked "FAO Archiving" and leave your contact details with the documents.



▲ Mark House & Peter Robinson watch Jack Plumb undertaking S&T work on Saturday 18th November 2019 - Nick Ridgway

◀ Mike Stanbury cuts the cake at his special 80th Birthday Celebration in the Museum Goods Shed on 29th February 2020 - Andrea Cornell

▼ Various Members at the Chelmsford Hungry Horse after a visit to see 80151 at the Bluebell Railway on 30th December 2019 - Jack Plumb





▲ Lesley Pennell, Rob West and some of the other Mini Rail 2 team take a test ride on the first section of completed railway on 23rd February 2020 - Tim Rice

▼ With just about every member of the Museum loco fleet visible, a shunt takes place on Sunday 4th October 2019 - Jack Cavie



▲ Track Works to replace the sleepers at the south end of Platform 2 during the strong wind and rain of Storm Ciara 9th February 2019 - Peter Robinson

▼ No. 5562 in a blast of steam, with Number 11 and Number 54 outside the Restoration Shed on 7th March 2020 - Peter Robinson





▲ James Kindred passing out as a Steam Driver on 19th October 2019 - Michael Sanders
John Bicknell with Jubilee offers some advice on how to prevent the spread of Coronavirus on 14th March 2020 - Alastair Holmes ▲

▼ Matthew Cornell having a break from trainee duties at the Santa Event - Mark House
Mark Fogg Elliot and his dog "Woof dog" at the Chappel Winter Beer Festival on 28th February 2020 - Sarah Lucy Brown/Archant Media ▼



The EARM Department of Model Railways -

By Gordon Humphris

It's been a great year for the Model Railway Club, which is now fully- integrated into the Museum's infrastructure. We are really now an integral attraction with Open Days and are involved with many of the events on the site.

The club membership continues to grow and this year we are hoping to reach the 30 members mark. Financially, the Club is sound with subscriptions and sales of second-hand railway items contributing to the upkeep of layouts both in the Exhibition Room and in the various modelling rooms. We continue to be a good attraction to visitors and surprising numbers of the public ring the doorbell on

a Thursday for a private viewing of the Club Rooms. (Members' night is Monday but we are open all day Thursday).

The success of the Small Trains Day in October highlighted how well the Club is now running as an integral part of the EARM. The Trustees and associated volunteers that help run the Museum were very pleased with the numbers and the financial remuneration from that day, - which was a mini-exhibition as far as we were concerned and we executed it as one. It was such a success that building on from that, the Department was approached and was offered the use of the Museum's facilities

for the Braintree & Halstead MRC's Annual Model Railway Show. It is a huge undertaking to put on a show but with such excellent facilities and transport links we are hoping to emulate if not exceed the success of the Small Trains Day. Our Events Team have been co-ordinating with the Commercial and VRC Teams to ensure its success and it is hoped that it will be well attended on the day; so we would like to see as many members as possible come and support this latest EARM venture. We are hoping to put it on the Model Railway Show map, and become a fixture in a lot of show- goer's diaries. So, 20th June 2020 is the date for your diary, wall planner or calendar.

It was last reported that work was progressing on the latest addition to the

◀ Club Chairman Martin Sansom knocking in the "Golden Spike" on the new O gauge double-track circuit.



► *The Halstead Layout*

Club rooms in the form of a new dedicated O Gauge room featuring a twin-circuit track with additional sidings and features. The aptly-named “Chappel Lane East” looks to be open to the Public during the DOWT event at Easter, and although the detailed scenic work will be a “work in progress”, operationally it will have running trains. As this goes to press it should be ready for track testing and running trials - exciting times indeed. Work continues on all the layouts with “Halstead” in the Exhibition Room gradually filling out as more permanent buildings replace the mock-ups. Both automated layouts continue to entertain visitors on a daily basis and many of the running problems have been sorted and they continue to be reliable, most of the time!

In the Main Layout Room there is plenty to see, and indeed, make purchases from our sales table, so you modellers out there, check out our bargains at the next Open Day. Please remember that if the Museum has an event on, we are open as well and our attending members can offer advice, tuition and practical help and demonstrations on all things model railway in all the major scales.

“Gosfield Yard”, the O Gauge Club Exhibition Layout, is on the road in March, to the Gauge O Guild Spring Show at Kettering. Having been extensively overhauled during the winter months we are looking forward to displaying the 10-metre long Goods Yard layout to the public for the first time, in its latest, and hopefully, final version. It is also hoped the exposure will generate more invitations which help to not only publicise the Club but also the Museum; we always take plenty of flyers to shows. Members continue to visit various shows around the country and again, always armed with publicity sheets so that we get the word out. We have had several visits from members of other Clubs, and we have a particular bond with the Sudbury Club at the other



end of the Gainsborough Line.

So just a reminder, as I close this latest news from the Club, don't forget the Annual Show and the Small Trains Day at the EARM.

◀ *Gosfield Station Layout*

The Society Scene *formerly Branch Lines*

In our recent review of Stour Valley Steam, it has been decided to discontinue the Branch Lines feature for three main reasons:

Firstly, the EARM branch network has been effectively defunct for some time. Both the Colchester Railway Group and the Enfield Transport Circle, are technically independent groups, although they both retain close links with the Museum.

Secondly, in view of the ever-increasing cost of printing and posting the Magazine, it has been necessary to reduce the page-count so that it can be sent out at standard letter rate.

However, on a more positive note, most local groups these days maintain a web-site, where more detail can be found about contact details, plus the contents and dates of meetings. Therefore, we intend to replace the reports from these groups with some basic details of where more information can be found. In addition, we are including similar information about the South East Essex Railway Society and the Ipswich Transport Society so that information about these meetings are available throughout our region.

The Editorial Team hope that you will understand the reasons for this decision.

Colchester Railway Group	Meets at the Friends Meeting House Church St Colchester CO1 NP; generally on the first Friday of the even months. More detail from the web-site: https://colchesterrailwaygroup.wordpress.com
Enfield Transport Circle	Meets at the First Floor Meeting Room, The Drill Hall Sports Club, Old Park Avenue Enfield EN2 6PJ Contact Kenneth Crane via the website: http://tetc.btck.co.uk/
Ipswich Transport Society	Meetings held monthly at the Greenfinch Church Hall, Greenfinch Avenue Ipswich IP2 OSQ Contact Joe Palmer on: joepalmer@hotmail.co.uk
South East Essex Railway Society	Meets at the Friends Meeting House , 18 Dundonald Drive, Leigh –on-Sea SS9 1NB More detail from the web-site : seers-rail.org

Platform 2 Café -

By Dionne King

Leigh-Ondrea and I are sisters (for those who have not met us !!!) and both of us have been involved with catering for many years. We have worked together to establish Jam Tartz Catering over the past 10 years, with the business predominately focused on wedding and party events. In 2016, after being approached by a Trustee after we had catered for a wedding in the Goods Shed, we were asked if we would consider taking on the running of Chappel Station Café and a contractual agreement was subsequently put in place.

We decided part way through 2019, due to Leigh-Ondrea's serious illness to divide and realign our catering business. Amy & Ross have taken on the management of the wedding activity and this has freed my time to help Sam with improving Platform 2 Café. It also allows me to support Andrea, Catherine, Neil and Anne with weddings/party/group bookings and specific events on site, offering more options and trying to ensure better communication. To this end, I have just set up a Platform2 Café website and a new email address: info@platform2cafe.co.uk This means that all communication in regard to the Café is reviewed by both Sam and me. Jam Tartz continues to operate with weddings in the interim, but Amy & Ross have established Stour Valley Catering to move everything forward during 2020/2021.

Hopefully you will have seen me about at the Café more regularly and I have started work on improving the facilities and growing the Café business to make it profitable. We are hoping that 2020 will be a very successful year for both us and the Museum. We now offer a Sunday Roast menu, excluding event dates, and we have had good feedback and booking is required to ensure availability. I have also worked on expanding the vegan options within our menu and we have sourced

some really fantastic vegan sausage rolls, vegan pasties, our 5-bean chilli and vegan biscuit and cake offerings. We have also added our brunch menu and will be considering this further on the coming weeks.

We launched our Children's menu during the February half-term and we are running a competition for someone to design a mascot that we will use for the Café and to help with the marketing of our children's offerings. Further details are available from the Café. We have started some preliminary improvements in the Café but this will continue throughout the year. The Museum and Platform 2 Café will jointly invest in this process.

We are happy to cater for special parties in our carriages. Larger parties can be accommodated in the Goods Shed or in the Thompson Building. Contact the Museum to discuss your plans, or you can talk to us directly through the Museum's main telephone number. You



can find all our contact details at the end of this article.*

Keep a look-out for the great events coming up at the Museum, we work with all those involved to provide additional catering requirements for these special events. We do have vacancies for staff, so if you know someone that could become one of our team please let us know.

We are pleased to be able to offer EARM staff and volunteers and Museum members a discount on some items so remember to bring your Membership card along to get your reduction. You do not need to buy a ticket to the Museum to visit the Café – why not arrange to meet your friends for coffee or lunch on a regular basis – you don't need to be a train enthusiast, just a lover of good food and drink on a wonderful stationary carriage!!

As mentioned above I have launched a new website to highlight events it is: platform2cafe.co.uk and you can email us at info@platform2cafe.co.uk and our Facebook page is [chappelstationcafe](https://www.facebook.com/chappelstationcafe). I really do want to thank the Trustees, volunteers, Museum members and everyone who continues to support the Café to ensure we maximise takings so that the Museum can go from strength to strength.

Drewry Gardner 838/230 -

I am pleased to announce that the Museum has recently taken ownership of a locomotive that is familiar to many members. This useful little loco, commonly known as WD72229, has an interesting past and the type does have a local connection.

By Isaac Ferneyhough

In 1945 the Army railways and locomotives were under the control of 1 Railway Group, Royal Engineers. The Drewry Car Company was commissioned in 1945 to produce a batch of twenty standard design 0-4-0 diesel locomotives at a time when the military was still ordering 2-10-0 and 0-6-0T "Austerity" steam locomotives. She was fitted with a Gardner 153 h.p. 6L3 engine (the Kent-based manufacturer still produces an evolved version today). It was fitted with a 4-speed epicyclic gear box and jackshaft final drive. The locomotives were easy to start, and having straight-air loco brakes were ready for action in a couple of minutes. They therefore served well at rail-connected Army depots across the UK; internal combustion was a distinct advantage when working in Ordnance storage depots! Our new loco had the Drewry number 2184 and Vulcan Foundry number

5265. She was finished in a drab all-over olive green, with WD and large American-style number on the cabside.

Although the contract was placed with Drewry the building work was sub-contracted to Vulcan Foundry (before their take over by English Electric) and Andrew Barclay. Originally she was numbered in the WD 722XX range.

WD72229 was supplied new to Moreton-on-Lugg Central Ordnance Depot, Herefordshire and this was the base most associated with her Army career. Moreton had originally been built as part of the Bolero operation during the war to house US troops in the lead up to D-Day. The first "Model General Depot" was planned and built at Wem, near Shrewsbury. It had 450,240 square feet of covered storage, 1,375,000 feet of open storage, and person-

nel accommodations for 1,250. Construction was begun in December 1942 and the depot was completed in June of the following year at a cost of \$2,360,000 (US). On this model five other depots, commonly known as “Wems,” were then built, one each at Boughton in Nottinghamshire, at Histon near Cambridge, at Honeybourne northeast of Cheltenham, at Lockerly near Salisbury, and finally the one at Moreton-on-Lugg northwest of Cheltenham. Those at Histon and Lockerly were built entirely by U.S. troops, and all took roughly six months to complete.

In 1952 the Army disposed of much of their steam motive power and so an inevitable re-numbering took place and WD72229 became Army 838. She returned to Bicester Workshops, the Royal Engineers’ depot then used to service the majority of the Army fleet, in August 1956. She was in all over dark Army green by this point with black and yellow wasp ends, black underframe and red coupling rods.

She travelled north of the border for the first time in September 1956 to Stirling Forthside Regional Depot and Ordnance Support Unit. Many of the stark Scottish stone buildings there were directly connected to the railway sidings. British Rail took over shunting duties, including the military sidings, in 1982 releasing the complement of two MoD diesels. On returning to Bicester in October 1964 she was re-engined with a new uprated 195 h.p Gardner 6L3B engine and her “top hat” style heavy cast iron chimney was replaced with the conical version she has today.

WD72229 was transferred back to Stirling in Spring 1965 for a further five- year stint. During this time from April 1964 the War Department became the Army Department of the Ministry of Defence which also included the Navy Department (previously Admiralty) and the Air Force Department (previously Air Ministry). From 1968 the new Army Department

undertook another inevitable systematic re-numbering at which time 838 became Army 230 (later MOD 230). The Vulcan/Barclay standard locos were in the Class B3, number range 220-237. They were re-classified Class B11 when re-engined. She still carried all over dark Army green, but now had three red V stripes on the front end (one either side of the radiator and one on the buffer beam) and one on the cab end, which seemed to be enough for Army work. Other locos in the class carried yellow V stripes.

After returning to Bicester in November 1970, there was no work for her until May 1971, when she was moved south of the Thames to Ashford Ordnance Support Unit (OSU) in Kent which would be her home for the next 10 years until October 1981. In March 1971 the administering organisation was retitled Railway Wing, Army Freight Organisation, becoming Army Department, Railway Staff in March 1977.

The OSU at Ashford closed in 1996 as part of the rationalisation plan which resulted in the closure of 13 Army Static Logistic Support and Engineer Support Units and the consequent loss of local jobs. Concurrently the OSU at Colchester Garrison was reduced and reorganised to become a distribution outlet.

From Ashford, 230 spent a further three and a half years languishing at Bicester until March 1985 when she returned to her old stomping ground at Moreton-on-Lugg. During this time she received the most attention to her appearance by the dedicated and skilled staff at Moreton shed. She was repainted deep green with red chevrons, received the white metal crest of the Royal Corps of Transport on her cabsides, a broken yellow line on her running plate edge and the brass window frames were buffed up. Her cab was light cream upper and dark army green lower. She also received a flashing beacon on her roof.

With the closure of the railway complex at



▲ 230 at the exchange siding at Moreton-on-Lugg, 1987 - Paul James.

Moreton, 230 moved again, this time to Long Marston Central Engineer Park, Warwickshire where she arrived in October 1987. Her cabside number was repainted from Army 230 to MOD 230.

Without work for several years, in 1992 the MoD found a need for two diesel shunters in reasonable condition that would lend themselves to the fitting of train air brakes and deployment to the nuclear submarine base at Devonport Dockyard situated to the west of Plymouth on the river Tamar. Here, 230 and sister loco 249 ousted the long- serving Hibberd/Foden “Planet” locomotives which were younger than the Drewrys by 10 years! (Devonport Dockyard also undertook work for British Rail and its successors, and a concise history can be found in Paul Burkhalters’ excellent book “Devonport Dockyard Railway”, published by Twelveheads Press.)

The train brakes were fitted by the Yorkshire Engine Co. Her original works plates were removed at this time and replaced by plates on her cabside which state “Yorkshire Engine Co. Ltd. Reworked 1993 L120”. If anyone has these plates or her original works plates we would gratefully

reunite them with the loco. She arrived at Devonport in 1993 where her whistle was replaced by a very loud horn and the loco was repainted blue with yellow and black diagonal stripes on the cab and inverted V-shaped wasps on the front end- probably in 1994. She received the number 10432 which she carried on a black cabside plate.

She returned to Long Marston for the final time in March 1995 where Yorkshire Engine upgraded her train airbrake compressors. On 1st March 1997 the Dockyard was sold to the company that had been managing the Yard since 1987, for the sum of £40.8m. Devonport Management Ltd then changed its name to Devonport Royal Dockyard Ltd, though the initials DML were retained in common usage. At the same time, the two Drewrys became the property of DML; at this point they were the oldest diesel locomotives working commercially in the UK. Newly- built Clayton locomotives were delivered in December 2000 and 10432 was out-of-use in late 2001 and stored pending a decision on disposal. 10432 was subsequently sold to Andrew Briddon and left the Yard on 6 December 2005.



▲ MOD blue livery with Scottish inspection saloon on hire to Devonport as a barrier vehicle for nuclear flask transfers to Sellafield, 1995 - Paul Burkhalter.



(The loco was then hired out to the Elsecar Heritage Railway where in 2006 it was fitted with vacuum exhauster and piped to work passenger trains. The old dynamo charge system was converted to solid-state in 2009. By this time it had reverted to WD “olive drab” for a war-themed event. She moved to the Derwent Valley Railway, York in 2010 where she was fitted with a newer overhauled exhauster. She was then moved to Peak Rail, Rowsley in 2011 where her cab floor was replaced. Since then, EARM Trustee Mark Fogg-Elliott found that there was in fact a weak spot in the flooring supports to which the hole in the cab floor now bears testament. New batteries and re-located battery master switch and cabling were also added whilst at Rowsley.

Following completion of a dual air and vacuum distributor and restoration of the air train hoses, the locomotive arrived on loan at the East

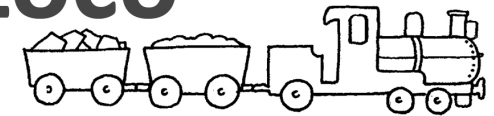
Anglian Railway Museum on the 30th January 2014 whilst repairs to the Class 04 were carried out. EARM has now become her permanent home.

Twin sister locomotive MoD 222 (Army 829) “CHITTAGONG” and Andrew Barclay variants of Class B11 250, 235 and 234 all spent time in Essex at the Shoeburyness Proof and Experimental Establishment (PEE) during their careers; 235 now lives on at the Isle of Wight Steam Railway.

230 (838) is in desperate need of cosmetic attention so, using our talented painter Rob Varletta, who out-shopped the Class 04 D2279 so well, it is planned to repaint the loco into a tongue-in-cheek fictitious livery of BR corporate rail blue with a departmental number of 97 838. Departmental BR shunting locos received the 97 8xx numbers, and the repaint will revive the old Army 838 number. As Traffic Operations Manager I am pleased with the purchase, as a dual-braked loco with a short wheelbase, 11 tons per axle and a reliable engine will be a valued additional asset to our fleet and with Colchester’s garrison history she also has a local connection with the region.



Pete Martin's Plumb Loco



I was originally going to write about the year progressing into another full calendar of events, commencing with the arrival of another visiting loco in the shape of No. 5526 for our Gala Weekend in March. However, a certain situation has overtaken things. As we disappear into the tunnel of hysteria with Coronavirus, there appears no light at the end of it. The focus of attention changes slightly as, in line with Governmental recommendations which evolve on a daily basis, the Museum has closed temporarily although this situation is under constant review.

Despite all of this, progress has been made in certain areas. The much-maligned arrival of the new Greater Anglia trains has seen much controversy, but their introduction into service brings a new era to not only the Sudbury branch, but the railways of East Anglia in general. Most of all, they add to the continued evolution in technology that has taken place since Stephenson built the Rocket.

▼ *Stadler Flirt 755335 passes the Museum on 19th February 2020 - Greg Kietos*



Talking of technology advancements, the most significant link with the 1950s transition of steam to diesel and electric traction, the Diesel Railbus, has seen varied progress over the past few months, and has taken another turn towards completion. Thanks to various kind donations, the interior is responding to a bit of TLC, whilst the exterior has taken on an old British Railways look having been the recipient of a magnificent coat of paint and transfers, by Robbie our resident painter. Although it may have received a finish coat, it doesn't necessarily mean that it is finished. Far from it, for we still have a little way to go, and we focus on No. E79963's journey from its original journey from Germany to Chappel and beyond - and back again! They say what comes around goes around, and this saying is no truer than with this vehicle.

When it first arrived after the Museum had purchased it from the North Norfolk Railway in February 2012, it was a rather sad purchase. There were derogatory comments of the “What the b***** h*** have we bought here” kind, but at the end of it came the rather more supportive thoughts on “Hang on a minute folks, out of all the stuff on site, this is the most appropriate to Chappel, as it actually ran on the line”. If you Google You Tube and put a search in for Colne Valley 1961, you will experience an excellent little film by Alan Snowdon taking you on a journey on our railbus from Chappel to Haverhill via Halstead. True it's a bit jumpy, which might be the camera or operator - or it might just be



◀ *Brian Sermons and Ian Jessop work in the DRB on 27th January 2019 - Pete Martin.*

required for operational purposes, so it very kindly donated that component to the cause.

Repairing the engine, which had been stripped and drained of oil, was next on the list. There are various schools of thought on how it came to be in that situation, as the original Bussing engine had been replaced at Stratford in 1961 by an English AEC 220LX or 219 model. Anyway, we stuck the bits back having examined it as far as we could, and as nobody at Norfolk could recall why it had been stripped, we stuck a set of batteries on the starter motor to just turn it over and check for oil pressure. The response was completely unexpected, as it did half a turn, fired up and ran well, apart from a slight idiosyncrasy with excessive oil pressure. Well, after that, it was almost telling us it wanted to run! And so began a long road to recovery, and in during the evaluation process, we really found out why the NNR got shot of it. The engine-driven air-compressor drive had broken and fallen to bits, the battery charging system had died spectacularly, the generators and regulators had been robbed and the body work was in car terms beyond economical redemption.

Nonetheless, a vast amount of work began on sorting the body corrosion – which was mostly from the inside. Unfortunately, spending many years just a mile from the North Sea, with everything that could throw at it, didn't do its overall condition a lot of good and various welders and local steel stockists were kept gainfully employed for many months. Interestingly, these railbuses, and the others built by different companies under contract to BR, had various design concepts built into them for evaluation. The AC cars variant had chevron rubber suspension and different door equipment, and those concepts were later to be seen on newer vehicles built as

▶ *The completed seating at one end of the DRB - Pete Martin.*

standard into more modern rolling stock up until the 1980s and early 90s. Nobody knows now what the others built by various other companies had incorporated into them. Needless to say none of those exist anymore and have become lost in the mists of time. The concept attributed to the five W&M built ones like ours was what is thought to be a prototype monocoque construction designed by British Railways, albeit built in Germany. (Dictionary definition: "A structure which integrates body and chassis together for improved stiffness and lightness")

To cut a long story short since the list is endless, as time and a lot of welding progressed, gradually it came to the stage of renewing first the floor panelling, then the ceilings, the bulkhead panelling and finally all the fiddly interior trim fittings. New door nose rubbers were manufactured, latching mechanisms rebuilt, wiring traced and checked, alternators fitted, compressor drive shaft rebuilt, and new window rubbers for the cabs fitted. The distinctive exterior waist-line aluminium mouldings were remounted and windscreen wiper mechanisms rebuilt. The air system had a few problems with compressor regulator and unloader valves, but interestingly after some telephone and email tennis, the original manufacturer Knorr Bremse, still in the business of railway air systems were contacted, and lo and behold - they still make them! We are indebted to Alex Scott and Nick Bradley at Knorr Bremse UK and Karl Hering at their Head office in Germany for their technical support and presentation. Absolutely amazing! I wonder what else they still make?

We are indebted to the many people who over the past few years who have devoted time and interest in the resurrection of this vehicle. This includes those who have kindly donated significant funding more recently to replacing the upholstery of the seats. That tale is a story in itself - in fact I won't bore you with it anymore, Tolstoy's War and Peace is shorter!

So, it is still not quite there yet, but rest assured, when we pick up the pieces after the current situation, the Museum will be best placed to continue or progress with something a little different. At the recent Gala Weekend, there were many intimations of interest in it, and it will surely be in popular demand when it is finally operational.

▶ *The DRB heading towards the North Headshunt during a test run, mid-restoration on 29th September 2019 - Alastair Holmes.*



The Future of Stour Valley Steam

The following is a summary of notes of a meeting held between the three members of the Editorial Team: David Reeve, Darren Johnson and Jeff Kilpatrick, together with Phil Ainsley, who is the Chappel Newsletter Editor, to discuss the way forward for Stour Valley Steam. The meeting was held in late January and was prompted by the threat of imminent cessation of David Reeve's and Darren Johnson's involvement in the production of SVS, as advised to the Trustees about 12 months ago, and to the readership at large in SVS167. Their involvement has spanned approximately 10 years since production of the bumper SVS150 edition in mid-2011, following a gap of more than a year's duration. In SVS167 views were invited on the possible future of the format in the digital age, when a newsletter circulated by email can have greater immediacy of impact than the printed magazine. Needless to say, the response from both the Trustees and the wider readership with offers of help has been virtually zero.

The major difference between SVS and the Newsletter is that Phil Ainsley is active in seeking out news to report, whilst the approach by David Reeve has been to solicit input from contributors and then to draw the threads of an edition together in an Editorial, which is the only part of the production he authors. The first way is journalism, whilst the second is the more formal recording for posterity. There is an unfortunate history of the editor of the day being forced to generate his own material for publication so as to maintain the "bulk" of the final product; this has not generally been the case in the last ten years, and the Magazine has by common agreement been all the better for it. A Magazine Editor has to do a lot of unsung work chasing copy, editing articles and sourcing suitable photographs to accompany them! In the same period the content has been mostly restricted

to Museum activities and articles by EARM members on subjects of local East Anglian interest, although more exotic topics have been covered from time to time. The approach has generally been applauded, and little adverse opinion has been expressed, (although in fairness there has not been a huge amount of appreciation formally expressed either).

More recently, Darren has taken on the continuous (rather than twice-a-year), role of Membership Secretary. The systems involved with this job are in urgent need of updating and coordinating and this task obviously takes up a lot of time.

All this is a preamble to the thinking about where we go from here in terms of talking to the members. From feedback we have received we believe there is still a wish to see a printed magazine, particularly among the older members who, with a few exceptions, are not using the newer media. But there is a reluctance to go on with the present arrangements. We discussed a few immediate changes which are being trialed in SVS168, including slimming down by dropping the repeat of historical items (SVS Through the Years) and reducing the Branch coverage since they have mainly withered away. These changes should reduce postage costs and will lead to a slimmer but more relevant production this time round, and have cut the production time by around a third, as there's no need to find and curate the historical content and then edit the articles to work with the current template. Phil Ainsley is happy to go on with the Newsletter although suggestions are that a blog format may be more useful, and it may be that this is all the Trustees and members want.

So where do we go from here? Given the current world wide issues with Coronavirus

which is likely to delay any meetings and the Museum Annual General Meeting, we'll certainly be back and will put together Stour Valley Steam 169 later in the year.

Along with Phil's ideas of an online blog to replace his newsletter, we also have ideas for a secure online Member's Area to replace the previous one which has stopped working. This would allow all members to have a login and access Museum policies and other relevant documents, and we'd hope to expand this to other operational items, training papers and rule books, along with operation rosters.

We want to hear from you about these ideas, and your thoughts on this issue of Stour Valley Steam and the changes we have made in order to make it more sustainable and cost-effective. Additional we would like to hear from anyone who may have any ideas and suggestions for future issues which may be of interest to our Members.

Last Call for Stour Valley Steam 168

Thank You to those who have submitted articles and photos to us for this issue. We will now be back for Stour Valley Steam 169 which we intend to publish later in the year, expected to be around September 2020.

We welcome submissions from all members, on any subject that you think is relevant, either Museum or railway-related. Email us at svs@earm.co.uk. Don't forget to send us photos along with any articles.

▼ *Now just a memory (see next page) - 156407 in One Railway Livery with Wherry Lines promotional branding departing Chappel on 6th August 2007 - Marcus Teyus.*



Farewell to Second Generation DMUs in East Anglia

By Marcus Teyus

Monday 20th January 2020 saw the end of an era on the Sudbury line, when No. 156416 became the last second-generation DMU to work the line, after 26 years of service.

The Class 156 "Super-Sprinters" were introduced to the line on 15th May 1993, working for around two years before being replaced by single-carriage Class 153s. These units continued to run the service until 1998 when for around a year the vintage Class 121 "Bubble Cars" covered a shortage of stock.



▲ 156409 in Regional Express Livery at Chappel & Wakes Colne in May 2005.

Following the return of the Class 153s, an increase in passenger numbers led to the two-car Class 150s taking over the weekday service in May 2001. These were then swapped for Class 156s in 2004. Since this time Class 156s have worked the line on weekdays and the 153s at weekends. The Class 156s received a major overhaul in 2013 which saw them gain various PRM-TSI (Persons of Reduced Mobility) modifications including a large accessible toilet.



▲ 153311 in Regional Railways Livery at Sudbury on 22nd April 2007.

In 2016 it was announced that Abellio had won the tender for the new East Anglia franchise and one of the commitments was that this would include replacing all the current stock across the network. The DMUs were to be replaced with Stadler "Flirt" trains, which are capable of running under both diesel and electric power- so-called "bi-modal operation".

On Tuesday 21st January 2020, No. 755332 became the first of the new Class 755 units to work on the Sudbury line, which was the last non-electrified line in East Anglia to receive the new stock, ushering a new era on the branch, with the 156s transferred to East Midlands Railway.

▼ 156402 with Chapelfield Shopping Centre Livery near Lamarsh on 6th June 2007.



▲ Two Generations of Met-Cam DMUs with Greater Anglia 156412 "Ride the Gainsborough Line" passing DUPA's Class 101 on 29th September 2019 - Alastair Holmes.

▼ The Last One - 156416 the final Class 156 working on the Sudbury line, waiting to depart from Sudbury as 2F14 23.26 Sudbury to Colchester on 20th January 2020 - Darren Johnson.



Back Cover: No. 5562 in Platform 2 during the Spring Steam Gala on Saturday 14th March 2020 - Alastair Holmes



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