

ISSUE 52 – SPRING 2023

STEAM IN TRUST

The Friends of Vintage Trains Magazine



Friends of Vintage Trains

Membership is open to all

Details and application form:

www.friendsofvt.org.uk or from:

The Membership Secretary

Friends of Vintage Trains

670 Warwick Road, Tyseley, Birmingham B11 2HL

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Spring 2023

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Corrections from Issue 51

Due to a printer’s error, there was an incorrect photo caption on page 19 in Chris Schroeder’s article on Tyseley’s Locomotive Allocations. The caption under the top right photo should read Ex LMS 8F, possibly 2A’s 48477, with a northbound mixed freight leaving Stratford in winter 1965/66. Apologies to Chris for this error.

Front Cover Image: 7029 Clun Castle and 5043 Earl of Mount Edgcumbe on the Vintage Trains double-headed Castles railtour on 4 March 2023 to celebrate 5043’s return to main line service.

Photo: Tony Teague

Rear Cover Image: 4079 Pendennis Castle meets 7029 Clun Castle at Didcot on 4 March 2023 – two of the first and last Castle Class batches face to face! *Photo:* Denis Chick

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A warm welcome to this edition of Steam in Trust. We would especially like to welcome our new members Mr R Saunders, Mrs D Lord, Mr G May, Mr & Mrs S Jackson, Mr & Mrs V Clark, Mr A Watts, Mr N Greenhough, Mr G Gladwin and Mr M Perry.

It is with deep regret that we note the passing of Jeff Robinson on 9 March who had been a volunteer for over 40 years. He held posts such as Secretary of the Clun Castle Trust, Secretary of the Friends of Birmingham Railway Museum and was a long time Committee Member. Affectionately known by the Maintenance team as 'Crusher' for his commitment to recycling, we will be carrying an obituary in the September edition of Steam in Trust where we will include memories of Jeff from his colleagues at Tyseley and the Friends of Vintage Trains. We are also sad to note the recent passing of Roger Stewart who had been a volunteer and train steward since 2016. Roger was an extremely knowledgeable man and will be much missed by colleagues and passengers alike.

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, Arthur Kesterton sadly passed away in August last year. We include an obituary with contributions from those who knew him well.

At our AGM we bade farewell to Robin Coombes and Matt Self, who did not stand for re-election to the Committee due to other commitments; we are grateful for their contributions to the Friends during their time on the Committee. We are pleased to welcome Denis Chick to the Friends' Committee. Denis is a former Trustee of the Vintage Trains Community Benefit Society and a Trustee and Deputy Chairman and Press Officer of the Transport Museum Wythall. See issue 49 of Steam in Trust for more of Denis' background.

The Membership Verification Form that was distributed with the last Newsletter has elicited a large number of responses, nearly 100 alone

from the on-line update page. We extend a heartfelt thanks to all who have responded with updates.

We have a wide range of features alongside our regular articles in this issue including updates from two of the volunteer groups which gives an insight into the work of volunteers which often goes unheralded, especially by travellers on our railtours.

Our historical articles include reflections on the visit to Tyseley when the then H.R.H The Prince of Wales arrived at the museum behind 7029 Clun Castle on the historic run from Snow Hill on 14th September 1988. Our regular contribution from the VT archives describes the recently found GWR Air Raid Precaution (ARP) Signalman's Air-raid shelter (nicknamed Tin Coffins by the staff) which was discovered at Tyseley in the summer of 2022.

An update on the Sutton Miniature Railway project is given by Simon Edmunds – some of our members may remember this railway in its heyday when it ran at Sutton Park before being closed in 1962 after the former Sutton Coldfield Borough Council controversially reclaimed the lease on the fairground through which the railway ran.

We welcome Glynis Dray to Steam in Trust. Glynis is an accomplished artist and is especially interested in heritage steam alongside being an enthusiastic VT supporter. Over conversation on the Severn Valley Railway a while ago she also said that she writes poems and suggested writing one for this issue of Steam in Trust. We are very pleased to include a poem about Tyseley Station and the floral display that the station adopters planted for the Queens Platinum Jubilee.

Paul Hatton - Chairman and Steam in Trust Editor, Friends of Vintage Trains

MEMORIES OF ARTHUR KESTERTON

It is with deep regret that we note the passing of Arthur Kesterton on 1st August 2022. Arthur was a long-time member of Vintage Trains Society and then Friends of Vintage Trains. He served on the committee for many years and was an active volunteer at Tyseley. His life has brought fond memories from a number of members which we have distilled here:



Arthur on the platform at Stratford-upon-Avon with the Shakespeare Express on a summer Sunday afternoon

Chris Schroeder recalls Arthur’s familiar voice over the Vintage Trains’ PA. As train manager, his announcements made sure his passengers were kept safe. He also led the ‘Tuesday gang’, working hard to keep the inside and outside of the rake of carriages, which make up the mainline tour stock, clean and tidy. As a long-time Friends member, devoted committee member and volunteer, he will be greatly missed.

Nickey and Ray Churchill saw Arthur

as a great character and true friend who ran a tight and efficient ship (train) and really understood what the Shakespeare Express was about. Nickey was particularly grateful for Arthur’s kindness on her first trip, putting her at ease when having to meet so many people. They saw first-hand his sad decline in the last year or two and also saw the love and dedication with which his wife Marion looked after him. Arthur has left a gap in all our lives but a gaping hole in hers.



Arthur on a Christmas train. His bow tie played Christmas music, typical of Arthur’s keen and dry sense of humour.



Arthur with friends and colleagues in August 2017 on his retirement from the Friends committee and from volunteering with Vintage Trains.

Geoff Middleton worked with Arthur at Tyseley for over 30 years. Organised, wanting everything done correctly, Arthur didn’t suffer fools gladly. Geoff got on with him brilliantly, as an ex railway man, he passed on many skills and his contribution to Tyseley and Vintage Trains was immense. Arthur left a great gap when he retired from Tyseley and it was upsetting to see his decline in the last couple of years of his life. He is greatly missed by his friends and comrades at Tyseley, he will always be in our thoughts and has left us with loads of great memories, bless him.

For Dave Martin, Arthur was an exceptional character, best keep out of his way first thing in the morning was the rule. It will be difficult if not impossible to find a replacement with the same attributes. He knows how Maz must feel having lost his Brenda last May.

FRIENDS ADOPTION OF TYSELEY MAIN LINE STATION

All stations between Moor Street and Stratford continue to be adopted by volunteers under the direction of Friends of The Shakespeare Line, the vast majority of the stations owned and operated by West Midland Trains. The Friends remain the adopters of Tyseley where the 2023 designs for the flower beds are well advanced, we hope for another great display of colour this year.

As discussed in the Shakespeare Line Promotion Group's article further on in this magazine, each station has been given a theme based on one of Shakespeare's plays. Tyseley's theme is *All's Well That Ends Well*. All of Shakespeare's plays contain horticultural references which, in common with other adopted stations along the Shakespeare Line, we will try to include in our summer planting.



One of the displays at Tyseley station

Tyseley is in need of some TLC so the Friends of the Shakespeare Line have stepped in with the fitting of a lovely mixture of art boards outlining places served by direct trains from Tyseley, some outlining the industrial heritage of the area. Installation of CCTV has also commenced, part of a more extensive programme involving other stations in the area, with Tyseley as a priority which

is very good news. CCTV cameras have recently been installed to cover the booking hall and platforms.

On 9th January the Railway Heritage Trust announced that they were pleased to award Network Rail a grant of £57,000 for the repainting of Tyseley station in heritage colours. The Trust will also be awarding a grant to restore the daggerboards.

Other improvements to the station are in the pipeline so The Friends will continue to work very closely with all the groups involved at Tyseley station, which is an important gateway to Vintage Trains, the Tyseley Locomotive Works and the Shakespeare Express.



The dagger boards at Tyseley, in urgent need of renewal

We would like to include articles about the stations along the Shakespeare line and are keen to hear from any members with recollections about the stations. Please contact the Friends through any of the contact details on page 2 with any contributions.

MEMBERS' SOCIALS

First, apologies to those expecting a social meeting on the 15th April. Cancellation was out of our control but plans are afoot to arrange another date. We are determined to offer members real value for money, acknowledging your cherished membership.

On Thursday May 25th 2023, members are invited to a railway themed film show on the big screen. The Electric Cinema in Birmingham is opening its doors to us; we will be showing a short British Transport film followed by a full length feature film, *The Train*, starring Burt Lancaster.

Doors open at 10.15am with a recommended donation to the Friends of just £5 cash, payable on the day. Please feel free to bring a guest, also at a recommended donation of £5.

There will be limited seats so advance notice of attendance is essential. Please be aware that some stairs are involved and there is currently no lift.

More details are on our website; since places are limited please text Neil Ewart on 07805 817711 or email neilewart88@gmail.com to reserve your place.



The Electric Cinema



K&ESR

Finally, we are pleased to offer a coach trip to the Kent and East Sussex Railway on the 7th September 2023. You may be aware that the K&ESR is now managed by Robin Coombes, FoVT member and ace photographer. The K&ESR is a real journey back in time and an opportunity to live in the world of Colonel Stephens, its founder. We will depart from Tyseley at 08.00, returning at around 20.00.

The coach seat is provisionally £27.00, which may rise if seats remain unsold. The train ticket is £24.50, to be purchased on the day for the 13:00 steam hauled departure, or you can purchase online when the timetable is open.

Full payment for COACH ONLY must be paid at time of booking and is non-returnable unless the seat can be reallocated. Booking is strictly on a first-come first-served basis; please see our website or phone Neil Ewart on 07805 817711 or email neil.ewart88@gmail.com for more details to check availability of tickets and to book on this social.

FRIENDS CALENDAR

The 2024 calendar is now available. The theme is The Shakespeare Route with superb images of a variety of motive power through the ages, historic stations and info snippets for each month. The front features a painting by John Austin FGRA. showing The Cornishman passing through Henley-in-Arden in the 1950s. Unfortunately inflation has hit here too, the likely cost to the public will be around £9.99 but the good news is that members pay just £8!

We will have these on sale on the trains, at the Open Days and through the website. We are also exploring other sales outlets; see our website for updates.



Neil Ewart

VINTAGE TRAINS UPDATE

Michael Whitehouse, Chairman Vintage Trains Charitable Trust

Well, we all gloried in the euphoria of the double headed Castle special private train to Didcot on 4th March and the line up of four Castle locomotives at their railway centre. And why not? It was a spectacular occasion, the train ran to time, the locos performed excellently and the team all played their respective roles ensuring it was so. 54 years after British Rail determined to end using steam locomotives we are able to demonstrate we can run express steam trains safely with our community owned licenced operating company. All good news and it was quite right that we were able to celebrate and the day certainly warmed many hearts.

We have a great team of people which is steadily growing in both number and experience. We are pleased to be able to offer opportunities to new market entrants, so as to develop both individual and collective talents. During the course of this year we are introducing and implementing improvements to our personnel and welfare offering. We welcome feedback as to the scale and speed of this as we grow together, whilst the outside world changes in ways perhaps we could never have imagined. The successful organisations of the future will get ahead of the game. We believe we are level pegging, at the very least, with pay and policy. Next up is a step change in working conditions, particularly welfare and communications. We are now actively planning to engage with both our internal and external communities working with a new Stakeholder Engagement Group we are founding, to be chaired by Steven Fisher. Applications to join this will soon be forthcoming for staff and volunteers together with specific external stakeholders so we can continue and develop our journey to ensure our relevance in the 21st century. This group will act as our 'critical friend' and embrace and discuss opportunities and challenges to enable us to become even more relevant and prosper on all levels.

And that is not all the good news. We are delighted that we have been awarded a second European Regional Development Grant by the City of Birmingham to create more engineering space and enable us to employ an additional ten staff within our engineering and operations businesses. That is quite a statement taken against the background of retrenchment at many heritage railways. We are proud to have been awarded the maximum grant of €200,000 which forms 50% of the project costs totalling around £350,000 to build a new carriage workshop which will eventually be capable of holding eight carriages. Donations are always welcome, via our new Patrons Club or otherwise, to support the match funding our charity is to provide. If you would like further information about the benefits of being a Patrons Club member, please contact: fundraising@vintagetrains.co.uk

This new workshop will be promoted under our *Metropolitan Railway Carriage & Wagon Works* marque as an integral part of our plan to increase employment and training opportunities, tell stories about the contribution railways made to our City and the Commonwealth and explain the relevance of our collection to new generations.

However, it remains a challenging time for business generally and for individuals too. We are all well aware now of the impact of interest rates and higher utility charges. TLW also has to battle with increasing costs of materials and extended lead times for sourcing these

for its increasing workload. VTL is operating within a competitive and ever changing market place. ‘Millennials’ and ‘Generation X’ now make up over half our population and they never experienced steam trains in every day service, but are happy to travel as an experience. They demand a better service and require websites to be able to convince them to book within seven seconds. This makes planning and delivery testing, but gradually we are rising to these challenges, understanding the market better and adapting our operations to suit. We have received useful feedback from Fareharbor, our website provider, on how people approach booking and Kim Hallett, our marketing consultant, is making good inroads developing relationships in the travel trade which will, over time, produce repeat bookings for groups. Expect us to adjust our offers from time to time for train tickets as part of our continuing response to rapidly changing markets.

Interestingly, I am always asked which is the next locomotive to be restored. This question is asked more keenly now that we have *Earl of Mount Edgcumbe* running again. The answer to the question is perhaps unusual and should make everyone think a little more. The next steam locomotive we expect to outshop for our own use will be an Atlantic: *Sutton Belle*, from the Sutton Miniature Railway for use on our new 15” gauge miniature railway at our Tyseley depot as part of developing the re-introduction of public tours and community outreach. Many of you and our stakeholders have asked when we will re-open our depot again and so the miniature railway and new depot guided tours (bookable on our website) are our first steps. We are actively fundraising to restore the *Sutton Belle* to full working order and support from the Friends has given the boiler repair fund an excellent start – thank you so much! To find out more about the Sutton Miniature Railway project at Tyseley, please check out the JustGiving page at: www.jusgiving.com/campaign/smr. We will also have a Castle Centenary open weekend on 17th & 18th June when we will welcome Pendennis Castle back to Tyseley (from our good friends at the Didcot Railway Centre) to join our own three Castles in a line up and a weekend of fun at the depot. *The Shakespeare Express* will run on the Sunday of the open day, with a different Castle on each of the two trains. Advance tickets are also available on our website.



Sutton Belle – Frames and splashers stripped and repainted. Photo: Andy Watson

On the standard gauge, we will concentrate on bringing our newly acquired English Electric diesel 37 240 back into main line service. We will continue to improve our train, particularly our Met Cam Pullmans and our catering service (with some at-depot preparation and storage). In particular, Pullman Parlour Car 353 is a top priority for restoration and will welcome your financial support - please contact: fundraising@vintagetrains.co.uk. Whilst we have now undertaken much of the structural re-work and re-upholstery, we have found

some more asbestos to remove and we will need to replace one end of the car completely. However, we are delighted to say that the ORR have approved our maintenance plan for our Mark 1 carriages and also our plan to fit door locks to all our trains. Additionally, our fitment of controlled emission toilets, courtesy of funding by Network Rail, is on target. These are all very significantly expensive aspects of simply continuing to operate and a good example of where we continue to need support and donations to keep steam trains on the mainline.

We will assess the work needed to return *Rood Ashton Hall* to service as she is a very suitable locomotive for both *The Shakespeare Express* and *The Polar Express Train Ride* (which was a huge success last December with over 71 trains and very nearly £1 million turnover). However, her ten year overhaul will require careful management depending on available funds which, as you will have read in this note, are required in every area of our operations and so we must prioritise.

Our immediate focus will be on developing TLW to sell more engineering time and specialist skills where we are really at the top of the game. Improving our train offering and brand awareness (you can all help with that) comes next, developing our depot to be the home for us and our collection and to showcase what we achieve so we can begin to tell the important stories of steam age innovation to inspire a better future for everyone.

We are developing a master plan for our Tyseley depot and creating a fundraising scheme to seek legacies, general gifts and projects to be funded. We have taken advice from Gifted Philanthropy on the relevant issues and now we have appointed Amanda Pearson and Lowri Goss to work with us (and you) to bring this scheme to fruition. They have excellent credentials in working with donors and grant funding bodies and one of their successes has been the Save Snowdon campaign for National Trust Wales. They will focus on our most urgent priorities and will be establishing easy ways of giving – look out for these on our website and at our annual events. For any queries on projects or support, please drop them a line at: fundraising@vintagetrains.co.uk. We will seek to develop business operations and a development plan to secure the future of our depot and collection and make everything we do relevant to the ever changing world.

Standing still is not an option. We must look forward and not backwards. We are in good heart. We have no commercial borrowings, but we have limited resources. Cash is king and people are paramount. Every hour and every pound you are able to contribute matters; particularly if it is thoughtfully contributed and enabling us to move us into the next square on the chessboard. Thank you for your ongoing support, it is vital to our charity and its future operations. Together we can deliver.

Michael Whitehouse
Chairman Vintage Trains Charitable Trust

TYSELEY DEPOT GUIDED TOURS – AN EARLY SELLOUT!

Plans have progressed during the winter months to start the re-opening of the Tyseley depot site to visitors once again.

An initial Guided Tours team of volunteers has been engaged to manage the tours and help provide an enjoyable experience for those booking visits to Tyseley Locomotive Works site, and create a safe and welcoming environment. The Guided Tours will provide the opportunity for visitors to appreciate the history of the depot, the railways at Tyseley, view some of the Tyseley Collection of vintage locomotives and rolling stock, visit the signal box and experience the uniqueness of the 15” Sutton Miniature Railway project. Guided Tours are commencing and finishing at the LMRCA premises with the LMRCA club project team’s support.



The new carriage workshop at Tyseley under construction

Information for the site guides covering safety induction for visitors, site history and the Tyseley Collection has been progressed. Preparation for the Guided Tours has involved reviewing and establishing safe walking routes to agreed accessible site points of interest and risk assessments with the support of Tyseley Locomotive Works. Supporting activities include site clearance by Richard Dovey and the Tuesday gang to tidy up the site and reduce safety hazards. Training of the site guide volunteers has commenced to familiarise the walking route and the collections knowledge prior to the start-up date. Thanks go to all volunteers and staff who have contributed to the preparation of the Guided Tours.

In planning the Guided Tour dates and maximise the opportunity to see some of the Tyseley Collection, we have avoided dates when Vintage Trains tour programme is operating.

There will be two guides per tour to accompany a maximum of twelve visitors with an estimated tour time of 90 minutes. We also hope to further increase the number of Guided Tours in the season subject to demand and the number of site guides available.

Initially, Guided Tours were planned on a Saturday morning commencing on 27th May followed by 10th June, 9th July, 5th August and 5th September. However, thanks to early Vintage Trains website activation and other publicity, these Guided Tours have quickly sold out! We have therefore recently added afternoon guided tours for the first three Saturday dates. We will also be increasingly involved with leading specific interest groups on guided tours.

We are still keen to add to the current number of volunteer site guides so that the Guided Tour opportunities can be expanded to meet demand. If you are interested in joining us or have any queries, please let us know via the e mail address below. You should be fit and comfortable with welcoming and communicating with visitors, have an interest in engineering or social history, and some railway knowledge is useful. Training, including prepared briefing notes and site familiarisation, will be provided.

If you think you could get involved in what will be an important feature of Tyseley moving forward and become an integral part of the Vintage Trains community, please email: volunteering@vintagetrains.co.uk and let us know.

*Mike Corbett
Guided Tours Team Leader*

VT OPEN DAYS – HELP NEEDED

VT is starting to look forward to the Open Weekend on the 17th & 18th June. This means that help is needed in the following areas over the weekend to ensure that they run smoothly:

- Gate/Car Park Stewards
- Registration & Welcome Staff
- Merchandise & VT Membership Sales Stand
- Site Stewards for general crowd management duties

If you are able to help on these Open Days then please let us know through any of the Friends contact details on page 2.

UPDATE FROM TYSELEY LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

TYSELEY LOCOMOTIVES

7029 'Clun Castle'

On the 12th February 'Clun Castle' continued to perform well following the winter break on the first Shakespeare Express of the 2023 season.

5043 'Earl of Mount Edgumbe'

Over the winter TLW received the independent finite element analysis (FEA) for the superheater header design. 5043 was given a successful hydraulic test and the locomotive was mechanically completed. On 11th February, static steam testing started. Just under two weeks later (24th February) the locomotive was out on the line to Stratford (with support coach) for testing in service. That afternoon 5043 took 7 coaches plus Class 47 support round the Leicester Circle.



5043 'Earl of Mount Edgumbe' undergoing static steam testing adjacent to the Tyseley Depot coaling stage on 14th February 2023

Class 47 '47773'

The traction motor bellows have recently been replaced. In addition, a new electronic Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR) is being manufactured to replace an original design. This new component is anticipated to be available in May.

Class 37 '37240'

Vintage Trains recent acquisition to the Tyseley fleet, Class 37 '37240', is receiving attention by agreement with the supplier, with monoblock wheels and axles to be fitted which are being assembled at South Devon Railway's wheelshop. We are also waiting for delivery of a new set of wheelset Timken roller bearings. The previous bearings had been damaged by the locomotive standing still for a long time.

COACHING STOCK

Following completion of the 2022 VT programme, the operational coaching fleet underwent relevant winter maintenance and brake overhauls in time for commencement of the 2023 programme.

Pullman Car No. 353

The continued restoration work on Pullman Car No. 353 in 2023 is subject to funding availability. If you want to help get 353 back on the main line – and see a rake of four Pullman Cars on future tours – the Pullman Club is still open for donations. You can donate at <https://pullmanclub.co.uk/> - where there are more details. On board the trains there are donation envelopes available. Your contribution, whether in cash or kind, will be welcome.



Pullman Car No. 353 waiting funding to continue restoration.

Mk1 and Mk2 vehicles

Arising from the ORR request following fatal accidents, and following the trial fitment of TSO No. 5198 in 2022, all Tyseley fleet passenger vehicles are now compliant having been fitted with door droplight window bars to prevent passengers leaning out of opening windows, but enabling access to the external door handle for door opening.



The door bars fitted to one of VT's coaches. There is still enough room for stewards to get to the door handle.

Coaching stock modifications

1. Controlled Emission Toilet

Following CET completion of the first three Mark 1 BFK vehicles in the programme, installation of the three operational Mark 1 Pullman Cars has also been progressed. Current non-operational Pullman Car no. 353 will be CET fitted at a later date. CET installation has now commenced on Mk2 vehicles and agreement has been reached with Network Rail for an extension for Tyseley fleet vehicles CET completion by the end of May.



Mk2 TSO 5177 illustrating assembly of the CET underframe mounted tank incorporating fluid level switches and tank extraction system.

2. Central Door Locking (CDL)

The design and an installation programme of electrically operated Central Door Locking to VT's coaches has been the subject of discussion with the ORR (Office of Road and Rail). All passenger carrying coaches must comply with The Railway Safety Regulations 1999, but Vintage Trains (and other Heritage operators) have had Certificates of Exemption which expire shortly.

Vintage Trains awaits the ORR's approval for an extension whereby a prototype coach installation is to be

completed by the end of 2023 and an installation programme for Tyseley fleet completion by the end of 2024.

CARRIAGE WORKSHOP

A significant change is underway at Tyseley Depot with the construction of a carriage workshop on the former Tyseley Warwick Road Station site with the benefit of a European grant. This will enable the storage of up to eight coaches undercover which will provide much needed protection. The project includes removal of the existing buffer stops and extending track to just beyond the existing depot boundary fence and part way into the car park. One of the platforms has been removed to facilitate the building footprint. On completion the depot fence will be rerouted. In order to make way for the building construction, volunteers and staff

worked quickly to clear the site as the contractors moved in. The steelwork fabric of the workshop is now being installed (see alongside). The project is due for completion in April.

As part of the carriage workshop agreement positive recruitment of additional workshop staff has commenced with advertisements for fitter/machinists, boilermasters and welder/fabricators.

THE HUT

Another part of the site development plans is the demolition of ‘The Hut’. This temporary building, (described by Bob Meanley as, “*the largest garden shed in the world*”), has served generations of volunteers as a mess area, tool storage, meeting room, and (at the back) archive and record store. But the wooden structure is showing the signs of age. Almost all the functions of the hut will be transferred to the LMRC. The current building will be demolished and replaced with a modern engineering workshop to support the activities of Tyseley Locomotive Works.

(All images by Mike Corbett and Michael Hughes, except where credited)



View from the Warwick Road end showing the platform demolition and steelwork erection.



The Hut

Mike Corbett and Michael Hughes

Geoff May, VT’s retail manager, is looking for 6 volunteers to be trained and accompanied by him throughout the year. They will comprise of purely volunteer staff helping out either at Stratford station, the Moor Street station Cube, or on train excursions.

If you able to help Geoff then please let us know through any of the Friends contact details on page 2.

RAILTOURS UPDATE FOR THE SUMMER: 2023

Following an excellent start to the year, marked by the triumphant return of 5043, Earl of Mount Edgcumbe, the 2023 Vintage Trains programme of Express Steam, Diesel Explorer and Shakespeare Express is about to get into full swing. The full 2023 programme was distributed with the last Steam in Trust Newsletter – this update adds in some excellent new destinations, alongside some that are more familiar. There are also several new off-train options available to passengers, which offer the enthusiast an enhanced experience when at destinations.

We kick off May, on Saturday 13th, with a not-to-be-missed, blue riband event, as we continue our 100 years of the Castle Class locomotive celebrations in style, with 5043 and 7029 double heading for a circular run, taking in the Welsh Marches Line for a break in Hereford. The return journey sees us running on home turf for the two Castles, along the Great Western Main Line.

The Welsh Marches Express is complimented by the Whistling Ghost to Minehead on 20th May, which will feature 7029 to Bishops Lydiard for West Somerset Railway traction to Minehead. 5043 then takes centre stage on the Express Steam trains, hauling the Red Dragon to Cardiff on 24th June. 7029 will work in ‘top’n’ tail’ with a class 37 to Melton Mowbray on 23rd September and one of the two castles will haul the Christmas White Rose to York on 28th November.

Alongside our popular Express Steam trains, there will be plenty of ‘action’ for the diesel enthusiasts, with the Scottish Railway Preservation Society’s 37403, ‘Isle of Mull’ featuring on diesel explorers to Ravenglass and Carlisle (3rd June), Norwich & Great Yarmouth (19th July), Skegness (29th July) and Blackpool (11th November).

For the enthusiast seeking to add to their experience, there is an ‘off train’ option available in Ravenglass on 3rd June. This takes the form of a specially chartered train operating on the stunning 7-mile, 15-inch gauge Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway from Ravenglass to Dalegarth and return. Similarly, Blackpool passengers in November have the option of a guided tour of the Rigby Road tram depot, alongside a ride through the illuminations on a heritage double decker tram. These exclusive options are not to be missed.

The Shakespeare Express will be operating on summer Sundays from 16th July to 3rd September, and there are other dates to look out for.

On Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th June, Tyseley will once again be celebrating the centenary of the Castle class locomotive at the open weekend. 7029, ‘Clun Castle’, 5043, ‘Earl of Mount Edgcumbe’, and 5080, ‘Defiant’, will be joined by Didcot’s 4079, ‘Pendennis Castle’ to create a three-castle line up. 4079 will operate shuttle trains, whilst 7029 and 5043 will each get a return outing on the Shakespeare Express on Sunday 18th June. This creates the possibility of enjoying four Castle class locomotives for haulage in the Birmingham area.

All railtours, the open weekend and site tours are available for booking on the Vintage Trains website: www.vintage trains.co.uk.

STOP PRESS – Keep an eye on the Vintage Trains website for additional railtours in August to be announced as this edition goes to press

Tour Manager & Stewards at Vintage Trains

VOLUNTEERING UPDATE

The last few months have unfortunately witnessed the passing of three valued volunteers, Jeff Robinson, Roger Stewart and Malcolm Finn. Their valued contributions to Vintage Trains and their companionship will be sorely missed.

On the other side of the coin we've taken on several new volunteers from a wide variety of backgrounds who have joined either the Tuesday gang, Train Stewards, Sutton Miniature Railway team or our business support teams. It is good to see new blood coming in and we wish them well in their volunteering exploits within the VT family.

Notable recent appointments have been:

- Geoff May – Merchandising Manager
- Mike Corbett – Site Tour Team Leader
- Simon Edmunds – SMR Team Leader
- Stuart Brighton – Artefact Curator

As well as a sterling effort from all those involved with the Polar Express in November and December the usual volunteering activities continued with maintenance work being undertaken on the works buildings, clearance of the old Visitor Centre in preparation for it being converted into a joint staff/volunteer mess area and the gradual transfer of archive material out of the old wooden volunteer hut into the LMRCA building.

We are now actively developing a new team to look at the kitchen/café facility in the LMRCA building in order that we might be able to provide refreshments on a regular basis for events at Tyseley and potentially opening it up to the general public as part of a community outreach project.

The Train Steward team continues to develop and grow, which it needs to do in order to spread the workload around for the increasing number of tours, Shakespeare Expresses, Polar Expresses and private charters we are running.

Also on the trains, the Merchandising function is being developed by Geoff May, and he is looking to grow the team with new volunteers who are happy to engage with customers, both on and off our trains, and generate valuable income from selling our souvenirs.

The new Site Tour Team is now in place to offer guided tours around Tyseley Depot on published Saturday dates throughout the summer which will not only provide a steady revenue stream but will allow the public to get a more in-depth knowledge about the history of the site and what goes on now. Hopefully this will also encourage new volunteers to step forward to join the family.

If anyone is interested in getting involved in any of the above areas, do please get in touch with me at volunteering@vintagetrains.co.uk

Tony Watson, Volunteer Coordinator

THE STEWARDING AND TUESDAY VOLUNTEER GANGS

Spending a day as a coach steward with VT is a rewarding experience, happy passengers listening to the sound of Clun Castle pounding up Hatton Bank is about as good as it gets, but what's going on behind the scenes?

Sixty year old coaches at the mercy of the elements need a good deal of TLC to keep them presentable so all trips must start with a spotless train and a comprehensive passenger manifest, all prepared by a motley crew known as 'The Tuesday Gang'.

The stewards on the last run will have removed all rubbish and left their coach tidy, so a brush down of seats, table wipe and sweep or vac of floors leaves only future programmes on tables to make them presentable. Next job is to clean and restock toilets before the ever present problem of dirty windows can be tackled.



The running gear and fitness to run exam is down to the workshop team but above the solebar it's

different. The combination of dirt, engine emissions and cast-iron brake dust forms an amalgam which sticks to windows with the tenacity of a Cornish limpet, this simply laughs off soap and water treatment. The solution is abrasive cleaner first, not the easiest job from the trackbed. If only more coaches were at platform level.

On the day and a couple of hours prior to passengers boarding, there is always much to be done. Tables labelled up, windows open slightly on a warm day, and of course 'laying up' for dining and club passengers.

Now we're away and it's always good to see the passengers enjoying the panoramic views of the English countryside through the generously sized and clean windows in our Mk1 and Mk2 coaches. With supplies provided by The Tuesday Gang, we always ensure that the door handles and other touch points are kept clean throughout the journey, an important procedure even after the pandemic. We try to sanitize a coach two or three times on each leg.

We also regularly pass through the train to ensure that rubbish is collected and tabletops are clear. On a diesel 'bashers' trip, boxes of chips, and cans of beer will be in evidence, upping the count to four or five bags on each leg, while on the Shakespeares and Polars, we clear all rubbish between runs. And of course we keep a constant eye on the toilets!

On arrival back at Tyseley we do the important final sweep to ensure that there is no rubbish remaining on the floor or in the nooks and crannies. Tabletops are cleaned using disinfectant and we ensure that windows are closed in the whole rake.

The 'Tuesday Gang' is proud of its well-prepared train and when passengers comment on the lovely views as we bowl along behind a Castle or Heritage diesel locomotive, it gives our hard-working volunteers a warm glow.

The regular turn out is about six people but, with the proposed programme for 2023 looking more intense, we will almost certainly need a Friday shift so more help is very much welcomed. If you are interested in helping then contact the Friends using any of the Friends' contact details on Page 2.

Peter Jeffs and Geoff Middleton

MAINTENANCE TEAM UPDATE

The volunteer team continues to carry out a wide range of tasks in support of Vintage Trains.

Most recently, two team members have endeavoured to prevent pigeons from accessing the top shed and causing fouling on Defiant and other engines. This has been largely successful but needs to be monitored so that the team can start to clean Defiant in preparation for the Open Day.



The archive on the move to the LMRC

The 28 pits around the turntable have been cleared, half are now swept clean, but we await some heavy lifting gear to remove large pipes and bricks. The museum is also being cleared of most items with homes identified for many but, not yet all. The doors of this building have been replaced, they leaked badly and are now secure, along with a problem gutter.



Figure 2 Work in progress on the SMR project

To prevent slippage in wet conditions, the wooden stairways and the goods platform are being covered in chicken wire and the shed that was at the end of the platform has been moved for safe keeping.

Various repair tasks are underway including pit boards, shunter windows and window glass while imminent jobs include replacing the turntable identity plates, transferring the archive material to the LMRC, repairing TOAD and Cadbury no.1.

Finally, SMR open coach refurbishment continues on our busy schedule including engine parts at the Denver Light Railway.

Richard Dovey

THE SUTTON MINIATURE RAILWAY PROJECT



No.2 Sutton Flyer at The Friends of Vintage Trains Stand – Warley Model Railway Exhibition November 2022. Photo: Simon Edmunds

Our decision to make No.2 Engine Sutton Flyer the centerpiece of the Friends of Vintage Trains stand at the Warley National Model Railway Exhibition in November 2022 proved to be a winner, with a steady crowd of interested enthusiasts coming to see the locomotive and talk to us about our plans for the future. The enthusiasm for the locomotive was tremendous – older visitors recalled their memories of the railway in its heyday at Sutton Park, younger visitors eagerly took an opportunity to sit in the cab and everyone seemed genuinely intrigued and interested in this beautiful piece of Midlands railway heritage.

The decision by Vintage Trains Charitable Trust (VTCT) to rescue the neglected collection may seem to some incompatible with the mainline operations and ambitions of the business. This however misses the point. The principal activity and objective of the Trust is *“to encourage and promote public interest in the preservation of steam and other railway locomotives and rolling stock of historical importance”*. The Sutton Miniature Railway Collection certainly ticks all of these boxes.

Our plans for the miniature railway put preservation, interest, and involvement at their heart. The scale of the railway makes it both accessible, affordable and fun, whilst retaining all of the same key components of their full-sized equivalents. It is the perfect vehicle to promote new interest, education and involvement in the heritage rail sector and marries well with the Trust’s longer term aims for the site at Tyseley.

Work is already well underway on the collection and good progress has already been made. Some of our early progress includes:

The Petrol Railcar has had a new braking system installed, a carburetor upgrade and a new seat for the driver. It is fully operational.

Open carriage (No.10) is being worked on currently at Tyseley by our volunteers. Work has progressed well with a full refurbishment of the wheel sets and carriage floor. Most of the seats have now been completely stripped back to bare metal, repainted and wooden slats replaced with hard wearing Sepele timber. We are hoping this carriage will be complete and fully operational by the summer.



A newly refurbished seat next to an original. Photo: Simon Edmunds

The useful little coal truck that features heavily in the SMR history is also undergoing a complete refurbishment at Tyseley, having been stripped back down to its component parts and all rotten wood being cut out and replaced, it is now being reassembled and should be useful for another few decades.



No 1: Sutton Belle – Frames and splashers stripped and repainted. Photo: Andy Walton

No.1 Atlantic Class ‘Sutton Belle’ is in the workshop undergoing a complete nut and bolt overhaul lead by Andy Walton – a well-respected expert in the world of miniature railways. The chassis has been fully disassembled and the frames have been stripped to bare metal. Most of the locomotive is complete, but it does require a new front buffer beam, rear drag box and a of course, a new boiler.

With their reduced size, so also is the cost to restore these locomotives. CAD drawings for a new boiler

have been created and some steel components already purchased. We still need in the region of £15,000 to build a new boiler and return the locomotive back to operational condition. Whilst still not an insignificant sum of money, this seems much less of a challenge compared to refurbishing a full-sized Castle or Jubilee!

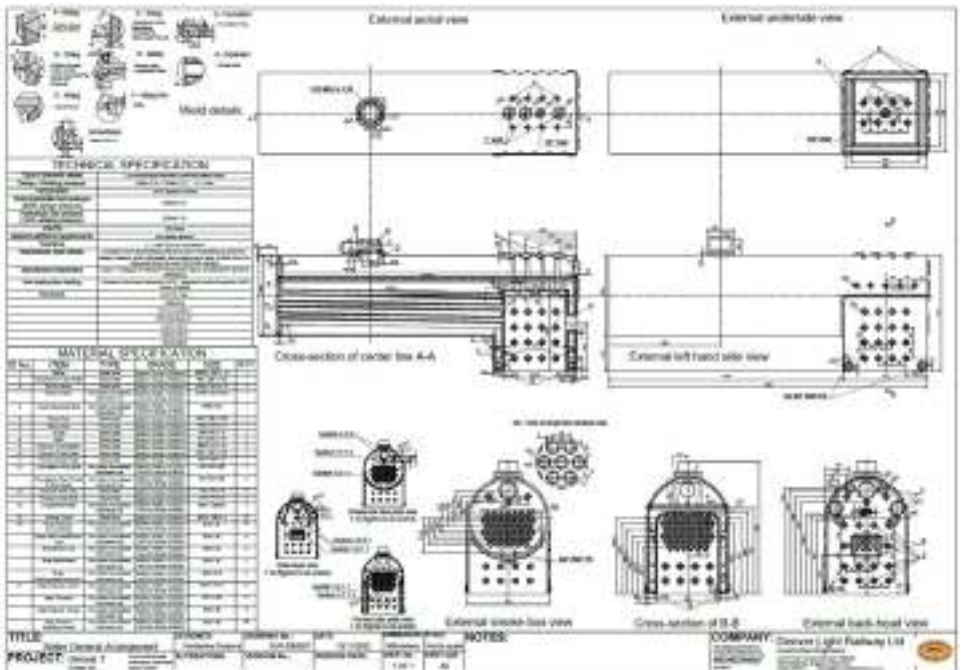
As any good railway modeler will know, there is little point having a glorious collection of locomotives but having nowhere to run them. Whilst it is our intention for the collection to visit other 15” gauge railways when operational, plans are well advanced for a miniature railway of our own as part of the wider Vintage Trains’ Tyseley site development. This

will start as an initial short stretch of line for demonstration and learning and should extend towards the signal box as funds and site access allows. This will be a dream for any rail enthusiast – a ride behind one of Sutton Miniature Railways famous locomotives around the sights and sounds of Tyseley’s historic rail yard.

The key objective of operating our own miniature railway is to encourage participation. This is an entirely volunteer lead project that hopes to encourage new interest into what we do at Vintage Trains and the heritage rail sector generally. It is the perfect platform for us to build new enthusiasm, engage with our local community, as well as providing the perfect platform to train our engineers and loco crews of the future. Above all, it is about having fun and playing trains. Now why wouldn’t you want to get involved in that?.

THE SMR BOILER APPEAL

With work progressing quickly on the frames, we are seeking sponsors to help fund the new boiler build for Sutton Belle. A generous offer to fund the Boiler Barrel (the largest single item) by Friends of Vintage Trains has got us off to a great start.



The CAD drawing for the new boiler

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

We have a range of components, listed below, available to sponsor starting from just £3 each. Every penny of your donation will go directly to the boiler build. All donors will be automatically enrolled in the SMR club and receive regular progress updates.

43 x Flue Tubes @ £25 each	1 x Firebox Tube Plate@ £200
1 x Boiler Barrel @ £1300 (Now Sponsored)	1 x Firebox Back-Head Plate @ £200 (Now Sponsored)
1 x Tube Plate Front @ £200	1 x Firebox Hole Plate @ £200
1 x Dome Securing Ring@ £200	1 x Dome Tube @ £40
1 x Dome Top@ £200	1 x Dome Top Ring @ £25
1 x Back-Head Plate@ £200	54 x Side Stays
1 x Throat Plate@ £200	3 x Longitudinal stays @ £15
1 x Firebox External Side Plate@ £200	18 x Crown Stays @ £6 each
1 x Firebox Crown/Side Plate@ £200	1 x Dome Flange @ £30
1 x Foundation Ring @ £22	

Please email us at smr@vintagetrains.co.uk and let us know which component(s) you would like to sponsor. We will confirm availability and then advise you to make your donation by one of the following methods:

- By cheque made payable to **Vintage Trains Community Trust**
- Online at www.justgiving.com/campaign/smr - Gift Aid will be automatically added for UK Taxpayers
- Bank Transfer: **Bank details will be advised if you wish to donate by bank transfer**

To find out more about this project and to keep up-to-date with our progress please follow our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/smr.tyseley

Simon Edmunds – SMR Project Lead

THE SHAKESPEARE LINE PROMOTION GROUP

The Shakespeare Line Promotion Group has been active in raising issues with train operator West Midlands Trains, such as short-notice cancellations on non-strike days and their apparent laissez-faire approach to revenue protection. Chiltern Railways also came in for criticism for not providing a replacement bus service to/from Stratford-upon-Avon when all their trains north of Banbury were withdrawn between 13th December and 8th January.

The Friends of the Shakespeare Line (FoSL) have four projects that have been grant funded, either fully or in part, under the auspices of the Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF) programme operated by West Midlands Trains.

At Wythall 15 students from Woodrush High School, the adopters of the station, will later this year begin studying for a NVQ Level 2 vocational qualification based on volunteering tasks involved with station adoption. Next year the number of students involved is set to double. The school has also taken over the former booking office and students are developing it as a community hub.

Representatives from Network Rail recently met Headteacher, Jay Barber and Head of Humanities, Andy Reece at the school and were suitably impressed. This has led to NR developing a matrix of apprenticeship opportunities in the Midlands area.

Negotiations between the Friends of Henley Railway Station (FoHRS) and Network Rail regarding the 25-year agreement to lease the station building have been protracted, however the momentous signing ceremony finally took place on 30th January. FoHRS and in particular Chair, Angela Okey, are to be congratulated for persevering and overcoming the innumerable hurdles that arose along the way.

Whilst the delays associated with the lease agreement were problematic, several other activities were progressed in the meantime. Just before Christmas FoHRS was formally granted access to the building and a crew from National Grid renewed the three-phase electrical supply for free. This generous gesture saved several thousand pounds of expenditure.



FoSL Trustees Howard Hemmings and Fraser Pithie, Fay Easton from West Midlands Trains, Malcolm Holmes and Tom Painter from West Midlands Rail Executive, Jay Barber and Andy Reece from Woodrush Academy, Birmingham City Councillors and students from Woodrush Academy at Woodrush.

An architect was engaged to draw up the plans for the building and associated land and these were submitted to Stratford-upon-Avon District Council in January. The proposal includes a change of use of the building to a Micro-Brewery and Local Community Hall. National Rail has agreed to temporarily remove part of the station canopy to allow scaffolding to be erected.

Local builders merchant *EH Smith* has become involved in the project and will be supplying building materials with a discounted mark-up and the company is also going to design the toilet, washroom and kitchen areas, just as if they were an extension to their showroom in Henley High Street.

On 1st March FoSL trustees signed a 2-year lease on a room at Stratford-upon-Avon station. This is located at the end of the building nearest the Alcester Road and is set to become a volunteer/sales/information hub.

At Hall Green station volunteers led by Howard Hemmings have worked with local schools, arranging for Black Country based poets to deliver workshops for the children to write poems relating to travel.

A key part of this CCIF project was featuring the poems in the Hall Green station waiting room on the community Poetry Boards which have become 'local legends' over the past years, with the resident volunteers at the station presenting passengers with an ever changing display of poems to read whilst waiting for their trains.

The FoSL trustees invited all station volunteers and SLPG committee members to a meeting with a buffet lunch in Stratford-upon-Avon on Saturday 28th January. This social event was hosted by Fraser Pithie and organised to provide volunteers with an update on plans for the line in 2023 and as a way of thanking them for all their hard work.

In order to provide a unifying theme at stations along the line and to tie in with the 'Shakespeare' title, steel life-size silhouettes of The Bard are to be erected at all SL stations. Accompanying each silhouette will be a board with details about one of his plays. A random draw for the play to be assigned to each station was held at the meeting. It is hoped that a Shakespeare garden tailored with plants mentioned in the respective play can be created around the silhouette at each station.

The meeting was also attended by John Austin GRA (Guild of Railway Artists), who brought along his painting of 'The Cornishman at Henley in Arden' that the FoSL had commissioned. John has kindly agreed that profits from the sale of fine art prints will be shared on a 50/50 basis. Also on show was a second picture depicting the iconic GWR station at Birmingham Snow Hill. What struck me was the incredible amount of detail in both paintings.

FoSL is also working with John and the GRA on a range of other gifts including greeting cards and heritage memorabilia.



The new 3 Phase supply installed at Henley-in-Arden

Neil Williamson

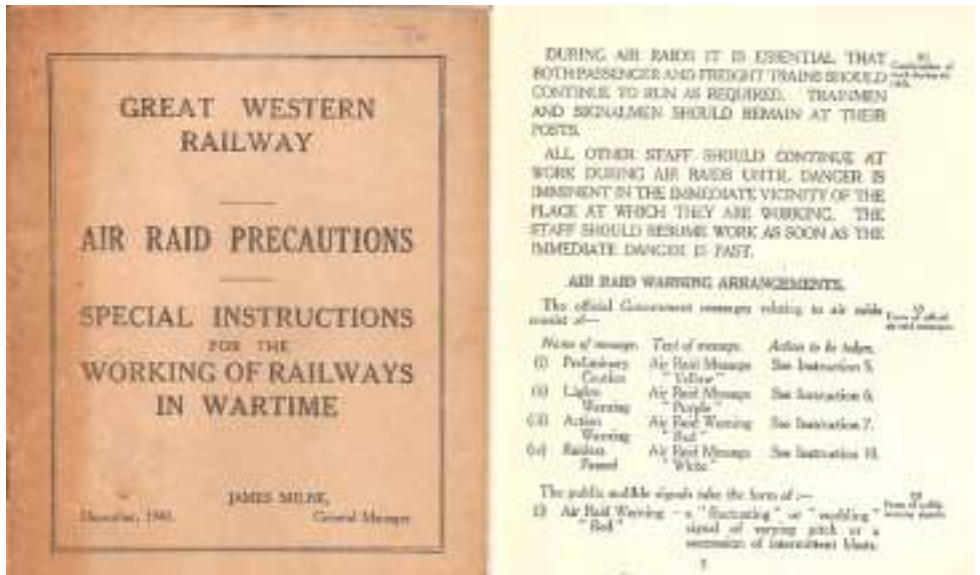
THE SIGNALMAN'S ARP SHELTER (TIN COFFIN)



This Air Raid Precaution (ARP) Signalman's Air-raid shelter was discovered at Tyseley in the summer of 2022. It is believed to have come to Tyseley with the Great Western Railway Holesmouth Signal Box in 1985. This Signal Box had worked the junction into the Avonmouth (Prince Edward) Docks outside Bristol. These docks were a prime target for the German air-force during WWII as they handled imported oil and petrol products which were needed for the war effort. Holesmouth Signal Box was

rebuilt on the same site after the previous Signal Box was destroyed during an air-raid in April 1941. Rebuilding took a month with only the important frame from the original signal box being salvaged.

The LMSR came up with a design to provide some protection to Signalmen following a fatality to one of their staff in the Midlands during an air-raid in 1939. Railways provided an essential service during the war and staff were required to remain at their posts even during an air-raid. Signalmen were particularly vulnerable because most Signal Boxes were built with a raised operating floor surrounded with windows on at least three sides. This gave the Signalman a good view of the track-work he controlled. The ARP Shelters would not have protected the occupant from a direct hit, but were designed to provide



some protection from shards of flying glass. These ARP shelters were nicknamed ‘Tin Coffins’ by the staff. The shelter was constructed from 1/4inch steel plate with a steel plate door on two hinges. On each side narrow slots were cut through at eye level to provide some visibility. The interior of the shelter measured five foot tall by two foot square and had a wooden seat positioned 1’ 6” above the floor.



LMSR publicity photograph showing a Signalman seated in an ARP shelter. The photograph is date stamped 16th October 1939, just six weeks after the start of the war.



An early wartime GWR publicity photograph showing a Signalman wearing a Gas mask while undertaking his operations. An ARP Shelter can be seen in the corner of the signal box.



Information gleaned so far indicates that 5,582 of these ARP Shelters were manufactured. This quantity may be just of the LMSR design. It appears that the LMSR design was shared with the other British Railway Companies. Some like the LNER set about designing their own style of conical shelter, while it appears that the GWR largely copied the LMSR design. One difference between these two designs was that the LMSR design had no steel floor, while the GWR design did. The use of 1/4inch boiler plate meant that the shelter could not be made at the GWR’s Signal Works at Reading, but was fabricated in A Shop at the GWR’s Swindon Locomotive Works.

The Signalman’s ARP Shelter at Tyseley has been painted by volunteers to help preserve it and a replacement seat will be installed. When first located the shelter’s door was missing, but this was found in September and has now been reattached. No serial numbers or other markings have been discovered so far.

Robert Ferris

A NOBLE YEAR ...

What a very regal year 2023 is shaping up to be ... not only have we seen the Earl - 5043 Earl of Mount Edgcumbe - back in service, and are celebrating 100 years of the 'Castle' class design, but, of course, we also have the coronation of King Charles III on 6 May. This fact alone prompted a look through the archive where we discovered that King Charles, when Prince of Wales, visited Tyseley on 14th September 1988. The Prince was re-commissioning the Royal Saloon which had been refurbished in the Tyseley Workshops.



Michael Whitehouse and the future King Charles III on the footplate of Clun Castle after it arrived from Birmingham Snow Hill on 14th September 1988.



H.R.H. The Prince of Wales signs the Museum's V.I.P. Visitors book (photo: museum archives)

A report to the Birmingham Railway Museum Trustees for the year ended 31st March 1989 talked about how "the public face of the museum had developed significantly with the year's events centred on the 150th Anniversary celebrations of the London & Midland Railway" and that they were 'honoured' with a visit by the then Prince of Wales to commission the Royal Saloon. The work was undertaken by the Community Programme which undoubtedly helped raise the Museum's profile in the local community.

Whilst the MSC Community Programme Scheme ended in 1987, the Museum had strengthened its links with the City of Birmingham by joining Employment Training and was setting out on a new phase of consolidation and development as a result.

The Trustee's report continued to say that "... The restoration work was almost complete on the LNER Royal Saloon 806 which looks truly magnificent in the Royal Train Livery. The coach was recommissioned by the (then) Prince of Wales on 14th September 1988 during his very successful visit to the Museum." Let's hope the King's Coronation is a successful event, too.



Evidence of Royalty was everywhere during the Prince's visit. The LNER Royal Saloon 806, commissioned by the prince, stood alongside "Clun", the latter being decorated with the headlamp from Queen Victoria's Royal train. (photo: Alan Price)

As an aside, we believe the photographer of the above picture was Alan Price, a former volunteer who went on to work for the Railway. Alan sadly passed away a couple of years ago and, in his memory, we received a donation from his colleagues which was used to purchase new power tools for the maintenance volunteers – funny how things come about.

Mary McCullough

A POEM FROM GLYNIS DRAY

Tyseley's Flower Power

**In Her Majesty's Royal Year, former
grandeur reappeared - at Tyseley Station.**

**Soil was shifted free of charge, plants
donated, small and large,
volunteer 'gardeners' - on location.**

**Sixty Foot borders, paths in between, flowers
planted fit for a Queen - in anticipation.**

**Passengers noticed straight away, this would
brighten up their day improve their local station.**

**'Red, white and blue' arriving in trays, happy
travellers full of praise -70 years celebration.**

**Waiting for trains is now a pleasure, seasonal
moments to treasure - a great creation.**

**Vintage Trains has a special link, 'Flower Power'
has made people think - at Tyseley Mainline Station.**

Glynis Dray

ON THE BUSES

Well let me start off by saying how much Nickey and I enjoy and appreciate being asked along to the 'Friends' outings, it is nice to be able to keep in touch with the 'Old Guard' if I may use that expression, and I think that The Friends of Vintage Trains is the real 'core' or inner strength of VT, without who's help and financial contributions VT would be a lot worse off, indeed it would find it harder to function!

Right, down to business, Wednesday 7th of September at around 10.00 am saw those of us that were interested arrive at Wythall Transport Museum. I think there were about 25 of us which was just about right in the circumstances. A week or so before at a meeting of the 'Friends' Denis Chick had given us an interesting talk about the bus museum to wet our appetites. He, having a hands-on interest in the place for the best part of a good bit! Now for all the times I've driven the 'Shakespeare Express' through Wythall I never knew there was a transport museum there... but I do now!

From the start we were given a warm welcome with coffee or tea and biscuits from a very friendly staff. For me that sort of thing makes you want to make a return visit and while we were sampling the goodies a member of staff gave us an introductory talk about what went on there. Well he certainly knew his onions... sorry buses. After a short film show we went on a tour of the museum. Well they were finished to a very high standard, especially the



AEC Regent 661 1929-31
Birmingham double-decker

paintwork. The highlight for me was seeing a West Bromwich Corporation bus. Being born and bred in Wednesbury in the Black Country those were our everyday buses and I have travelled on countless numbers of them. Also of special interest were buses belonging to Birmingham Corporation, the blue Walsall bus, the green and cream Wolverhampton trolley bus that we used to catch every Friday teatime from Darlaston to Monmore Green to watch Wolverhampton Speedway.



Ray with Dennis Herbert

Another highlight was to meet Dennis Herbert who's book I have just finished reading titled Birmingham Footplateman, A job for life which tells the story of his career at Tyseley and Saltley. After Dennis and I had a little chat it eventually came time for another thrill. We were taken

for a pub lunch in a Crosville single deck bus. Now when I was a nipper we went on holiday to Barmouth for a number of years and whenever we went into town we would see the green ubiquitous Crosville bus. To see one let alone ride in one gave me a particular buzz!

After a splendid pub lunch we went on a short tour through various Warwickshire villages eventually arriving back at the Museum and before departing for home a look in the shop where I purchased a couple of books and a Dinky sized model of a London Transport Bus. Denis Chick hopes to arrange a spring visit when Dennis Herbert hopes to have his 7¼ inch King there and whilst not wishing away what's left of my life away... roll on the spring.

Ray Churchill

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We are always pleased to hear from our readers, which can provoke further discussion. Please let us have any feedback through any of the routes in the Contact the Friends details on Page 2.

Chris Schroeder's article on Tyseley's Locomotive Allocations led to a knowledgeable reader pointing out that part 2 of the Tyseley Locomotive Allocations article included an incorrect statement that *The two WD's moved away in 1950 leaving the shed with an all ex-GWR allocation*. In fact ROD 2-8-0 No. 3016 was shedded at Tyseley from 12/49 - 12/52. The RODs were not GWR designed or built, although the ones allocated to the GWR were modified by Swindon works and were allocated and carried GWR numbers prior to nationalisation.

Robert Ferris' article about the Tender with 5080 Defiant led to member Justin Edwards contacting the Friends saying:

Regarding the Collett 4000 gallon tender that possibly came from 7929 Wyke Hall. You have quoted two possible numbers for this tender, 2715 or 2894. I have had a look in Peto's Register Of Great Western Locomotives Volume 1 which covers the King class. Tender 2894 was never coupled with a King, but 2715 was, and was allocated to 6014 from 2/6/1949-1/8/1952. 6014 carried the BR blue livery from August 1950-February 1954 and therefore the traces of blue livery found on the tank would suggest 2715 was the tender's most likely identity.

I found the whole article fascinating. I have been researching preserved steam locomotive tenders for a while and run the Railway Heritage Register Partnership Tender Register.

Robert's article about the Hockley Goods Depot and the Tyseley water supply also led to member and volunteer Geoffrey Massey sending us a follow-up:

I enjoyed your article in SiT No 51- about Hockley goods depot and the water supply.

Earlier this year I spent a morning walking round the area looking at what remains – and is visible or accessible – of the site. I used the excellent 'Warwickshire Railways' as a sort of location checker and was surprised at just how much still remains and how it is identifiable from the old photos.

For example, until the new building went up behind Jewellery Quarter Station, the massive blue engineering brick retaining walls that stopped Vyse St slipping into the goods yard were all still there, and I expect they will remain there for many years to come.

Another GWR construction still very much in evidence is the brick wall in All Saints Rd and Park Rd South – and I'd love to know what's hidden under all that greenery!

This led Robert to contact Geoffrey with his thoughts:

Glad you liked the article in Steam in Trust. I have also enjoyed wandering around what remains of Hockley Goods Depot. It was interesting to me to see the stable buildings in the canal basin site on the other side of All Saints Road, especially the two storey building with the sloping access for the horses. The pits for the two hydraulic (later electric) wagon lifts are also there when I last went.

Regarding the stables, apparently Hockley was the principle stable on the Great Western Railway in the early days with 190 horses there in 1869. Other locations on the GWR originally tended to use more private carters, but this policy changed over time and the collection and delivery work was gradually brought more 'in-house' resulting in a huge increase in horse numbers across the railway. Following construction of a 'new' two storey stable block in 1876, the Hockley stud increased to 397 horses in 1882, and to 402 horses in 1883 (following the transfer of all the Birmingham Parcel horses to Hockley). Even in 1947 there were still 245 horses owned by the GWR in Hockley and other Birmingham stables. One unusual job at Hockley was the 'Chain Horse' which assisted other horses to haul their loads up Pitsford Street.

Tony Edwards has contacted us with some thoughts inspired by the recent trip to Didcot where he says:

Our recent trip to Didcot was a resounding success and a joy for all involved; however it is an unfortunate fact that such trips are becoming more expensive and difficult to arrange on a modern railway.

The very title of this magazine reminds us why we stay involved, and trips like the Shakespeare Express seem safe, but rising costs and increasing pathing difficulties lead one to question the practicality of longer days out with steam as a regular activity.

The Diesel Explorer programme has introduced a whole new clientele to Vintage Trains which is a positive development and could be developed further, especially since the last HS125 class 43 units (the most iconic rail development of the last 50 years) are currently being withdrawn from service. I know nothing about the cost or difficulty of running such trains but would not a VT set provide a fast and comfortable way of future proofing our activities?

HOW'S THIS FOR A TIMELY FIND?



Michael Hughes, one of the Vintage Trains archivists, has found the key that was used by the then Prince Charles when he opened the Birmingham Railway Museum in 1988.

The note reads

806 opening ceremony

HRH

Prince Charles

where 806 is probably the museum accession number.

WORKSHOP AND STOCK LIST

From time to time locomotives and stock may be loaned out to other railway centres for static display or to operate services. Main line certified engines may be temporarily stabled away from home in order to undertake mainline duties. Guest Locomotives and rolling stock are included. These may be stabled at Tyseley Locomotive Works for attention or using Tyseley as an operating base, including use on Vintage Trains charter trains. Items marked 'p' are privately owned and not part of the Tyseley collection.

Please note that this list is maintained by volunteers and may not be complete at the date shown.

Some locomotives and rolling stock may not be on view in areas accessible by visitors to Tyseley Locomotive Works. Visitors are only admitted to the works site on Tyseley Open Days.

BR=BR Power Classification ; P= Locomotives in private ownership.

Coaches in Vintage Trains mainline operational fleet : TY01 = vacuum braked/steam heat/ TY02 = air braked/aircon

GWR Steam Locomotives

No.		Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
2885	P		28xx 2-8-0	1938 Swindon	Practical GW Steam
4121	P		5101 2-6-2T	1937 Swindon	on overhaul
4965		Rood Ashton Hall	49xx Hall 4-6-0	1929 Swindon	Stored
5043		Earl of Mount Edgcumbe	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1936 Swindon	Operational
5080		Defiant	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1939 Swindon	Stored
7029		Clun Castle	4073 Castle 4-6-0	1950 Swindon	Operational
7752			57xx 0-6-0PT	1930 Glasgow	LT No. L94 Stored
7760			57xx 0-6-0PT	1930 Glasgow	LT No. L90 Stored
9600			57xx 0-6-0PT	1945 Swindon	Stored

LMS/BR Steam Locomotives

5593		Kolhapur	5XP Jubilee 4-6-0	1934 NBL	BR 6P5F Stored
670			LNWR Bloomer	1987 Tyseley	Replica, ongoing work
71000	P	Duke of Gloucester	8P 4-6-2	1954 Crewe	on overhaul 71000 Trust

Industrial Steam Locomotives

		Henry	0-4-0ST	1901 H/Leslie	At Barrow Hill
1		Cadbury No 1	0-4-0T	1925 Avonside	
No 1			0-4-0ST	1941 Peckett	
71480	P	Fred	WD 0-6-0ST	1945 RSH	(LNER Class J94)

Industrial Diesel & Petrol Locomotives

299099	p		88DS 0-4-0 DM	1950 Ruston & Hornsby	
347447	p		LWS 0-6-0 DM	1957 Ruston & Hornsby	
376	p	Princess Margaret	0-4-0 DM	1948 Andrew Barclay	at Turntable

BR Diesel/Electric Locomotives

No.	Name/Numbers	Class	Built	Notes
13029	08 021, D3029	08 DE 0-6-0	1953 Derby	Site Shunter
37240	D6940	37 DE Co-Co	1964 EE/VF	At Boden Rail
47 773	D1755 The Queen Mother	47 DE Co-Co	1964 Brush	47161/47541 Operational
50 033	Glorious D433	50 DE Co-Co	1968 EE/VF	At SVRly

Coaches

No.	Name/Numbers	Class	Built	Notes
311	Eagle	Mk1 Pullman Kitchen First	1960 Metro Cammell	NRM/TY01
335	Car No 335 : 99361	Mk1 Pullman Kitchen Second	1960 Metro Cammell	TY01
349	Car No 349 : 99349	Mk1 Pullman Parlour Second	1960 Metro Cammell	TY01
353	Car No 353 : 99353	Mk1 Pullman Parlour Second	1960 Metro Cammell	On Overhaul
806	74/5074/10506	Semi Royal Saloon	1903 Wolverton	LNWR Stored
1201		Mk 2RFO	1973/74 Derby	TY02
3309		Mk 2 FO	1973 Derby	TY02
3351		Mk 2 FO	1973/74 Derby	TY02
3416		Mk 2 FO	1973/74 Derby	TY02
5148		Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	at Telford
5157		Mk 2 TSO	1966 Derby	TY01
5177		Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	TY01
5179		Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	Top Bank
5183		Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	Top Bank
5186		Mk 2 TSO	1966 Derby	Fuel Sidings 2
5191		Mk 2 TSO	1966 Derby	TY01
5193		Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	at Telford
5194		Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	Fuel Sidings 1
5198		Mk 2 TSO/Club Car	1966 Derby	TY01
5212		Mk 2 TSO/Club Car	1967 Derby	TY01
5221		Mk 2 TSO	1967 Derby	at Telford
5314		Mk 2a TSO	1968 Derby	at Turntable
5420		Mk 2a TSO	1969 Derby	Top Bank
5928		Mk 2 SO	1973 Derby	TY02
6320		LMS Saloon	1927/65 Wolverton	PRCLT Derby
9101		Mk 2 BSO (Buffet Car)	1966 Derby	TY01
14064		Mk 2 BFK	1967 Derby	45305 Support
17015		Mk 1 BFK	1961 Swindon	71000 Support
17018		Mk 1 BFK	1961 Swindon	TY01
17090		Mk 2 BFK	1968 Derby	at Turntable
35470		Mk 1 BSK	1963 Wolverton	TY01
96100		GUV (Water Carrier)	1959 Pressed Steel	TY01

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144 Pacers

Set Number	Car Numbers	Builder and Date
144014	55814 DMS - 55850 MS - 55837 DMSL	Built 1987 Derby
144019	55819 DMS - 55855 MS - 55842 DMSL	Built 1987 Derby
144023	55823 DMS - 55859 MS - 55846 DMSL	Built 1987 Derby

Occasional Based Diesel Locomotives

No.	Name/Numbers	Class	Built	Notes
08730	D3898	08DE 0-6-0	1960 Crewe	RSS Blue
08752	D3920	08DE 0-6-0	1960 Crewe	RSS Grey
08805	D3973	08DE 0-6-0	1960 Derby	Railfreight Grey
20007	D8007	20DE Bo-Bo	1957 EE Vulcan Foundry	Green
20142	D8142	20DE Bo-Bo	1966 EE Vulcan Foundry	LT Red Sir Benjamin Franklin
20189	D8189	20DE Bo-Bo	1967 EE Vulcan Foundry	BR Blue
20205	D8305	20DE Bo-Bo	1967 EE Vulcan Foundry	BR Blue

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Locomotives in the Works

No.	Name	Class	Built	Notes/Owner
6880	Betton Grange	68xx Grange	New Build	6880 Society
5952	Cogan Hall	49xx Hall 4-6-0	1933 Swindon	6880 Society
4936	Kinlet Hall	49xx Hall 4-6-0	1929 Swindon	JJP Holdings
789		F5 2-4-2T	New Build	Holden F5 Trust
80104		4MT 2-6-4T	1955 Brighton	SLL
7802	Bradley Manor	78xx Manor	1938 Swindon	EM Fund
7812	Erlestoke Manor	78xx Manor	1939 Swindon	EM Fund
41708		1F 0-6-0T	1880 Derby	Barrow Hill ES Society
3840	County of Montgomery	County 4-4-0	New Build	Churchward County
4709		47xx 2-8-0	New Build	"Night Owl"
4588		4575 2-6-2T	1927 Swindon	

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TWO CASTLES FACE-TO-FACE AT DIDCOT



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