



STOUR VALLEY STEAM WINTER 2022

Number 172

EDITORIAL

Welcome to this edition of Stour Valley Steam, the first under our editorial control following our return to the position. Whilst we do have a few ideas for changes, these will be relatively minor and the overall mix of articles and number of pages is not intended to change. To this end, it would be appreciated if submission of articles could be as early as possible. For example, an article on a special event could be submitted within a short time of it finishing, and not leaving it until the deadline looms. This will help us get the magazine together, to the printers, and out to the members punctually. Contributions should be sent to svs@earm.co.uk or by post to the Museum, marked SVS. 2023 deadlines are planned as follows:

Spring 2023: deadline 15 February 2023, to be distributed in March 2023

Autumn 2023: deadline 15 August 2023, to be distributed in September 2023

Mark House and Rob Boyce

PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES

Back in 1996, it was announced that a small team had started to catalogue some of the then several hundred photographs in the Museum collection. Since then, the collection has grown inexorably, and numbers well in excess of 40,000 images - but we still want more! Current events are as welcome as historical photos of occurrences at the Museum and in the wider East Anglian area. If you have any photographs that you would be willing to donate or to loan for copying, please contact Rob Boyce at rob.boyce@earm.co.uk. Alternatively, if they are digital images they can be e-mailed to the same address.

Listings are updated regularly and are available to view on the Chappel photographs area on Facebook, which can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2137936823112197>. If you have not joined the group, why not do so today?

We have recently been fortunate to acquire the majority of photographs taken by the late Ron Smith of Braintree, which are slowly but steadily being added to the Collection.

We also have a large number of negatives and slides awaiting scanning and cataloguing: if you can help with this, please let Rob Boyce know.

Front cover photo shows No. 11 with Mk1 coaches departing north stops on the main on 1 May 2022 (photo by Dom Shaw)

Opposite: Jubilee storms up the Museum main line on 23 October 2022 (photo by Craig Greenslade)



TRAFFIC MATTERS

by Isaac Ferneyhough

Have you ever considered becoming a driver, fireman, guard, signaller, crossing keeper or shunter? There are always opportunities for new operating staff at the Museum. You just need enthusiasm, reasonable health, good timekeeping, and some availability to join us on operating days. Once you have been assessed as competent with track safety by a short course delivered in house, you can commence training.

The Traffic Operations Manager is the Head of Department, and you can contact the department via operations@earm.co.uk

This edition of Stour Valley Steam marks my last as the current Traffic Manager: I will be 'retiring' from the post on January 31, 2023, marking five years since a persuasive Trustee assured me that this was possibly the finest thing for me to do and would definitely be the making of me.

Since then my teeth and hair have fallen out and I walk with a stoop. I forget my name on occasion and can be found shuffling up the street muttering "roster .. minirail ... availability" and have to be bundled up and returned to my long-suffering wife who then doesn't recognise me as it has been so long since I was home for a weekend. I now have a permanent aversion to laptops, email and WhatsApp. Mention of the acronyms HOD, RIDDOR, HRA and ORR will send me into a stupor. I had to find an acquaintance just to help me type this. (I would like to say friend but unfortunately they have all gone since 2018 as well). My hands shake too much at the thought of typing a message for fear that the reply will give me four days' work and sleepless nights between.

However, the therapy is working. At this rate once I get past January and just continue with my operational duties such as driver, shunter and signaller life will be easier. The therapist says rubbing salt into my skin twice a day is the only way to ensure I will be cured! I have my doubts about his qualifications.

I know we are all going through a hard time of it at the moment, so I hope you don't mind if I say a few words to tell you how much I appreciate everyone who has helped me run the department during my time. I am aware some members were disappointed about this change. However, as a kind of explanation I suppose, I was Traffic Manager throughout the covid years. I like to think we all helped each other get through some of our ongoing problems together. I know we all faced significant challenges on giving up time to get to the Museum, so I don't want to be too self indulgent. A lot of my personal time was taken up with EARM staffing matters when, looking back, I should have spent more time looking after myself and my family. As an NHS health professional of very nearly 30 years you might think that this was obvious. But often what starts as a hobby can quickly become an unpaid job, which rather takes the fun out of it. For example, when I was relaying to a younger member about how tricky it can be screwing the two month summer roster together he informed me that "everything seemed OK to me" as if it couldn't have been too tricky. This shows a pleasant naivety.



The event days go smoothly when there is someone constantly in the background changing, editing, reiterating and begging some members to help, just to get the staffing covered in time, often the night before the event. But if it seemed smooth to even a few of you, then I did my job well.

There is no 'time off' from Traffic Manager. Members want immediate answers and some will often give very little notice of sudden unavailability which had been fine right up until that moment. This has been not only when I have been on holiday, but also at other more personal inconvenient moments. But this is the nature of the immediate modern world with a mobile phone in your pocket and competing demands.

Overall, I like to think I have bridged a tricky gap, focusing primarily on safety and helping the Museum develop with added running days and cost effective but popular event days. I also believe I have developed a strong operating team with many members adding to their list of competencies. I have also tried to be inclusive, championing equality.

We have of course lost long serving and reliable staff during this time due to age, ill health or fear of exposure to covid. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your help over the years. Please remember that the time you gave was to a noble charity.

Plus the outlook is good. We have many new (and mostly young) members joining us who continue with their training journey. The future will eventually be in their hands so the more we can all do to support development by sharing what we know the better.

Like covid, I will still be around but less than I was a couple of years ago. I will be concentrating on some other projects but more at my own convenience for a change. There is no truth in the rumour I am taking up needlework or my starting my own sandwich delivery van. I wish my successor Jack the very best of luck and am happy to pass on the name of my therapist's therapist. I've worn mine out!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR MIKE BRADLEY

My name is Mike Bradley and I have been a volunteer at The East Anglian Railway Museum for over 3 years. I joined the Museum on the back of my own driver experience day, and I now run them with assistance from amazing crew members and volunteer staff. I've recently been appointed Volunteer Co-ordinator, taking over from Martin Gibbons who handed over the role of Rail Experience Co-ordinator to myself. I am part of the Estates team under Tim Rice and also help out on most operational days, such as providing assistance on the minirail. I am working my way towards being a guard one day. Outside of the museum I work as a customer service advisor for DD Group, which is a dental supply company, covering most of the UK & Ireland. My other hobbies include the great outdoors, particularly hiking & camping, as well as visiting other heritage railways and museums.



Volunteer Co-ordinator Mike Bradley



The brake van (as mentioned in the article below) in the Restoration Shed

PLUMP LOCO - OR SPANNERS IN THE WORKS **by Peter Martin**

As I write, we once again have enjoyed - or endured - the Halloween Thomas spectacular, which heralds the approach of the inevitable Christmas period. "Oh deep joy", I hear you say!

Things have been a tad busy up at base in the meantime, where it is difficult to know where to start - and equally - where to finish. There are many ongoing things in the melting pot, and as always like the wind, priorities are ever changing, and the odd spanner gets chucked in the works for good measure.

One of the items which fits that equation is the BR 'Queen Mary brake van, where it is desirous to fit it with a vacuum brake cylinder. Although it is piped for working in passenger operation, it was never built with it's own brake cylinder. Originally, it was solely reliant on the Guard screwing the handbrake on to assist retarding the freight train it was (hopefully) attached to whilst going down hills, or holding it on a line while the engine and the crew toddled off back to the shed for tea, or shunted the constituent parts of the train into a yard or siding. A small batch were produced by BR that were fitted, but typically ours wasn't one of them!

The spanner in the works is the fact that to give adhesive weight to accept the braking force (I'll leave you to Google the science), BR filled the chassis with concrete. Unfortunately some of it has to be removed in order to fit the cylinder, and poor Brendan (and a couple of others) have been chommering away with diamond cutting drills and Kango hammers for some weeks, and have just about knocked off a hat-full. Obviously BR didn't want it falling out, and it is of superior MoD grade, where an Excorcet missile wouldn't even dent it.

In the meantime Kevin has been doing a superb job rejuvenating the timber body and framing which had reduced the integrity of it to the point, that if you coughed violently or undertook some other common bodily function in the vicinity,



the doors would have fallen off. At the current rate of progress, the body will be ready before the chassis! Ho hum!

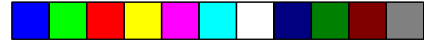
Poor ol' 5455, our BR Mk 2 coach, has been in and out of the shed several times as a result of numerous 'can you just' shunting manoeuvres, but seems to have come back to a rest, where remedial attention and a fuller evaluation can now be undertaken. Bought cheap - well not that cheap - from the NRM some years ago, sadly it has been found that many of these Mk2 coaches apart from a handful, never really cut the mustard in preservation. When they were built, they were a revolutionary advance in BR coach design with a complex pre-stressed framing and all welded construction. The main criteria at the time, was to enhance vehicle crash integrity and was almost a monocoque construction. (I'll leave you to Google that one too). However, the build complexity doesn't really lend itself to ease of repair unlike a Mk1 coach, which relies on traditional nuts, bolts, screws and rivets to hold it all together.

Some years ago, we sent it to a specialist contractor, and like most things we do, you only find out what's really wrong with it when you take it apart. But when they started on one side, it was found that there wasn't a lot left of the internal framing to attach any new steelwork to and did an expensive sticking plaster fix just to enhance the external appearance cosmetically, but it ate all the money and they only did one side.

The welding and repairs were exacerbated by the fact the body side framing and voids had been injected with a 2 part expanding foam called 'Koolag' (like your cavity wall insulation), and sadly it acted as a sponge. The coaches were never renowned for their ability to prevent water ingress, and having got in, it then couldn't get out, so their fate and longevity were sealed quite literally by the amount of rust they could handle. Many were subsequently cut up, where only better examples survive today. Cutting this one up is not an option! That's defeatist and not what we're in it for! Apart from that we spent a few grand on it. So we got it back, and decided it would never be a runner again, but would keep it to augment our current buffet vehicle.

We are where we are with it, and we now embrace the history behind it, and the fact not many survive compared to the Mk1s. Grinders in hand, we started on a voyage of discovery on the opposite side of the vehicle which wasn't touched. From initial impressions through various holes, the view is somewhat less daunting, as it would appear (ha,ha!) that there is only a minimal amount of this 'Koolag' foam in the bodyside. (When I was on BR, Koolag was the trade name of the foam). Many of the double glazed windows need removing for resealing as they themselves are like goldfish bowls - although I've never seen a fish in them - and the moquette on the seats is threadbare. Anyone got a roll of NSE Blue Blaze?

Never mind, at least the lights work, and for all it's failings, its seating arrangement is popular with Beer Festival customers - even as it is. But - you never know what else you're going to find.....



And so it was with WD722229 the MoD diesel loco. Undergoing a major cosmetic review, all the top engine and bonnet assemblies were removed. Having come thus far, it was decided to remove the 4 speed gearbox from the loco, as it had lost drive in 1st gear some time ago. Upon removing the top cover of the gearbox, the 1st gear clutch adjuster was found to be beyond limit. Examination of the other gear clutches also showed those to be almost at limit, and it wouldn't have been long before it would have ceased to go along totally. And - here we go again - another spanner in the works as it went up the drive on a pallet to someone who can rejuvenate it. Incidentally the gearbox was one of many thousands supplied to the rail traction industry by a company by the name of Self Changing Gears. I saw another one with a label on it pronouncing links to British Leyland - and we all know what happened to that lot!

54, alias Thomas had a problem with the coal, which we had ordered just as the Ukraine situation evolved. We don't know where it originated from other than a hole in the ground (maybe in Russia), but it came in as a bulk load from Ireland. Over a period of time it was noted that the combustion of it took place more in the ashpan than on the grate. This did not help with the construction of the new higher capacity ashpan, and the thing glowed almost translucently and was rescued just before meltdown occurred. So much work was expended laboriously grinding down the firebars to close the airgaps up, and fitting a sprinkler system to keep the ash damped down.

And to cap it all, as I write, we went to order some oxy-acetylene welding or cutting gas, only to find that we can't because due to an explosion at the production plant in the US - there's now an international shortage! And you thought loo rolls were bad enough!

You couldn't make it up. Like a lot of things, why can't we make it ourselves? Stay safe.





SIGNALLING DEPARTMENT by Jack Plumb

Recent signalling work has looked at the Platform 2 set of points for both point detection enabling works and improving the setup of these points. Signallmen especially will be pleased of the latter statement as the points have never been as smooth as our other sets and caused frustrations at recent events in 2022 (mind you I do hear Isaac found the rain refreshing whilst crowbarring them over at the October DOWT event!). Elsewhere, further progress has been made on overhauling the three lever ground frame for the Platform 5/6 Signalbox by James Lloyd and Angel Vaughan (ably supported by others where needed).

As reported elsewhere, I will shortly be stepping down from the Signalling HOD position to take a new role as Traffic Operations Manager. I'm pleased to say that James Lloyd will be stepping up to take forward Signalling supported by the usual gang as a great example of bringing new blood and enthusiasm into the management of the museum. Please join me in supporting James going forwards as there is lots more still to do but for now. 7-5-5. Below we see James Lloyd working on platform 2 points.



LONG TERM PLAN by Peter Robinson

Despite all the disruption caused during the pandemic, Museum development was able to continue in a rather dramatic way with the construction of the new Exhibition Hall, supporting a long-term goal to increase the amount of undercover display area to protect our rolling stock. The next question was "what should go inside?".



This question instigated a complete review of the Museum Long Term Plan, particularly key given the imminent expiry of the temporary planning permission for the current Heritage Centre. The Long Term Plan is an important strategy document for the Museum; it helps direct priorities, avoids re-work and supports our credentials as an accredited museum. During this latest review, a different approach has been taken this time, with the plan being revised from the ground up in an aspirational way. Funding and resources will then help determine the timeline.

I may be sounding quite vague at this point, however as I write this, the Board are still to endorse the draft following which we will be able to share more details, as well as invite comments and ideas for various aspects.

So what sort of things might be in the pipeline?

A detailed review of all our rolling stock has been completed, which has included key department heads as well as wider comments from members collated by our curatorial team. This has included short listing vehicles for display in the Exhibition Hall as well as identifying those items that may have a better and more appropriate home away from the Museum.

In terms of the Exhibition Hall itself, Adam and Jaki have continued to develop plans for the displays within, particularly in the annex area which will house larger items such as the North London Birdcage and give them a secure future. The outside of the Exhibition Hall on the yard side is where the next steps come into play, with various ideas on the table, including an enhanced pub garden, re-sited coal office and bays, or even a Network Southeast themed platform to continue telling the history of railways through into the 1980s.

The other new major project on the agenda is the replacement for the Heritage Centre with a permanent building to continue to provide interpretation for our small exhibits. The final outline designs for this are being completed at present, in preparation for seeking planning permission. The aim is to provide a flexible open exhibition area, a archive/storage room and a multi-use space that can be used as both a site shop and a learning venue for school visits, all within a footprint only slightly larger than the existing Heritage Centre.

The Long Term Plan doesn't just deal with new projects however; the whole site will be included, from our front door in the main station building through to the behind-the-scenes areas like volunteer toilets and messing facilities. It's not just construction activities either, also included is the aim to improve general accessibility through our displays for those who may not currently be able to get the most out of the Museum, such as those with limited sight.

The dates by which the above might be achieved will always be flexible due to restrictions on funds and volunteer time, however there are some key goals that we would like to achieve as follows:

Running shed to have the finishing touches completed, such as the electrics and building regulations signoff for potential opening in Spring 2023.

Track connection into the Exhibition Hall in place during 2023.

Works start on replacing the new Heritage Centre in 2024.



Finally, I'd just like to pass on my thanks to Jaki Collison for providing the drive to carry out this latest review of the long-term plan and for putting up with Mark C and I when we inevitably keep moving meeting dates!

This is an exciting time of development for the Museum as a whole with huge amounts of potential to transform what we offer our visitors as well as protecting our collection for future generations. I hope to be able to share more detailed plans in the near future.

MINIATURE RAILWAY NEWS **by Rob West**

As you are doubtless aware, with coal supplies these days being erratic an attempt has been made to use e-coal in *Frederick*, but initial trials have been unsuccessful due to problems with firstly producing enough heat and secondly due to leaving large lumps of burnt fuel in the firebox.

The current coal in use is rather sooty and has on occasions produced sparks which have landed on passengers. To reduce this, three coaches have been utilised rather than four with the front two seats kept empty: Tim Rice is to fit a spark arrestor to further minimise the risk.

The generously donated new wheelchair carrying passenger coach - named after Fred Youell - has been tested using the battery loco *Ricardo Lampwick* successfully.

Further plans are being developed to try and ensure that the Miniature Railway runs more regularly. One way to help this happen is to have a greater pool of volunteers available to operate: if you are interested, please do not hesitate to contact me!

ENGINEERING NEWS **by Allan Robinson**

Things have been a bit hectic recently, with most of the time the team have been working on the new buildings.

Nonetheless, work has been progressing on Lamport, and the belly plate forging has been refurbished with the corroded areas built up with weld and a new set of studs made and fitted courtesy of John Bicknell. This is now ready to be riveted back on. John has also been fitting new studs to the back-head, the tank is in the shed and the team are busy scraping the old paint off, and once finished being cleaned down and painted it is planned to fit it to the chassis. The new inner fire-box is now complete so it should be with us shortly.

The Mk2 coach is in the Restoration Shed having a makeover, and new steel patches are being welded in where the body has rusted through ready for a repaint, and the roof is also being attended to.

On the PMV, the last two doors have now been replaced and the vehicle is now being cleaned and painted.

With the Running Shed, the two dummy roof ventilators have been manufactured and it is hoped to fit these shortly.



Outside the Restoration Shed on 1 January 2022 (Michael Sanders)

RETURN OF THE JAZZ by Michael Sanders

This is the first of many updates in the magazine on the constant progress of the overhaul for the N7, 9621, in a bid to share with you the status of the project in terms of the works being undertaken and the financial requirements. As always any help is always welcomed, be it in person; such as working on the frames onsite, or remotely; such as offering vital financial help to enable the project to continue and meet the goal of the N7 returning to steam for its 100th birthday in 2024.

Since commencement of work in June 2020 in brief the boiler was removed from the frames in August of 2020, remained onsite being de-tubed and stripped down to allow for a boiler inspection from our insurance inspectors. This was finally conducted in the early summer of 2021 and it was found that the boiler would require a completely new inner and outer firebox, extensive work - if not replacement of the front tube plate - due to misalignment and corrosion of the bottom quarter, and the super heater header - due to corrosion, the boiler barrel was found to be in good condition.

After a period of tender, Heritage Boiler Steam Services in Liverpool were chosen by myself to undertake the necessary boiler work. The boiler being dispatched to Liverpool in June 2021 where they began immediately in the process of splitting the firebox from the boiler barrel, also removing the front tube plate. This has



allowed the removal of the foundation ring and all manner of internal components of the boiler to allow them to be tested and repaired as required.

Unfortunately, since October 2021 progress in Liverpool has been slow and non-existent at times, this has been because we have been awaiting the replacement materials for the inner and outer firebox. These have been bought at immense cost, the firebox material costs alone accounting for over £100,000.00 and the lead time for the copper for the inner firebox due to various global impacts being close to 12 months. In the last 3-4 months recommencement of work has taken place at Liverpool with the foundation ring being completely overhauled, requiring an extensive amount of building up with weld and materials for the firebox having arrived in September 2022, already great progress has been achieved with the firebox outer door plate already being drilled and temporally fixed to the outer firebox wrapper.

Since September 2020 once the boiler had been removed, the frames have been worked on by a very small team of the museums younger fraternity. Myself being very much the oldest, at 35. Nearly every component on the frames has been removed to be inspected and repaired as required. If replacement or repair was not required, then it was cleaned down, repainted and refitted, this is a constant process, and at the time of writing, is progressing well, with a near complete running chassis. The main thrust on the frames at time of writing, is awaiting contractor JM Engineering to come to site to re-bore the valves - this is required because the ovality and the slight barrelling was exceeding the maximum permissible to allow for further use. A consequence of this is that 4 new valve heads have had to be cast and new rings made up to replace the originals as the overall diameter of the valve has increased due to the re-boring. All in all, these works are costing around £7000.

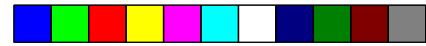
As you can see extensive work has been undertaken both on and off site to get this asset overhauled ready for its 100th birthday. In terms of the financial gap between where we are and completion, is in the region of £100,000.00. Just to reassure everyone, all the money spent has come from kind donations from members of the public and volunteers and will continue to do so as no funding will come directly from the museum.

I would like to personally thank those who have contributed in some way to our N7's return to steam.

TEAM WEDNESDAY NEWS **by Tony Foster**

Team Wednesday has said good bye to a number of retiring members and of course there was the sad passing of Colin Burwood. On the positive side, thanks to the efforts of Mike Bradley and Martin Gibbons we have been joined by three new members. We hope that they will enjoy their time with the team.

During the late summer 2022 TW completed the reconstruction/repurposing of the other ancient GER coach that was on site. This will become in due course the annexe to the 'Viaduct' pub. The front of the coach has been painted in Colchester crimson. The interior



has been painted in a bright colour scheme, with the window reveals painted in the crimson colour. A number of brass door handles were sourced from the old door store and these have been fixed to the doors, although all but the centre doors do not open. The roof covering has been applied and the coach is weathertight. The covering material is a heavy duty vinyl. A lot of timber recovered from the dismantling of other redundant museum buildings was used in this project. A large proportion of the rebuild costs have been met by current and a retired member of the team.



Members will recall the row of faux 'old time shops' that were erected by TW some 5 years ago have now been dismantled to make way for landscaping work to take place. All the timber that was salvageable has, or will be de-nailed and board materials dry stored for use on other projects. The team has put the supporting sleepers and the telephone box into storage in the set down area. Some of this recycled material is being used to create a weatherproof back to part of the old B1 building. The team have put in a stud work frame, the exterior clad in featheredge timber and the interior with recycled plywood panels.

Other projects: A number of wooden cabinets have been refurbished. These cabinets contain electrical connections. They are situated by the pathway leading to the south signal box. Some vegetation has been cut back in this area too.

At the Estate managers request we have constructed a lean to weatherproof, secure structure to house the MR engineering department's compressor. The timber wall facing onto platform 3 that is used to display the museums' enamel signs has been refurbished and repainted. The signs have been re-hung, using some new tamper resistant screws. Gordon has used his plant operating skills on a number of occasions, including moving a saddle tank from the storage area close to the MR station and onto a well wagon in the sidings.



At Adam Cullings' request the team has fabricated and hung four display boards in one of the display rooms in the Heritage Centre. While considering this area, TW have found a solution for the door at the rear of the centre. Unfortunately the door has a tendency, windy conditions to swing violently into the tubular railings on the landing outside. The railings around the Passimeter on platform 4/ 5 are currently undergoing a refresh. Members of the team have been working with other Wednesday volunteers in helping to lay paving slabs on the eastern side of the new exhibition shed.

Rod Terry the TW electrician has been busy with a number of tasks around the museum site. He continues with the programme of emergency lighting tests that Colin instigated. He has been substituting where possible, light bulbs that consume less power. He and his assistant Richard have brought a permanent power source into the new running shed. The feed is taken from the switch room under the footbridge on platform 2, under the running track via various inspection chambers and into the building. The feed terminates in a distribution board.

Tending Hundred Railway



East Anglian Railway Museum

The latest title from
EARM Publications,
available from the Visitor
Reception price £9.95

Also available (all at
£4.95) are :
N7- Star of the Jazz
Branch Lines to Braintree
Branch Line to
Southminster
Kelvedon & Tollesbury: A
Pictorial History



SAFETY LESSONS FROM HISTORY - 100 YEARS AGO

by Isaac Ferneyhough

I occasionally hear at various EARM encounters and Mess room chats, with full ebullient confidence from the person sounding off, that “Surely, we have little to worry about compared to other heritage railways as our maximum line speed is 10 mph and only 5 mph on all crossovers and junctions?”

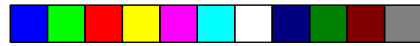
I always listen carefully but consider that point of view against what history tells us. As I always mention on Track Safety courses, the train “is a very efficient killer”, no matter what speed it is doing. I also hear from some railwaymen that it doesn’t matter the length of a loco boiler on visibility, as there is a fireman on the opposite side to the driver to relay the aspect of the signal to him. He therefore does not need to be in two places as once, and so doesn’t matter which way the engine is running. “Two pairs of eyes must be better than one?” Besides which, “with our fully-fitted trains at that speed you could pretty much stop immediately without causing any real harm”.

On a cold but hazy afternoon on the 26th of November 1921 the driver William Shepherd and fireman Cowley of the 2.10pm Bristol to Sheffield express, manoeuvred their Midland Railway Class 3 4-4-0 tender engine no. 757 across the roads on the West side approach to Birmingham New Street station to access Platform 4. There was a tendency on these cold days for smoke and steam vapour to sit in the cutting and around the entrance to Hill Street Bridge. There was no fog, but it was likely there was a frost. As they passed signalman Barbrook’s clear signals of New Street No.4 box at 10 mph they could have little idea of what was to happen in the next couple of minutes.

The approaches to the platforms at the West End of Birmingham’s premier station are on a significant downhill gradient of 1 in 68 until just before the platforms, which are on the level. The train was made up of a 6-wheeled brake van, seven bogie passenger coaches and a four -wheeled horse box and was fully fitted throughout.

Platform 4 allowed for two relatively short trains to share its length at the same time. There was a semaphore stop signal half-way along platform 4 to allow the second train to be signalled into the platform if it was clear up to the signal. The signals in this case were worked jointly by ‘box No.4 and ‘box No.2 working together. However, given its length, the express would never fit in just half the platform. It was not unusual for only the front portion of a train to be in the platform.

Sitting peacefully at the East end of Platform 4, pointing eastwards, was the local to Derby. It was made up of Midland 2-4-0 No.203, four 8-wheeled wooden-bodied coaches, and a six- wheeled wooden bodied brake van at the rear. Interestingly one of the wooden coaches was numbered 553, and all were of a remarkably similar ilk to our vintage stock. Passengers and light goods were being loaded ready for a slightly delayed departure due to a somewhat tardy turning of the engine on the turntable.



The approach to the platform from the West was on a tight curve with two overbridges which did not lend itself to good visibility, but the experienced crew were fully aware of this. Signalman Barbrook, satisfied that the stationary train was inside the protection of the signal half-way along the platform, pulled off the signal giving the express permission to enter the platform just as the train rolled towards it at “line speed” of 10 mph.

In his evidence the driver says that he kept the brakes applied until he had passed under Hill Street Bridge and arrived, under clear signals, at the west end of Platform 4. He stated that by this point he was down to around 6 mph.

The platform stop signal, owing to the left-hand curvature of the road, and obstruction to view caused by the boiler of the engine, is not visible to the drivers from the right side of the footplate. In accordance with his general practice, therefore, he asked his fireman (Cowley) to look out for the signal from the left-hand side of the footplate, from which side there was less obstruction to view, and tell him its position. Just before the engine reached a point on the platform line opposite the refreshment room i.e., about 100 feet from the signal, Cowley shouted something that Shepherd took to be “off”. Shepherd then released the continuous vacuum brake thinking that the signal was clear, and he could take the train past it. A second later Shepherd suddenly saw the corner of the 6-wheeled brakevan of the local train standing in front of him and at the same time caught sight of the signal at danger. He immediately re-applied the vacuum brake. He estimated that the speed had increased slightly due to the brakes being released and that he may have been travelling at 7 mph when he re-applied the brake. The sudden application of the brake, he thought, resulted in the engine wheels skidding, and did not effect, therefore, any reduction in speed. There was no time to apply sand and he was unable to avoid the collision.

Fireman Cowley stated that Shepherd asked him to look out for the platform signal. He leant out of the cab as far as he could but was unable to see the signal until he was half-way between it and the west end of the platform on account of all the “steam and smoke that was hanging about”. The signal was at danger and showing a red light. He put his head back into the cab and shouted, “It’s on,” and received the reply “Right.” He did not expect the driver to have any difficulty stopping the train before passing the platform signal. He thought his knowledge of the station was adequate to qualify him to assist the driver in observing signals. In his experience, it was the practice of drivers to observe signals themselves, even though they asked firemen to look out for them.

A ticket inspector on the platform stated that from his position alongside the rear of the local train, he saw the engine of the express rounding the curve as it entered the platform at the usual speed but owing to its quietness was not applying the brakes. He therefore did his best to warn passengers who had taken their seats in the standing train and endeavoured to get them out of the carriages.

The force of the collision drove the stationary train forward about four yards. It is likely the express train was running at 10 mph at the point of collision. After the accident, the frame of the 6-wheeled brakevan was found tilted sideways and



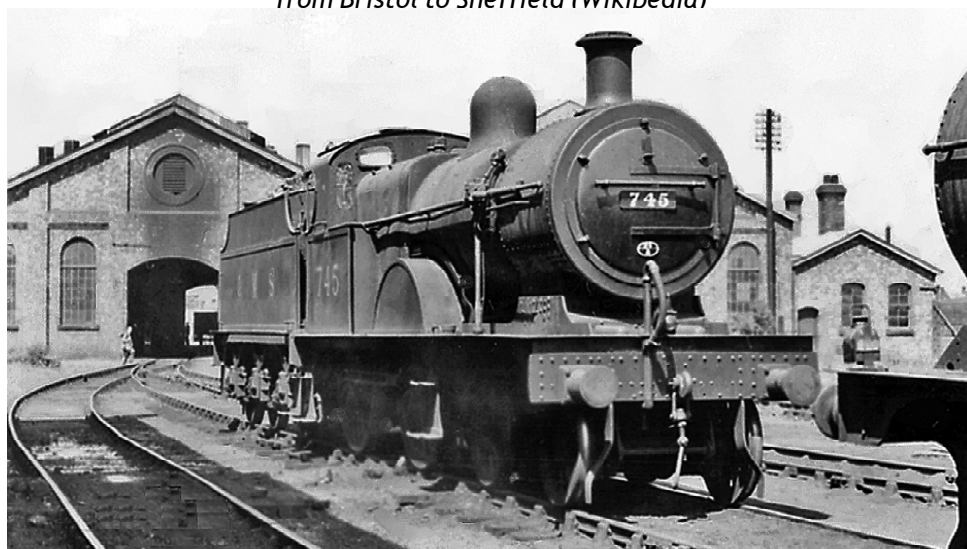
lying across the tracks. The leading and trailing ends of the next two coaches were locked together. The bodies broke away from the underframes and rose vertically in the air where they met. The rear end of the western most coach body was found resting on the front of the express engine. The body work of one coach was found to be jammed underneath an overbridge. The headstocks and buffer castings on two vehicles were broken. The damage to the express was confined to breakage of buffer castings and bending of buffer rods, in the case of the engine and three other vehicles. Three people were killed and 24 injured.

To quote Inspector Pringle, MHRI, [for the misunderstanding that caused this accident] *“I consider that driver Shepherd was mainly responsible in that there was no adequate reason why, in accordance with what undoubtedly is the best practice of enginemen, he should not have satisfied himself, in the conditions which prevailed, what the position of the signal was. The instructions are explicit, and Shepherd was fully aware of the instructions to drivers entering New Street Station.*

“All trains and engines emerging from any of the tunnels must be completely under control, so that they can be stopped at any part of the station” and “That the lowering of the main signals for entering the station indicated that that the line is clear to the platform stop signals near the middle of the station”.

Various suggestions were put forward to improve this complicated approach road, but we should not let that detract from the main point that a speed of 10 mph, poor rail adhesion and a downhill gradient combined with substandard communication and passengers climbing into coaches can cause death and devastation. We would be extremely complacent if we were to assume otherwise. Only by working vigilantly together to establish a clear understanding between safety-critical staff can we avoid a tragedy becoming inevitable.

Midland Class 3 4-4-0 No.745 of the same type driven by William Shepherd from Bristol to Sheffield (Wikipedia)





THOMAS AT CHAPPEL: HOW IT STARTED

It is incredible to think that it now over twenty five years ago in 1996 that the Museum started holding Thomas events. This brief history has been put together using contributions from the Stour Valley Steam magazines of the period.

In 1996 Peter E Thompson wrote that the Museum “held a Friends of Thomas the Tank Engine over the four days of the Easter holiday. It was a controversial move and did not meet with universal approval from the Membership in General or from the Volunteer workers at Chappel either. The usual division of opinion was soon evident and doubts were raised as to the motives of the Board of Trustees, the state of their mental faculties and their questionable parentage.” The plan was for three passenger trains to operate: one steam hauled, one diesel and the freight at ten minute intervals, plus some Wickham trolleys were to run on the back sidings.

All did not go quite to plan though! One of the diesel locos would not start, so a start was made preparing a second steam loco - *Mirrvale* - not a quick job. By 1130 on Day One queues were growing for both the one steam and the one diesel train then in operation, with no freight train yet. The passenger train was formed by a mix of Mk1 coaches and the 5-plank wagon, hauled by *Bellerophon*, on loan from the Vintage Carriages Trust. Eventually *Mirrvale* was put on to the freight. The queues continued to build up, and by noon the decision had to be taken to change from double runs to single runs. With a spare DMU car in platform 2 this was swiftly attached to the two car DMU in an attempt to help reduce the queues. *Mirrvale* was borrowed from the freight train





to add the Suburban to the passenger train: however, this was easier said than done as it couldn't be the last coach so the train had to be re-marshalled. Despite now running five coaches and an open wagon the queues grew longer.

And then the freight train ran, and during the ascent of the yard *Mirrvale* threw out enough sparks and flames to cause no less than five separate fires. All train movements were stopped for around fifteen minutes while the fires were extinguished. To avoid a repetition, *No. 23* in its new guise as *Toby* was attached to the front of *Mirrvale* so it didn't have to work so hard. The rest of the day continued without incident, although the queues never diminished all day.

Bear in mind that at this time we did not have the VRC or on line bookings, and all tickets were sold in the Booking Office on platform 1 - with payment made by cash, cheque or credit card - and credit card payments required a manual imprinter, none of this new fangled contactless system!

The representative from Britt Allcroft (the then licensees of Thomas) came from Southampton (with her mother) to see how the event went, and they both ended up spending most of the day working in the buffet. The buffet sold out of virtually everything by the end of Day One, which saw an early Saturday morning trip to the cash and carry to clear them out of chips - followed by a visit to Sainsbury's at Stanway to clear them out of chips as well!

Overall, the event was deemed an unqualified success and the Trustees decided to run the event again in 1997 - but with a licensed Thomas replica, as will be told in a future issue. To put the event in terms of numbers, no less than 8445 visitors attended over the four days, and the Museum banked over £35,000 - that's equivalent to over £73,000 at the time of writing at today's prices.





BREL DERBY/YORK, LMR and ER LONDON SUBURBAN SERVICES, CLASS 317

Introduced: 1981 (317/1), 1985 (317/2)

Original unit numbers: 317301-317348 (317/1), 317349-317372 (317/2)

The first batch of units was for the electrification of the St Pancras to Bedford route, together with the branch to Moorgate, which was approved in late November 1976. They were built at York (driving and motor vehicles) and Derby Litchurch Lane (trailer vehicles). They were designed to be driver only operated trains but there was a bitter industrial dispute with the first electric trains not entering service until 18 April 1983 instead of the planned 17 May 1982. The second batch of units - to be the 317/2 sub-class - were to replace slam door Class 312s on the Great Northern outer suburban services from King's Cross: these had an improved front end design and were also designed for driver only operation. They were constructed at York between 1985 and 1987.

The re-opening of Snow Hill Tunnel between Holborn Viaduct and Farringdon into what became the Thameslink route displaced some of the Class 317s King's Cross and Euston outer suburban services. A number of Class 317 units were transferred to Bletchley for working Euston to Bletchley and Milton Keynes rush hour services, replacing slam door Class 310 units. By the end of January 1988 the class were working the through Euston-Northampton and Birmingham stopping services, and by March, 35 of the class were based at Bletchley. The other 13 of the class were transferred to Hornsey, supplementing the Class 317/2s.

The stay on Euston services was short-lived. Following the introduction of Class 321s in 1989 the remaining 317s moved from Bletchley to Hornsey for working services out of King's Cross. In May 1993 seven sets were downgraded to second class only and renumbered 317322-8. During 1997 deliveries of the class 365 units released some sets for working LTS services, a move that brought sliding door stock to the LTS for the first time and helped eradicate more slam door units.

From October 1997 with the additional Anglia Railways services from London to Ipswich Class 317 EMUs were sub-hired from WAGN to Anglia Railways to operate these services. In addition, for a period from 27 September 1998 a WAGN Class 317 EMU was hired to Anglia Railways work the 1842 (SX) Liverpool Street to Norwich returning the next day as the 0500 (SX) Norwich to Liverpool Street from 27 September 1998.

Various refurbishments and re-numberings took place over the years: from 1998 twenty sets were dealt with, 317349-372 renumbered to 317649-672. With the growth of Stansted Airport. the decision was taken to extensively refurbish a number of Class 317s from 2000 to provide a dedicated fleet for this route. Former Class 317/1 units 317 308/09/10/14/19/22/23/29/32 were selected for this refurbishing programme with the fourth digit of the number changing to a '7'.



*317340 in First Capital Connect livery at Hitchin on 22 June 2013
(Alastair Holmes)*

Following the ending of the hire of Class 317s to Thameslink on 1 April 2003, three units (317301/5/17) were hired to c2c as cover while Class 357s underwent modifications.

From 2003 WAGN units received a new purple livery with pale purple doors, and started to be fitted with OTMR. The Thameslink fleet was bolstered from late 2004 until May 2005 by the loan of twelve Class 317 sets from WAGN.

For the launch day of 'one' on 1 April 2004, 317692 and 317729 were in the new livery.

As at late 2004, fourteen Class 317/1 sets, 317 317-318/320/321/324-328/330/331/333-335 were allocated to 'one' West Anglia, 317336 was leased to 'one' West Anglia and sub-hired to Great Northern and the twelve sets 317337-348 were leased directly to Great Northern. This allowed c2c to release five Class 357 Electrostar sets to 'one' Great Eastern for use on services between Liverpool Street and Southend Victoria. The 357s enabled 'one' Great Eastern to release five Class 321 sets to Silverlink who, in turn, provided six Class 321 sets to Central Trains for its new Birmingham-Northampton service until the Class 350 Desiros entered service in 2005.



From late June 2005 Colchester drivers started training on Class 317 units, with 317302/4 initially being used for crew training. From 19 July 2005 Class 317s took over the Ipswich standby unit duty from Class 321s.

National Express took over the West Anglia part of the WAGN franchise on April 2004, and made changes to the Class 317/1 fleet on West Anglia. In 2005 fifteen units were transferred from Hornsey to Ilford, and dedicated to West Anglia inner suburban units. This saw 317301-320 (apart from the five converted for use on the Stansted services) renumbered to 317501-515, with the first class declassified. 2006 saw a project by 'one' to refurbish twelve units for dedicated use on Stansted Express services and renumbering to create Class 317/8: the units involved, 317321-326 became 317881-892.

The first Class 317 to be re-vinyled into First Urban Lines livery was 317345 in July 2007. From mid-2007 twelve Class 317s were on lease from Angel Trains to FCC: eight for traffic on GN routes, plus two sub-hired to Thameslink to cover for Class 319s receiving overhaul.

For the launch of the new National Express East Anglia name on 27 February 2008 317508 appeared in the new colours.

From May 2011 Class 317s were diagrammed to work the Romford to Upminster service, although substitutions by 315s or 321s were not unknown. From August 2011 Class 317s visited Clacton both for short term storage and for the fitment of OTMR equipment: some units also had periods of storage at Parkeston.

From 23 November 2011 Class 317s took over (from Class 321s) the working of 1P48 1702 Liverpool Street to Norwich and 1P65 1930 Norwich to Liverpool Street. Booked for Class 317/7s, other sub-classes did also appear. However, this ended from 3 February 2012 and following the takeover of the franchise by Abellio from 5 February 2012 the nine Class 317/7s went off lease for a period.

In 2013 Angel Trains contracted Bombardier to rebuild 317722 as a demonstrator. Total cost was £7 million, being £6 million for a new AC traction equipment and £1 million for internal works. Two coaches had altered seating, including some perch seats, lighting changed to LED, and were DDA compliant: the other two were unaltered. The unit was taken by road to Derby in September 2013. Following its return to Ilford and much testing, on 20 June 2014 it formed a special 0933 Liverpool Street to Bishops Stortford and return. However, it was rarely used and on 6 March 2019 it was stored prior to scrapping.

From 2014 units started appearing in Greater Anglia white livery with red doors. The transfer of the West Anglia suburban services (Enfield Town, Chingford and Cheshunt via Seven Sisters) to London Overground (LOROL) in May 2015 saw additional units required, as the previous use of units on mixed long and short distance services was no longer possible, with the reinstated Class 317/7s providing the answer. London Overground gained the following units: 317 708-710, 714, 719, 723, 729, 732, 887-892. This initially left GA with 317501-515, 317649-672 and 317881-886. The LOROL units gained a new white, blue and orange livery.



In 2015 a refresh programme commenced of the 317/6 sub-class units. This £1.25 million programme was a franchise provision, which was carried out 'in house' at Clacton depot. At the same time, Clacton also hosted other members of the Class 317 family for door modifications. The programme was completed around the end of 2015.

From 14 December 2015 Class 317s reached Ipswich again when a pair were booked to form 1Y34 1818 Liverpool Street to Ipswich and 1Y61 1952 return: this lasted until December 2019, after which the trains were truncated at Colchester.

From January 2017 new Class 700 EMUs were started to be introduced on Govia Thameslink services. This was to start a merry go round: Class 387/1 units would then move to the Great Northern route to replace Class 365s which would in turn displace the GN Class 317s, with 317337-348 transferring to Greater Anglia to provide additional accommodation as per the franchise commitment. The final Class 317 workings on the Great Northern took place on 30 April 2017, when 317337+317341 worked the 1115 Peterborough to King's Cross.

In February 2017 GA announced that they were to finance a £4.7m refurbishment project that would see 19 Class 317s (and 53 Class 321s) fitted with new carpets, seat covers and dado panels, as well as interior repainting. This work was carried out at Clacton depot.

317508 at Upminster, 28 September 2013 (Alastair Holmes)





In 2018 Arriva Train Care at Cambridge were contracted to carry out overhauls on the doors and to remedy air leaks on the Class 317s in a bid to improve reliability. Meanwhile, a number of units were sent to Brodies at Kilmarnock for PRM modifications. Some units were also similarly dealt with at Clacton.

317669 was the first to be withdrawn, being towed to Ely for storage on 22 June 2019, with others gradually following. On 29 June 2019, 317651 and 317664 covered for a failed InterCity set on the 1825 Liverpool Street to Norwich, but only as far as Ipswich due to driver route knowledge: this is believed to be the last time Class 317s substituted for an InterCity set.

With the introduction of the Persons of Reduced Mobility (PRM) regulations from 1 January 2020, dispensation was granted for the continued use of Class 317s firstly from this date until 30 September 2020: this was extended again due to the ongoing problems with the Class 720 replacements. Eighteen Class 317s could be retained until April 2021, by which time more PRM modifications should have been carried out. A further 14 could be retained until September 2021, and 14 more until 31 December 2021.

In March 2020 four of LOROL's six Class 317/8 units went off lease and were placed in store, with two (891 & 892) going to Northampton and two (887 & 889) go to Ely Papworth. The two from Northampton were subsequently moved to Ely Papworth via Ilford.

And then came the coronavirus pandemic, with three major lockdowns over the next sixteen months. Train services were cut, although many services that did operate were formed of longer trains than previously to allow for the new phenomenon of social distancing. The rest of London Overground's Class 317 fleet was withdrawn for storage. Gradually the stored units were concentrated at Ely Papworth and Parkeston as withdrawals continued. The Class 317/6s were slated for withdrawal first as they had corrosion issues and none had universal access toilets.

From November 2020 the former London Overground Class 317/7s were resuscitated from store for use by GA to help overcome availability problems caused by the withdrawal of the Class 317/6s: the 317/7s were stated to be partially compliant with the PRM regulations. They remained in LO livery but with Greater Anglia branding. Within a very short space of time the first of these were withdrawn again: by the end of May 2021 all had returned to Angel Trains as off lease. By late February 2021 the 317/6 sub class had become extinct in passenger service: this 1985/6 batch were withdrawn earlier than some of their slightly older brethren due to suffering corrosion issues. Scrapping of the former London Overground Class 317/8 units commenced on 19 February 2021 when 317890 was hauled to Eastleigh. On 21 May 2021 the experimentally refurbished and unloved 317722 was hauled away for scrap. Despite refurbishment work and having its DC motors replaced with AC motors at a cost of £7 million, it rarely operated in service.

Throughout 2021 units were stored at various locations - primarily Parkeston Yard - prior to being taken to Papworth Ely for storage prior to disposal. Some units were fortunate to be reinstated for a further period of service. The number of



these moves is too complex to be included in this article. The last known passenger working on the Great Eastern was on 19 April 2022 when 317337+317347+317502 formed the 0743 Witham to Liverpool Street.

From the new timetable from 16 May 2022 there were no diagrams whatsoever for Class 317s but the present Class 720 shortfall meant that some examples covered for a short while longer.

On Saturday 16 July 2022 317343+317508 operated nine round trips from Liverpool Street to Hertford East, their last trips on the network: a 'Class 317 Farewell 1983-2022' headboard was carried by 317343 at its country end. These were the last workings of the class.

At the time of writing, there are still twenty three units still in store at Ely awaiting their final one way trip to the scrapyard.

Part of 317345 has been saved for preservation: DTS 77092 is now located at the East Anglian Railway Museum, and TC 71621 at Old North Road station. The other two cars have been scrapped. Since arrival at Chappel, 77092 has been revinyled in Network South East livery thanks to guidance from the Network South East Society, as seen in Brad Wright's photograph below. The vehicle will be used as Santa's grotto for this year's Day Out With Thomas and Santa event in December.





MY EARLY INTRODUCTION TO RAILWAYS

by E W Lawrence

For those who do not know Ted Lawrence, he is a one of the founder members of the Museum, and his membership number is 4. Whilst now living in Devon, he regularly still assists with information and photographs of the early days at Chappel, and is an active volunteer at the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway. This article - which will appear in a number of parts - will give a lot of information on the founding of the Stour Valley Railway Preservation Society and the early years. But first, this article sets the scene with details of Ted's early years.

I suppose we must begin with the question - how did my interest in railways start which eventually led to my involvement with the Stour Valley Railway Preservation Society. For this we have to go back to 1944, during the Second World War, in the year in which travelling restrictions to the coast were lifted after the 'D Day' landings. Until then I had never seen the sea and as a very young boy the prospect of a long trip by train to the Suffolk coast was one of considerable excitement and expectation. We were to stay with an Aunt and Uncle at Aldeburgh, a long way from home and, hopefully, from the onslaught of the V1 Flying Bombs when every night and some of the day was spent in our Anderson Shelter.

We left home at the crack of dawn, my father laden with a large suitcase which was to prove more useful on the journey than I realised. Our first train took us as far as Chelmsford. There we had to await a train that would take us on to Ipswich. When it arrived it only had standing room in the side corridors. That large suitcase made an ideal seat for a small boy on a crowded train. The travelling restrictions had only been lifted the previous day and many were taking advantage of it. In addition there were many service personnel on the train. After a somewhat protracted journey and a further change of train at Ipswich we eventually arrived at Saxmundham, the junction for the Aldeburgh branch. We were on our last leg of the journey and even that branch line train to Aldeburgh seemed quite full. Leaving Thorpeness Halt the first sign of the sea came into view: we were nearly to Aldeburgh. As we arrived at Aldeburgh there was great excitement as the train coasted into the platform. Where were the Aunt and Uncle I had never seen before? Ah yes, Mother had spotted them. Aldeburgh station seemed very large and impressive to a small boy, with its over-all train shed roof. It must be the terminus of a very important railway line. The die was cast: railways were definitely a way of life that I liked and until it closed I could not be kept away for long from the Aldeburgh branch.

My grandparents had moved to Aldeburgh in 1946 and it was with them that we stayed for holidays from then onwards. My Grandfather knew all of the station staff at Aldeburgh which was a distinct advantage for a grandson who was a railway enthusiast. I recall watching the passenger train arriving at Aldeburgh and then being offered a ride on the footplate when the locomotive ran round the train and



into the shed siding with either of the locomotive regular crews - George Barnard and Jim Gilbert or Jack Runnacles and Maurice Holman. After these trips I sometimes found myself up in the signal box with Henry Vale. He used to keep the signal box interior immaculate and there was obvious pride in those who staffed Aldeburgh Signal Box.

Christmas 1949 marked a further boost to my interest in railways. Hornby train sets were at last appearing in the shops again after their war time absence. My parents had managed to get me a Hornby clockwork Gauge 'O' LMS passenger set together with some wagons, a point, level crossing and buffer stop. Over the ensuing years additional locomotives, track and station buildings were added as they became available.

In the summer of 1957 when I left St Edward's School it was to the De Havilland Aeronautical Technical School at Hatfield in Hertfordshire that I went on a five year apprenticeship. On Sunday evenings it was back to my digs in St Albans via Liverpool Street and St Pancras and on Friday evenings it was home from Hatfield to Collier Row via Kings Cross, Liverpool Street and Romford. At King's Cross there were all of the LNER Pacifics plus V2s, B1s, L1s and N2s on the suburban services. St Pancras seemed to be only blessed with Stanier 5s, 2-6-4 tanks and the odd Jubilee or Midland Compound. Liverpool Street was at its most interesting period. You could see Britannia class pacifics, BR std class 4s, Gresley K3s, B1s, B12s, Gresley B17s and the B2 rebuilds, L1 2-6-4 tanks and N7s on the suburban lines out to Chingford and Enfield. All these were being joined by the first diesel electrics, the Brush type 2, BTH type 1, and English Electric type 4. The pride and joy of Liverpool Street were the two station pilots. The N7 in gleaming lined-out black livery and the J69 finished in Great Eastern lined-out royal blue livery, complete with the Great Eastern coat of arms.

By 1963 it was becoming apparent that the time was not far away when many East Anglian railway landmarks would disappear. Many more lines would close and those surviving would be reduced to a basic railway. It was not my intention to let all this pass without recording it on film. With this in mind I purchased a 35mm Ilford Sportsman Camera made by Dacora in Germany. A line side pass was issued to me by Percy Gillett, then British Railways Public Relations Officer at Liverpool Street. This gave free range at the line side from Ipswich to Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Aldeburgh as well as Norwich to Lowestoft and Yarmouth. Over the following three years I made many excursions to the area filming station buildings, signal boxes, line side buildings, junctions, bridges and other interesting features which made up the railway atmosphere of East Anglia.

It was in 1963 that I met a young lady by the name of Clare Southwell who was to become my wife in 1966. Her Grandmother lived in Sudbury and so it was that I made my first visit to the Stour Valley Line, leading to my recording it on film from Marks Tey to Pampisford and Audley End to Bartlow in 1964. Together in April 1965 we were able to take a trip from Marks Tey to Cambridge while the line still existed in its entirety. Today much that I captured on film has gone. Lines have



closed, stations have been demolished and earthworks have completely disappeared, leaving little evidence that a once proud railway line existed.

It was in the mid 1960s that I became a member of the Midland & Great Northern Joint Railway Preservation Society which I very quickly became disillusioned with due the fact that there appeared to be two factions in the Society who fell out in a big way. This was to be the cause of difficulties in the future for any organisation trying to negotiate with British Railways for a redundant railway line in East Anglia.

I had always had an interest in gauge OO model railways and in about 1967 laid out a line around our garden in Chelmsford. Tom Kearney will recall the Sunday morning train running on the track of the Tile Kiln Farm model railway fraternity. However the line was to be short lived.

In 1968 this all changed when I happened to read an advertisement placed in an Essex newspaper by Wally Banks of the proposed formation of the Stour Valley Railway Preservation Society. This I responded to and promptly joined, my membership number being 4. Early meetings were held at the King's Head Pub, Ridgewell whose licensee John Laitt was the Chairman of the Society. The other officers and committee of the Society consisted of W.H. (Wally) Banks (Secretary), K.J. Jeeves (Treasurer), A.J. Booker, P.J. Cannon, C. Porter and R. Skipsey. The first edition of Stour Valley Steam was published in November 1968 by Ted Kirby and consisted of a double sided sheet of duplicated foolscap.

It was suggested by the committee that branches of the Society should be formed in the main areas of membership - Sudbury, Colchester, Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds, Cambridge, Braintree and Chelmsford where local meetings could be held. Resulting from this I arranged a meeting on 4th June 1969 at our home in Chelmsford, inviting all members in the area to attend. There were 12 members present resulting in myself being elected Chairman of the Chelmsford Branch, Terry Gregson Secretary, and Bunny Austin Treasurer. Bunny, being somewhat older than Terry or myself, became a very good 'wise advisor'. Also present was Mr Knibbs who was Headmaster of St John's School on the outskirts of Billericay who kindly offered the use of the school hall for our meetings. This enabled us to hold monthly meetings with film shows and guest speakers as the numbers of members attending rapidly increased.

A meeting of all Branch Chairmen was called by Wally Banks for the evening of 7th October 1969 at a Hotel in Sudbury, with an Agenda for the meeting sent to all concerned. The Branch Chairmen all arrived but for whatever reason Wally Banks did not appear. When it became obvious that he was not going to arrive to chair the meeting I stated that I had not driven all the way from Chelmsford to Sudbury on an October evening just to sit round a table and do nothing. All the others assembled agreed. So, as we had an agenda and a quorum from the branches, it was felt we should elect a Chairman for the meeting, proceed with the meeting and issue minutes with a copy to Wally Banks. I thus got elected as Chairman for the meeting, a step in the SVRPS controlling my life for the next two years.

(To be continued)



DAVE MORDECAI: AN APPRECIATION

It is with great sadness that we received news that Dave Mordecai passed away on 14 August 2022. Having joined the Museum after undertaking a Railway Experience course in 1996, Dave became one of the regular loco crew and in due course was the instructor on many Railway Experience courses. He was also a skilled model engineer, being closely involved with the Ipswich Model Engineering Society and displaying some of his models at Chappel periodically. Numerous tributes were posted on Facebook, just a few of which are reproduced below

- You always knew you'd have an enjoyable day if you were rostered with him
- Dave was a marvellous engineman and taught me a great deal. A gifted model engineer but more importantly a devoted family man and true gentleman
- Had some of my best turns on the footplate with him: he was an excellent teacher and I learned so much from him
- As a new volunteer Dave was always very welcoming to me
- Always smartly dressed and took a lot of pride in what he did. He always had time for the younger volunteers to pass on his knowledge

Michael Sanders and the late Dave Mordecai in conversation during a 2014 Day Out With Thomas event



COLIN BURWOOD: AN APPRECIATION

I am utterly devastated by the news of Colin's passing. Colin was a wonderful ambassador for the Museum and, without doubt, made a positive contribution to its development and progress.

I remember when he, along with Bob Proctor and their mate, Alan, first arrived at the Museum as freshly-retired, willing, ex-BT engineers. I took them under my wing to help with the fitting out of the new Exchange container in the lower orchard and some serious, heavy cabling around the site.

I can say that I have never seen three volunteers enjoy themselves so much. Their humour infected everyone who came close - I spent many an afternoon in tears having heard what they all got up to.

But beyond the humour, they always got the work done and to a very high standard.

This is going to be a very sad time.

Brian McGennity

Here is a photo that may be of interest to those longest in membership at the Museum. In the early days at Chappel the S&T Department consisted of a few individuals, who got together on 21 July 2022 at Colin Hill's railway in Oxfordshire, and this group photo was taken. Left to right are Colin Hill, Richard Booth, Derek Fox, Chris Hunt and Ian Reed.





MEET THE SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM

by James Cornell, Katie Keppel and Greg Kiteos

Introducing the EARM Social Media Team consisted of James Cornell, Katie Keppel and Greg Kiteos. The Social Media Team was formed earlier in 2022 with the aim of promoting the Museum's online social presence on Facebook and Instagram. In an ever advancing digital age, this work is vital to capture the wider audiences beyond the reach of traditional paper marketing. Us three were honoured to be given this task as we all want to maximise numbers through the door and keep up with modern digital social trends. We are fortunate to be using two different media platforms (Facebook & Instagram) as it allows us to capture two different key audiences, rather than confined to just one. For example, we initially took on Instagram with the aim to capture more of the 'mummy market' and younger audience. Instagram is rapidly taking over Facebook as the key social media platform for these audience groups so is vital that we keep these groups engaged with the goings on of the museum and events. Facebook on the other hand we have identified to have a larger 'train nerd' audience, although still has obviously a very large family audience too. Having these two platforms means that we don't put off mums and families with too much 'train nerd' talk, and we don't put off the train geeks with too much 'mummy' talk. That is why if you have seen our posts that go out, the Instagram wording is more 'yay come and play' whereas Facebook is more businesslike in structure and sometimes has the numbers of the trains running etc.

Our duties as a team are more than just publishing posts. Katie is in charge of the messages that come through from the public on Facebook and Instagram and acts as the first point of contact with the public (other than the VRC). She has worked hard to find a voice that is friendly and consistent when replying to messages and comments. Katie is also in charge of replying to our TripAdvisor reviews. James is in charge of the Google reviews and messages, as well as making sure the Museum's business presence on Google is kept up to date, including the event listings. He also creates and updates the Facebook event listings and assists marketing to make sure that Facebook remains the more 'business' front face platform. Greg is our spelling and grammar go to who makes sure that our wording makes sense and has no spelling mistakes. He is very gifted with his phone photography and a huge proportion of our posts have used his images, and in fact, our most successful video on Instagram is one that he took with over 6000 views! He is also very knowledgeable about the Museum's locos and rolling stock which is perfect when we get enquiries from train enthusiasts, which we do quite a lot.

We are pleased that since April to the time of writing, we have had 580 new Instagram followers and 456 Facebook page likes. If you have Facebook or Instagram and haven't yet followed the museum, then you can do so by searching East Anglian Railway Museum on Facebook, and earailwaymusuem on Instagram. The Social Media Team would like to thank everyone who has supported us and provided us with pictures and videos for our posts.



(Above) 23 October 2022 sees the crews of 54 and Jubilee posing by their locos:
left to right Aimee Archer, Gary Coomber, Josh Fortescue, Michael Sanders,
James Kindred and Jack Cavie (photo by Craig Greenslade)
(Below) An atmospheric shot of the station on 30 October 2022 (Greg Kiteos)





TRUSTEES AND OFFICERS OF THE MUSEUM

Trustees:

Pete Martin (Chairman) - peter.martin@earm.co.uk
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Peter Robinson (Health & Safety) - peter.robinson@earm.co.uk
Mark Fogg-Elliott (Treasurer) - finance@earm.co.uk
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Liz Larvor (Secretary) - liz.larvor@earm.co.uk

Heads of Department:

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HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT OF VOLUNTEERING?

Please contact either the relevant Head of Department if you have a special interest in an area, or Mike Bradley the Volunteer Co-ordinator who will be happy to explain the volunteering opportunities available



Different generations of diesel units at Chappel - Greater Anglia's 755330 heads for Sudbury on 18 July 2021 passing the Museum's Diesel Rail Bus (photo by Dom Shaw)

Below is new Traffic Manager Jack Plumb on No.23 (photo by Craig Greenslade)



