



Ecclesbourne Express

*Newsletter of the Ecclesbourne Valley
Railway Association*

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The Wirksworth to Duffield Line

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association

(Company No.5257082 - Limited by Guarantee) (Charity No. 1106810)

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The Spring Edition (Issue 86) will be published in April 2022

Contributions are welcome by post/email to the editors: editorsEE@talktalk.net
Our **DEADLINE DATE** for inclusion in the Spring issue will be **March 5th 2022**

NB A reminder will be sent 7 days prior to the deadline date.

Front Cover: Seasons of mist... (See letter to the editors page 7) *photo* © Bob Harris

Back Cover: Brrrr! 9446 hauls the 28th November service to Wirksworth from Duffield.

photo © Malcolm Beard

Letter from the Editors

So here we are then, another New Year has started and the Christmas panic is over until the next time.

Our Trains through the Christmas Countryside have been a great success again and we look forward to this becoming an annual item with more events planned for Easter and Summer in 2022

We have survived a mixed year of pandemic measures and still been able to attract and entertain visitors which has been a relief to the Railway.

However, just as this was being written a new variant of Covid has invaded the country with some restrictions being re-introduced, but not to our operations (so far).

By the time you read this magazine our fleet of steam locos will be tucked up for the winter, drained of water and wrapped up against the cold to prevent freezing and cracking of the intricate brass and cast iron fittings.

We are hoping to have our third EVRA loco, Cathryn, in service for the first time since 1967 this year and it is looking good for "The Duke" to be back on the rails again after a 10 year rebuild, mostly by Tim Oaks.

Meanwhile, EVRA's TSO is getting some TLC but will not be ready this year. Work on the shed concrete has delayed it, however, repairs continue to the SO to renew rotted steelwork. 60 years of tin worm has taken its toll!

We wish all our member and contributors

A Very Happy New Year!

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Please Note:

It has been decided to used the normal February running days to perform essential maintenance to the track this year.

We do not expect to resume our regular services until April 2022.

Please check at www.e-v-r.com or www.e-v-r-a.com for up-to-dated information regarding services, times and facilities available before travelling to the Railway.

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Sadly in this issue, we have to advise of the passing of two more staunch supporters of the Railway.

OBITUARY Alan Johnson

Paul Raynor



I first met Alan around 2002 when, like myself, he volunteered to work on the EVR. Alan has always been a loyal member of the emerging VCT (vegetation clearance team). Friendly, unassuming and willing to help he tackled each and every task that came his way. Consistently driving from the far side of Nottingham on Tuesdays and Thursdays (as we did 2 days a week then). He was always cheerful.

Unless told, one would not have guessed he had had two knee replacements .

Together with the rest of the team he has seen completion of our ambition to open the full length of the line.

We must pay tribute to his wife Jeanette who would often drive him to and from the railway and we thank her for 'lending' him to us.

Alan, it has been a honour to know you.

OBITUARY Lawrence Knighton

The Railway



Lawrence lived in Bakewell and over his career working in Derby on the railway gathered a range of artefacts from framed timetable posters, Midland and LMS timetables, diagrams of junctions, railway signs, silverware, to lamps etc.

He was well known for his collection of Midland and LMS items and if someone at the station had been told to throw something away, often Lawrence was the first to know and it ended up in his office. Martin Miller remembers that he acquired some Midland Railway gas lamp posts for his garden

at the time of the closure of the Millers Dale section, which he subsequently gave to the EVR. He also gave us the Midland Railway bench which had sat in his garden and after refurbishment is now positioned outside the Museum at Wirksworth.

His main significance for the EVR was his friendship with Peter Taylor and his influence on him, resulting in Peter's very generous support for the refurbishment of the Gorsey Bank to Idridgehay section of the line, without which, as Martin says, we would still be trying to break out of Wirksworth.

The Museum at Wirksworth holds a number of items which he has donated in recent years – going to collect them was always an experience, listening to his memories and carrying items down all the stairs in his house!

Lawrence was a staunch supporter of the Midland Railway Society and the Rowsley Association. He wrote, or co-wrote, several publications for these and other organisations.

COMPANY SECRETARY

Ian Bowley

Well, 'That Was the Year That Was', and we survived it. Yet another year has gone by and we are still under restrictions which by the time you read this may even be more stringent.

However, thanks to our volunteers, we have managed to run successful diesel and steam weekends plus a regular service for much of the season.

The two locomotives on long term hire have put our railway well and truly on the steam railway map.

Our steam experiences have started again and have proved very successful throughout the year.

The shop and museum continue to flourish under Pat Craft's (Marketing) guidance.

The Annual Draw brought in much needed funds and for the first time all the tickets have been sold - quite an achievement! Thanks especially to the volunteers in the shop who sold a large number of books.

Cathryn is nearing completion, as is some additional re-work on No 3. Brian Harrison. Henry Ellison has done a sterling job covering the majority of the Barclay turns this season.

I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas and I wish you all the best for the New Year.

Ian Bowley

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

Lindsey Bowley

New Honorary Treasurer Required

I have been advertising for some time now for a replacement Treasurer, but without success. I therefore decided to split the role into two separate parts. Firstly, a Trustee with Treasurer responsibilities and secondly, a Bookkeeper.

I am pleased to announce that I am in the process of offering the position of Bookkeeper to a suitably qualified person and hope that I will be able to begin training her in the New Year. This should reduce the workload of the Treasurer quite considerably.

The Association is now looking to recruit a new Trustee/Treasurer to oversee the work of the Bookkeeper, deal with income and payments, advise the board on financial matters, work with the Independent Financial Examiners to produce the year-end accounts and report to the EVRA membership at the AGM. This position would suit someone with a background in finance and accounting. Experience with using SAGE software is essential as is use of MS Office and emails.

If you think that you have the expertise we are looking for and would be willing to help the Charity in this way please contact me at treasurer@evra.org.uk. Alternatively, if you know someone who is looking to work in the voluntary sector and would be suitable, please pass on this information. *more follows* →

Other volunteer vacancies.

Not only do we need volunteers to help with the practical tasks of manning and working on locomotives, working on the line and maintaining the site but we also need people willing to assist the board of trustees with other vital tasks.

Pat Craft (Marketing) is in urgent need of assistants in the shop and museum, and if you wish to offer your help please contact her on: mikecraft7@btinternet.com or ring her on 01629 825213. (BT call check is in use, so please follow the instructions or leave a message if no reply.)

The fund raising team is in need of people to serve on the fundraising committee. If you wish to apply, please contact me on: treasurerevra@outlook.com. In addition, if you have any fund-raising ideas please let Ian know on: secretaryevra@outlook.com

During the season, we are in constant need of volunteers to carry out bucket collections on trains. This is a very simple way to raise funds but needs more person-power than we have available at the moment. If you would like to help in this way, then please contact me on: treasurerevra@outlook.com.

Finally, the steam team is always looking for additional help in cleaning locomotives or becoming part of the "Dream Steam Team". If this appeals to you, please contact Dave Williams on: roy-williams4@sky.com.

Lindsey Bowley Treasurer



Mitchell's

Artisan Butchery

Mitchell's Artisan Butchery is an independently owned butchers shop, located in Wirksworth, Derbyshire, UK. We only deal in locally sourced meats derived from good farming standards.

We believe in respecting our animals. This means that we only sell free range, local meats. We also pride ourselves in being able to use the entire carcass, and not wasting anything provided to us from our local farmers.

21 Market Place, Wirksworth
www.mitchellsartisanbutchery.co.uk 01629 820261



A RECENT LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Dear EVRA editors,

I was walking with a group of people from Wirksworth up to the National Stone Centre when I couldn't believe my ears. Surely that loco whistle wasn't coming from just a few hundred yards away, and not down in the main station yard? That would put it as coming up Ravenstor incline! When were trains last seen up there?

Anyway, I got to the path crossroads just above Ravenstor station and could just see a buffer beam through the trees. But wasn't that a loco buffer beam? Where was the coach being propelled? You should have seen me move fast enough lower down, to get the attached photo. Talk of being in the right place at the right time! We'd even have been too early provided we'd not got lost in Wirksworth's ancient labyrinthine of streets just a little earlier. Henry Ellison's light engine movement must surely have been a one-off?!

I've been a member of EVRA since 2000 when the yard was full of trees (membership no. 98) and am currently getting involved with volunteering for the LMS 10000 project. Sincerely Bob Harris.

NOTE: We have given Bob an update on Henry's role at EVR and wish him well volunteering with the LMS 10000 Project.

Thanks too for the picture of Henry Ellison (on the front page.)

We suspect that the fireman hanging out the side of the loco is one half of the editorial team - yet again. He gets everywhere! Ed



Just to prove it:
The EVRA steam team visited the West Shed to give The Duchess of Sutherland a rub over with a bit of emery cloth in October, the day before her return to mainline duties.

L - R: Paul Leighton, Duncan Yarnell, 1/2 editor, Chris Richardson, Nikki Baker, Nathan Cooke, Owain Evans, Steve Usher, and CME for 6233, 80080 and EVR, the man with the broad shoulders, Simon Scott.

HILL CLIMBING AT HAZELWOOD

Howard Sprenger



The above two photographs show the forecourt of Hazelwood station being used as a “paddock” for motoring events. The left one is predominately populated by cars, and is possibly just before WW1, whilst the right hand one appears to be mainly motorcycles with at least one three-wheeler on view (the car nearest the camera on the right – possibly an early Morgan). The fashions would suggest that this is probably after WW1, around 1920. The weighbridge (see below) can be seen on the centre-left of this picture. So, when were the photographs taken and what is the history of the Hazelwood Hill Climb? Hard evidence is thin on the ground, so this article represents only an initial investigation into the history of the event.

Motor racing on public roads was allowed in Britain until 1925 when it was banned following a fatal accident to a spectator at a hill climb near Princes Risborough. Prior to that, motor races, time trials and hill climbs were relatively common events on the quiet roads of Britain in the early 20th century. I have details of at least ten hill climb events for cars at Hazelwood, but there were quite likely more than that. Of motorcycle events, I have not found any evidence other than the photograph reproduced here.

The earliest reference to an event for cars is one that took place on 14th May 1904, organized by Derby Automobile Club, which was won by a Mr M.J. Astle in a 12hp De Deon, “who, following his last year’s success, again made the fastest run up”. It is not recorded where the previous year’s event had been held, but the implication is that it was also at Hazelwood. Most hill climbs were organized by the Derby club, which later changed its name to Derby & District Automobile Club and is now a constituent of Pathfinders and Derby Motor Club. Other events are known to have been organized by Nottingham Automobile Club and Derby & North Staffordshire Automobile Club.

From contemporary press reports, the route started from the station and went up Nether Lane then Hob Hill. A distance of a little less than a mile would be consistent with some of the timings given in the results from various meetings and a 0.9 mile run from the station would end at the gates to the Vicarage of the church St John the Evangelist (now leading to “The Tower” and “The Coach House”). This is borne out by contemporary photographs in *Automotor Journal* that show the finishing line apparently at this point.

The same magazine for 4th August 1906 has details of an event held on 28th July and says that “Hazelwood Railway Station was the site of the weigh in, the foot of the hill being quite close to the station. The course is a very stiff incline and constitutes a good test of the capabilities of the cars.” Presumably the weigh in was carried out on

the railway company's weighbridge in the station yard. The article goes on to say, "Two ascents were allowed to each car, so that if any driver was dissatisfied with his first attempt or desired to weigh in again with either more or less passengers, he was allowed to do so." Carrying passengers is not something one associates with motor racing these days, but many early events were run as "handicap" races, and the weight carried could be taken into account when working out who had won.

Anyone who has been to a modern hill climb will know that cars are sent up the hill one at a time, but photographs in *Automotor Journal* sometimes show two cars approaching the finish line, apparently racing. These were the handicap races whereby two cars set off up the hill separated by a time interval that was calculated on the basis of the relative power and weight of the vehicles (including passengers!) The aim of the lighter, faster car was to catch up with the slower, heavier one by the time they arrived at the top. Exactly how the runs were timed is not clear, but the August 1906 report tells us that, "expeditious dispatch of the cars was greatly facilitated by the use of the club's telephones", which were temporarily installed at the top and bottom of the hill and connected by a long wire along the road.

A couple of reports acknowledge the help of the local police, and in the report of 17th August 1906 event, we hear that, "the local police, so far from making any unnecessary interference, actually considerably helped"! It comments on the route being, "quite away from the main road, and is but sparsely visited by vehicular traffic". However, "curiously enough, it happened to be selected on this particular occasion as part of the route followed by a pleasure party who were out for a day's enjoyment by wagonette"!

The last result I have was for an event on 23rd October 1912 won by Joseph Higginson in an 80hp La Buire in a time of 59.4 seconds. The Derby club also held at least one competition (in May 1906) up Hillcliff Lane between Cross o'th' Hands and Idridgehay, but the hill at Hazelwood seems to have been used more often.

While it is possible to have a go at identifying the cars and motorcycles in the photographs, I would be interested to hear from anyone who can say, definitively, what we are looking at. It might then be possible to tie them in with the known results and therefore date them more accurately. Needless to say, if anyone has any further information about the Hazelwood Hill Climb, I would be very pleased to hear from them.



Automotor Journal, June 15th 1907 at the finish line. Has the car on the right just stormed past the one on the left or is it holding on for the win?

more follows →



Hazelwood Hill Climb Course route as shown on the 6-inch Ordnance Survey map, revised in 1913 and published in 1922.



The finish line photographed on 15th June 1907. The walls behind are consistent with those that are still there at the entrance to the old Vicarage.

Any information passed to the editors will be forwarded to the author.

All pictures supplied from H. Sprenger collection

COMMENT

Editors

A topsy-turvy year for the Railway in many ways. We have managed to run a decent service as, luckily, we have a good collection of compartment carriages which have allowed us to run and still meet social distancing requirements. Some other local Heritage lines have not been so fortunate and were unable to operate so easily.

The Summer saw our very successful shows which had been postponed from Easter as the Covid restrictions were still in place then. This was followed by an outstanding Halloween show by the same company and now our Christmas shows have been sold out. There is a mention of the favourable comments elsewhere in this issue.

We can only say congratulations to all the organisers, players and volunteers who have brought this year together the way they have.

As one editor has been driving and firing 9466 on the North end of the train, the thanks and expressions of the public as they leave tell the story - It was great.

We must not forget the South end of things where a largely unseen Class 14 "Teddy Bear" diesel loco pulls us down to Shottle then 9466 brings us back. Teddy Bear then stays out of sight under the bridge at Wash Green.,

So a big thanks to them as well. They are the unseen heroes of this event. See page 13.

EVENTS UP DATE

Leigh Gratton



The Halloween Event on 30th October was very well received for our first ever attempt at such an event.

...It seems like a long time ago already!

SPOOKY!

The first weekend of The Train Through Christmas Countryside 2021 went very well, despite our having lost the marquee in the high winds on Sunday 28th November and also despite it being very wet on Saturday 4th December during the afternoon of our first Christmas event day.

It has been an enormous effort to set up this time round with us carrying 50% more passengers than last year...and last year was double the year before!

We've a great team on the cast side and have already received a barrage of excellent reviews online.



Christmas Entertainment!

photos courtesy of WyvernRail



Funny White Stuff ! The 14.15 service to Wirksworth from Duffield from the cab of 9466 on 28th November



Waiting on the Right Away for the 16.20 service to Wirksworth from Duffield with Pete Edgington on the shovel.



Ready for Bed! All tucked up for the night at 7.35pm after the last 2021 service train of the year. I am sure that one of the team is under there. The romance of steam!

THE LAST ONE.

The last full line passenger service of the year was on 28th November and the setting would have suited the Christmas Wonderland theme better than the end of the season run. (See also rear cover.)

No rest for 9466 as she was about to perform on the North end of the Train through the Christmas Countryside.

Have a little sympathy for the driver and 2nd man on Class 14 "Teddy Bear" as they were out of sight most of the time on the Christmas services.

Water is a must for 9466, especially with steam heating on for the coaches, so the class 14 is well away from the platform as 9466 sits at the water column, and even when the train is in the platform loading, the diesel crew are almost under Wash Green bridge and not in view.

photos © Nathan Cooke



As mentioned on page 12, the train is taken to Shottle by D9537 Class 14 loco seen (here out of sight but not out of mind) on the South end of train ready for the second run of the day allegedly at 12.00.

There are always hold ups, but fortunately it is quite a slack schedule and there are a couple of hours in between the day's runs.



We have a change of crews on the steam engine as they have to be there at 06.15 to get the loco lit up, oiled up, coaled up and ashed out, with steam heating applied to the coaches from around 09.00 just to keep the passengers cosy and to be ready for the first run at 10.00. The afternoon shift get the pleasure of putting her to bed at the end of the day and they usually finish about 19.30 on four run days.

Waiting for a train?

D9537 "Teddy Bear" sits under the arches at Wash Green ready to take the Santa Special to Shottle on 22nd December.

Nice Hats Chaps!

Class 14 boys? They switch off the engine, drain the air reservoir, wind up the cat, put the clock out, and then go home!

photos Andrew Denham

BAGNALL 2746 THE DUKE

Tim Oaks

The boiler has returned from LMS (not London, Midland, Scottish, but Locomotive Maintenance Services) at Loughborough with a full boiler certificate and was expertly placed in the frames by County Lifting Services.

The insulation quilts have been made up and fitted. We are using 1" rockwool lagging, which comes foil backed on one side. This is folded in half and the edge sealed with very sticky aluminium tape; the idea is to keep water away from the boiler barrel and cladding as soggy lagging can do a lot of damage.

At the moment we are in the process of fitting the steel cladding. The first two sections are on, but the sheets which fit over the firebox are beyond use, so replacements have been expertly formed and shaped by the 48624 team and are now ready to fit. We could do with a mild spell so they can be painted on the inside first. After that we will proceed to the plumbing and painting phase.

We are looking to fit a Buffalo vacuum ejector on the advice of LMS. This is smaller than the one we already have, but should have capacity for a 6 coach train and a better range of operating pressures. As this is a change in design the details will have to be submitted to the Company for approval, but we understand this isn't the first austerity to be so treated.



Our latest two Dapol wagons have been delivered, Buggleskelly Quarries Tarmacadam and a re-run of the first in the series, Buggleskelly Gas, but with a different running number. £15-00 each from Tim Oaks 13 Trenchard Drive, Buxton SK17 9JY



photos © Tim Oaks



When I wrote the last report, I speculated that the new siding in Wirksworth yard would be finished and full of stock. Those of you who have been to Wirksworth recently will see that this is not the case! The new point was eventually installed but it took far longer than we hoped to complete the work. It might seem easy to work in the yard, with road access and no need for rail possessions, but the crowded nature of our site made the logistics very challenging. The spoil had to be removed to an embankment strengthening site at Wash Green which, of course, requires use of the main line, so could only happen when no trains were running. Add to this the need for us to use two diggers and only having two staff qualified to operate them, meant that resources were tight. However, with some help from the yard staff, we managed to complete the new point. We next need to regrade the formation where the new siding will be and lay out the sleepers. Our tool store also needs to find a new home as it is in the way of the new siding. Just finding space for an 8ft square container at Wirksworth is proving challenging.

We have been planning to repair the roof of our tool van for a couple of years. Inspection has revealed that there is more work than the roof needing attention and a plan was drawn up to get this done in the shed prior to our programmed winter renewals programme. As I stated last time, we also need to reprofile the wheels on 'Tom', the works loco, and we planned for both of them to be in the shed together. However, Wyvern Rail's board decided the priority for the railway was to concrete the rest of the shed floor. This has meant that we cannot do the work on Tom and the van at the moment. How this will affect the planned winter renewals programme is not known at the moment.

Despite the problems with these projects, our regular maintenance work has continued. Re-sleeping on the 'racing straight' has continued, using good sleepers sorted out from the ones we removed at Barnsley Lane, as well as some 'new' ones. There is much more of this work to be done. We have also fishplate oiled the line from Derby Road bridge 1 to Wirksworth, completing a pass of the line which we started 4 years ago. Now it is time to start it all over again!

As I write this, the team are working on the points at north end of Duffield. These are in need of attention to track gauge and require a new set of switches (point blades).

The work of the P-way team is always varied and new volunteers are very welcome. We meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays with Mike Fairburn and some Saturdays at Wirksworth with Tim Oaks.

To join us please contact Mike Fairburn on: mikefairburn47@live.co.uk or Tim Oaks on: sleepermonster@yahoo.com and they will be only too pleased to welcome you.

UPDATE ON CATHRYN

Joe Carver

In early 2018 I was asked by Bob Gibbens to make a new wooden floor for Cathryn's cab. A new wooden floor was needed because some of the old floor had rotted away with the loco standing outside for many years and a new design was needed because the coal stoker was not to be refitted in the restoration. The floor itself was a bit of a jigsaw puzzle (excuse the pun) to fit round the various pipes and had to be 6 inches high to sit flush with the top of the two rear sandbox fillers which were located in the cab floor.

A design was drawn up, timber ordered and the work continued throughout 2018 and 2019 as a background task because there were 3 steam engines in regular use that needed servicing each week. To aid the extension of the maintenance shed, Cathryn was then sheeted over and moved outside which put a stop to the work and then it was decided to leave the floor in its current state until the boiler had been refitted to the frames and all the additional pipe work for combined steam and vacuum brakes along with the steam heating pipes had been fitted.

It was not until October this year that work recommenced on the floor. Changes had to be made to the Driver's side floor layout because of all the new pipe runs. With the impending shunting around of the vehicles in the maintenance shed to allow work to go ahead in preparation for the final concreting of the shed floor, a concerted effort was made during November to finish the floor before this shunting took place. The deadline was met and the floor was completed in time on the 18th November.

photos © Joe Carver



100 Club Grand Prize Draw

Andrew Denham

The big draw this time with 5 prizes:

1st, Mr D Johnson, Somerset, £73.92.	2nd, I Smith, Derby, £52.80
3rd, Mr J Tunley, Derby, £42.24	4th, Mrs B Hawkins, Coventry, £21.12
5th, Mr J Weaver, Belper, £21.12	

Congratulations to you all and a Happy New Year!

Subject: InterRail Card Price for 2022.

Message from HRA:

'Dear InterRail Coordinators,

I hope you have all been keeping well over these difficult times and are looking forward to as near a 'normal' Christmas as possible.

I just wanted to send you all a quick note to confirm that the price of Corporate InterRail cards will remain at £35 for 2022. We won't however be able to continue the 2021 discounted price for previous years card holders. So it will be £35 for everyone.

Full details will be circulated at the beginning of January as usual.

Regards

*Mark Dewell
HRA InterRail Coordinator'*

Persons wishing to renew their HRA InterRail passes should contact:

Mr J. Hastings-Thomson, 6 Bosley Mews, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 1BU

For preference, by email hastingsthomson@btinternet.com or by mail (please include SAE for reply):

Once details are finalised, I will contact everyone with payment information.

Please Note:

These passes are for working volunteers and provide reduced travel on other heritage lines which are within the scheme.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2022

Editors

Mike and Pat Craft have advised that **EVRA** will be hosting the annual
Model Railway Exhibition in Wirksworth on 15th &16th Oct 2022.

Layouts and traders are already being booked.

A provisional date has been set for this year's **Volunteers' Day on 7th May 2022.**

More details of both events will be published in later issues.



Black Swan

Idridgehay

Food Served

Tuesday to Saturday

Midday to 8.00 pm

Sunday Midday to 4.00pm

Wirksworth Road, Idridgehay, Belper
DE56 2SG

01773 550694

email: blackswan.idridgehay@gmail.com

www.blackswanidridgehay.com



The Rising Sun

Rise End, Middleton, Matlock, DE4 4LS

Tel: 01629 258658 Mob: 07902 918410

email: rising_sun_middleton@yahoo.com

www.rising_sun_middleton.com

Good Beer, Good Food &

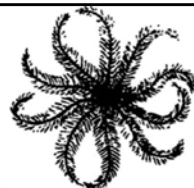
a Warm Welcome

Home cooked traditional English pub food,
done well.

Please be aware that our opening hours
are subject to the current Covid19
restrictions, and we advise that you check
on our website or call before travelling to
see us.



The Red Lion



THE FEATHER STAR

THE FEATHER STAR
is now within the
RED LION Hotel, Wirksworth.

Inside bar now open

Ample seating in our sun trap outside space

13 keg lines – 5 cask ales – 4 real ciders – wine list & tea and coffee

UMAMI bar menu to eat in the Feather Star
or take-aways Wednesday – Sunday

Ensuite bedrooms

Accommodation

07944 932665 (Red Lion)

07931 424117 (Feather Star)

Edited Extract from an interview by Mike Craft August 2005 with:

Ted Hall speaking about his Father John Hall, Stationmaster at Wirksworth Station March 1946 - October 1961.

Mike Craft: What recollections have you got Ted, of your Father?

Father started off at the Railway in about 1921 as a Clerk on the Midland Railway and he gradually worked his way through, he became a Stationmaster at a small station just outside Cambridge in the 1930's and then moved in 1934 to just outside Coventry and he stayed there all during the War. He had to go into Coventry Station during the Blitz because we'd got a junction at our station. When Coventry station was out of action the trains were diverted, he had to go into Coventry to find out what the state of the line was because he could not rely on telephones. And then in March 1946 he moved here to Wirksworth and he stayed here until he retired in October 1961.

The first winter that we were here was quite memorable. It was the bad winter of 46/47 and the heavy snows came in the beginning of 1947 and for a while the roads up to the Town was all blocked and we managed to keep the line, the Town open though by running an engine up and down the railway line so at least we had got a little bit of connection with the outside world but, eventually they found the engine was tilting over at rather an alarming angle and they got out and had a look and found that the snow was building up a lot more on one line than the other, so they decided that discretion was the better part of valor and they abandoned that idea so the Town was cut off for a day or so.

When we came here in '46 there was a passenger service between Wirksworth and Derby. It was only two trains a day though. One in the morning and one in the evening, it was mainly Railway Workers that used it, to get to the Loco Works at Derby because the Railway Stations, right from here to Derby, were all in the wrong place, so anybody wanting to go shopping or to other work, places of work, it was much more convenient to go by bus. So the result was the passenger service obviously wasn't paying so they cut that out in 1947. There was a big outcry of course, when it was announce that the Passengers were going to be stopped and Father had deputations from the Town – could he do anything about it and he said 'no I can't but you can if you use it'. But as I say, the stations were all in the wrong places so people carried on using the busses and the Passenger was lost. But there was still plenty of Stone and then in fact, the amount of stone gradually increased from the Quarries. It went, to a larger extent to Corby Steel Works, and a certain amount went out in the autumn for the making, for processing Sugar Beet and the

amount of stone increased to such an extent that the Station was upgraded from a Class 3 to a Class 2, which Father was quite happy about, getting a promotion without having to move anywhere.

The staff at that time were two or three in the actual office and then there was a full set of Shunters, must have been about four or five Shunters I would say because the first train would get here about eight o'clock time and then another train, the last train didn't go until tea-time. So possibly they would need two lots of Shunters sometimes.

It's difficult to say how many trucks were on the trains, they were fairly long. They had Class 4 Freight engines pulling them and it was, I think, about at their limit. They were fairly long trains and each of the Wagons was around about 20 tons. So it was quite a lot of tonnage. I know bringing the trains down from the Quarry there was only a limited number allowed to come down at any one time because it was in the days of the loose-coupled when the engine puts its brake on, it only applied to the engine not to the rest of the wagons. It's a 1 in 25 Incline, so, I think, about 1 in 3 wagons had to have their brakes pegged hard down and they say there was only a limited number allowed to come down at any one time. So they had to be very careful bringing the stuff down.

They normally had a Class 4 Freight for the stone but occasionally there was none available so they had to have Class 3 and there were odd times when only a Class 2 came but so they had to be very careful how many they brought down then. But the big problem arose when they started scrapping the steam engines and changing over to diesel because the system was, as an engine came due for its overall it was scrapped. Whether they got a replacement diesel for it or not and they started ringing up saying I'm sorry there won't be a train coming up today because we've got no engine. Of course, Father wasn't too pleased about that because he'd got thousands of tons of stone in wagons wanting to go out. So, he swore at all the right people and eventually they, with a lot of misgivings, they sent a Class 8 out at once. They didn't think the bridges would stand it between here and Duffield, but they put all sorts of instruments on and tested them and the 8's got over without any trouble. So, after that, if a Class 4 wasn't available we had a Class 8, which wasn't too good for shunting, but at least it was strong enough to bring the stuff up and down the Incline and take the wagons out. So, then of course, we started getting diesels for a while after that.

Mike Craft: So the Lorries actually left the Yard, they didn't load another wagon up in the Yard to be taken out by rail?

As well as the stone coming down the Incline there were stone coming from Wirksworth Quarries from what's known in the Town as the Big Hole, the tunnel ran all the way underneath the Town. Initially, the power, motive power they used to take the wagons up and down into the Big Hole was Steam Loco. Eventually, that was changed to a small diesel and then, I think, that was about in the Fifties, they decided that some of the stuff would go out by road so they altered the track so that lorries

more follows —————>

could get up there but they still carried on with a few wagons until the quarry closed.

They drove the Lorries straight up into the quarry and then took it to wherever they were needed. Then just before about the time Father retired in '63 there was a plan for the output from the Middle Peak Quarry to increase considerably and so they decided they'd alter the Yard around so they could move the wagons in and out a lot quicker. The result was, the main station buildings were demolished and the Engine Shed, which hadn't been used as an Engine Shed since the very early days of the railway; so, it was just used as a dumping ground for stores for the Platelayers. That was demolished and the Engine Shed, the sorry Goods Shed was also demolished and the track was altered. Unfortunately, it was never used because about the time they finished altering the Yard, Corby Steel Works closed down and they were the ones taking all the stone, so stone for the steel stopped then and the quarries went over to road-stone. The easiest way to take the stone, to wherever it was needed for the new road is to put it in a lorry and so that was virtually the beginning and the end for Wirksworth Station as a going concern.

They kept it on officially as a Railway Station but no trains were coming in and out until eventually Wyvern Rail took it over.

Please Note: As we were putting this magazine together we were given the sad news of the death of Reg Barber who featured in Tales from the Past in EE issue **82**. His friend, Chris Canner told us that they had been at school together and had remained close friends for the last 70 years. Reg had regularly assisted him on his bookstall at Wirksworth and Belper Model Railway events.

Our sincere condolences go to Reg's wife Sue and to Chris who let us know through John Hastings-Thomson

Better late than never, shots from the September Steam Gala.



A couple of atmospheric pictures that were found in our inbox a little too late for the previous issue.

Left: 9466 is coming onto the coaches in platform 2 whilst No3 (Brian Harrison) awaits the right away from the yard master. On the right: No 3 in fine form with an unfitted freight demonstration train running into Platform 1. Both were taken during the September Steam Gala.

photos © Thomas Wooley

VEGETATION CLEARANCE TEAM

Mick Kingsley



LOCATION:-

10 26AM

It's was Midsummer and this, obviously dead, tree needed to come down.

So, all tools needed are at the ready.

SOLUTION:-

10 59AM

TIMBER!

...Now to clear up.



RELAXATION:-

2.07PM

Taking a well earned breather, job done.

OBSERVATION:-

2.32PM This one's OK.

We must all thank the **VCT** team for all the hard and essential work they do.

THANKS LADS!



Appeal from The Railway

As the year ends, EVR have to assess the state of our operation and finances. Although it has been a good year compared with the previous one, we are faced with finding around £50,000 to carry out essential track maintenance for the coming year.

With the advent of heavier motive power, and ageing, the track that we ride on has been taking a pounding.

This, along with water penetration, necessitates the replacement of sleepers with associated re-ballasting and also remedial work to the Duffield North points. The latter alone is expected to cost around £18,000. Then there is the constant need to improve drainage to prevent sub-soil from being eroded below the ballast and damage to new sleepers, both concrete (they crack) and wood (they rot). The aim is to replace 400 wooden and 1500 concrete sleepers over the next few months, plus fittings as needed.

This is a direct appeal to existing shareholders and potential new shareholders. Please consider buying WyvernRail shares, as this is the easiest way for the Railway to raise funds. If you pay income tax, you can reclaim 30% of your investment from HMRC via the Enterprise Initiative Scheme. In this way, a £100 investment will cost you just £70. There is a monthly option as well, known as "ShareSave" which also qualifies for tax reduction under the EIS.

Please visit e-v-r.com for details of how to buy shares.

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