

Ecclesbourne Express

Newsletter of the Ecclesbourne Valley
Railway Association

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The Wirksworth to Duffield Line

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association

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Next Edition will be published in July 2017 – Contributions welcome by email or post to John Hastings-Thomson, see above, by **Friday June 23rd 2017**.

Front Cover – Visiting Class 14 during the March Diesel Gala at foot crossing 5, ¼ mile north of Hazelwood Road with the 10.05 from Wirksworth - *John Weaver*.

Back Cover – The removal of the Dust Dock and the new car park.



NEWS UPDATE - Mike Craft

We would like to like to let members know that we have received a further significant sum from the Estate of Sam Winfield and we are very grateful to the executors of the will for all their work.

To bring you up to date on the monies spent from the original instalment of the legacy: those who have visited Wirksworth

recently, will have noticed that the dust dock has been completely removed, to the desired level, thus reducing the risk of decapitating drivers, who hang their heads out of the cab. A suitable surface for car parking has been laid and is already a popular place for visitors, although some miss the elevated "spotters" position of the original structure. More ballast and sleepers have been bought.

Following the survey of the electrical system at Wirksworth, we recommended to WyvernRail that a new cable to the maintenance shed starting from the station buildings should be installed and we have also put in a water pipe. This has been started. This means that we do not have to pay for a totally new supply, as was originally proposed. The legacy has also paid for the excavation of ground in the maintenance shed and the laying of a considerable amount of reinforced concrete, with the final layer being laid in the near future. This will support the large jacks which we purchased last year to enable repairs to coaches etc.

Two concrete bases will be laid at Idridgehay and Gorsey Bank and a temporary shed will be erected at Gorsey Bank for the use of a crossing keeper during 2017.

A Mk 1 TSO has been purchased and will be restored over the next 12 months. We have purchased 3 defibrillators, one each for Wirksworth and Duffield stations and one on the train. Training in their correct use is currently underway for guards and other key personnel. Three drivers have been trained to use the forklift truck purchased last autumn, both in the general use and the more specific role of loading coal into steam engines.

As I mentioned last time, on Friday 16th June 2017 we will be celebrating the opening of the line in 1867 and also the closure! The event will be opened by Mr W. Tucker, HM Lord Lieutenant of Derbyshire who is our Patron. We still have a limited number of seats on the commemoration train at 11.15 and some on the other two trains that day. So hurry up and book a seat if you haven't already done so. Every EVRA member or shareholder can claim one free return ticket on a train that day and they are entitled to bring one guest at a cost of £10, payable when booking. Applications should be made in writing to me (see address inside front cover): you will be sent your ticket(s) in May.

As part of the celebrations the Trustees have decided to hold a special Draw, with many up-market prizes, so don't miss the chance – tickets are enclosed. We will be selling tickets on the steam trains during the summer too.

There are still a few tickets left for our steam-hauled fund raising event, the Cheese and Wine evening on May 20th (£25 per ticket). They are available through our website, by post and at the EVRA shop on platform 1 at Wirksworth.

As I write there are only a few vacancies for steam driving experiences for the rest of the year. If you are interested please visit the website or e-mail me.

The Volunteers Day in February was well attended and new volunteers across most departments resulted. We welcome all those who joined on the day and who offered to help.

SALES MATTERS - Pat Craft

The first six weeks of the year when the shop was closed were helped by sales of the Anniversary wagon and these have increased with publicity in several magazines. To date over 185 wagons (36%) have been sold. At the end of February, two shows, at Chapel en le Frith and Ilkeston, produced very good results.

The first sale of miscellaneous items will be held over all three days of May Day Bank holiday weekend. The Volunteers Day resulted in two new volunteers for the shop and they will help us cope with the very full timetable in 2017.

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150th Anniversary 00 scale Seven Plank Wagon Swift Hazelwood.

Sales of our limited edition wagon are going well with around a third already sold. The exact number is in Sales Matters above. If you haven't bought yours yet, make sure you get one soon before the season gets into full swing. Many people missed our last wagon, "Wirksworth Quarries," We still get enquires!

The model is available from the EVRA Shop or by mail order through the EVRA Website: www.evra.org.uk or to my email address: hastingsthomson@btinternet.com It is a limited edition of 504, priced at £16.50 collected from the EVRA Shop at Wirksworth, Derbyshire or £20 including P&P. Postage rates for multiple orders can be obtained from my email address.

I must apologise for the slowness of delivery on some orders at times of high demand, Currently orders are being processed in 1-2 days.

APRIL MUSE - Vince Morris.

Following an operation on my arm I have not been to Wirksworth since Christmas. I'm now recovered but have been told that I will probably only get back about 90% of the strength and flexibility of the arm. Plenty enough for everyday living, but a slight reduction in my usefulness to the Permanent Way Team – assuming that they have even noticed that I have been missing from the front line, which, of course, set me musing!

In my absence someone has demolished the dust-dock, someone else has extended the maintenance shed, others have finished off the down platform at Shottle and yet others have tarmacked the footpath at Duffield, where the footbridge has been repainted as well. MyTestTrack has hosted countless test visitors, included, if the railway press is to be believed (no fake news here), a highly successful demonstration of a new method of safe working in tunnels. Locos have been gathering for the Diesel Gala, the DMU fleet has been in operation, steam has been on the incline, both The Duke and Cathryn have moved closer to their return to service and the rakes of coaches have been dusted down for the coming season. Plans are well advanced to celebrate 150 years of trains in the Valley (see www.ecclesbourne150.org). In other words the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway is very much alive and well, with the potential to expand further to meet the challenge of providing a first class heritage experience to locals and holidaymakers alike; to be part of the local scene and a must do for the railway enthusiast and the coach party.

But I am now more aware than ever that I, and my colleagues, the first generation of volunteers, the ones who can remember cutting down trees to find where the rails were, are getting older and, certainly in my case, more decrepit. We had a very successful volunteer recruitment day in February, although I could not be there I received 15 application for membership of EVRA by prospective volunteers. apologies to them, and renewing members, if their membership cards looked as if they were written by an intoxicated spider, the cards are small and slippery and really require a firm two handed approach to keep them under control.) 15 is a good number, but the railway really needs many more if it is to move forward. Both people who just like pottering in the glow of nostalgia and those with dynamic, but realistic, ideas as to how the future should look. We must ensure that there is room for both types, and that they can (indeed must) mutually support each other's aspirations. Then the first generation can pass the baton to those who have only ever seen shiny rails and smart platforms between Wirksworth and Duffield. The future is not in our old hands, it belongs to the next generation, but it is us who must encourage that next generation to reveal itself. Several have arrived already, particularly in the DMU team, and the EVR are indebted to their enthusiasm for our growing reputation in that area, but both we oldies and they must ensure, that by all our actions we are ambassadors for the Railway, encouraging many more to join them, in all departments, and that the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway becomes what it is threatening to be: a major force in the heritage railway movement.

Spread the word by deed and mouth: our railway needs you!

OUR NEW 150TH ANNIVERSARY BROCHURE

We have recently published an illustrated 24-page colour brochure to celebrate Ecclesbourne 150: "The Ecclesbourne Valley Railway – The first 150 years", which contains a history of the line and a guide to the railway by Richard Buckby plus many more interesting articles.

Available from Wirksworth and Duffield Stations and the EVRA Shop - £4.95.

A STRANGE DAY OUT AT SHOTTLE - Mike Colebourne.



Eunice (or Unis) Banton, German's widow. Born 1832 at Ticknal. Married German at Mackworth 1853 Lived at 6 High street, Litchurch, Derby. died 1913.

Some years ago, in 1996, when visiting Derbyshire, I discovered that the railway line from Derby to Wirksworth had closed but that all fixtures, such as the track, signals and stations had been left as they were as there was a possibility of it reopening. We drove along the route stopping to look over bridges (as you do when you're potty about trains) and tried to find stations. One such was Shottle [Cowers Lane] where we peeped over the wall and saw the station and track all weed infested and dilapidated. Turning away, muttering that they'd better get on with restoration before nature took over, we went to the nearby pub, the aptly named "Railway Inn" for lunch. The railway line ran north from Derby, branching off at Duffield; terminating at Wirksworth which was a centre for stone quarrying.

A family legend says that my (Great Great) 'Grandfather German Colebourne was killed by a train' so in 1997 I was searching for his death certificate which I obtained from Ripely. This told me that German [my dad always pronounced it Jarman] Colebourne was indeed killed by a passing train. It appears that he was a goods guard employed by the Midland Railway and had died 26 February 1897 at SHOTTLE!!

SHOCKING RAILWAY FATALITY AT SHOTTLE

A Midland Railway goods guard was run over and killed during shunting operations at Shottle Station today (Friday). The name of the deceased is German Colebourne, and he belongs to Derby.

Colebourne was getting off the guard's van on to the platform when he fell between the train and the stone work, and was crushed.

DERBY EXPRESS Friday 26th February 1897

The next time we went to Derby I was determined to find out more. At the Derby Local Studies library I enquired about coroners records, evidently these were not kept at this time. The librarian recommended that I search the local newspapers for a mention. There were several Derbyshire newspapers at this time after searching the Derby Daily Telegraph to no avail; I began

to search The Derby Express. In the edition of Friday 26th February I found a short piece about Grandfathers' death. This piece was published the same day as the accident! On the following Monday a larger report appeared full of gruesome details.

The article appeared at the centre of the front page of the paper which illustrates that newspapers were much the same as television news is now, heavy on sensational detail and almost entertaining.

German's poor family, what happened to them? Did his widow get a pension from the railway company? How did his children manage? At the next census, 1901 finds Georges' widow Eunice still at the family home, 78, Alexandra Street, Litchurch, Derby. Her offspring had left the family house and made lives of their own. Eunice died in 1913, aged 81, and was buried with her husband at Nottingham Road Cemetery.

I think its uncanny and amazing that I had visited the site of Grandfather's demise before I knew any of the facts. What was it that drew me to the very place of a family event that must have changed the fortunes of my family?

MARKETING OUR RAILWAY : HOW YOU CAN HELP. Neil Ferguson - Lee.

WANTED – GUERRILLAS! Not your usual start to an article but a heartfelt request from your favourite railway and one where you can help us whether you live near or far away. With Ecclesbourne 150 underway this year, and the planned arrival of the 'Jinty' to join us over the Summer, the more publicity we can obtain, the better. Getting the word around is always a challenge: they say that half of any advertising spend is wasted, but the problem is that nobody knows which half!

We tend to divide advertising between local papers and the enthusiast press with a smattering of opportunistic adverts as and when the moment arises. However, the most significant spend is on the familiar timetable brochures that often accompany your Ecclesbourne Express and other communications from the railway. Tens of thousands of these are printed and the majority are sent to specialist distribution companies who ensure they are placed in those large leaflet dispensers seen in shopping centres, tourist attractions and other public places.

So, what does this have to do with guerrillas? Well, the connection is guerrilla marketing: this is 'an advertisement strategy concept designed for businesses to promote their products or services in an unconventional way at low cost. This involves focusing on grasping the attention of the public at a more personal level'. We can all take part in this and this is where you can help. Are you able to find a home for our timetables and event posters? We are looking for 20-30 'Guerrilla marketers' to distribute our brochures and help publicise events. We will provide you with a supply of materials from Wirksworth station, email updates to tell you what is happening and how we are publicising specific events and support if you wanted to do something special like attend a public event on behalf of the railway.

Perhaps you placing materials in just one location seems like a bit of a drop in the ocean? On its own yes, but when your individual efforts are combined with those of many others, It becomes surprisingly effective.

If you are interested, please drop me an email at neilfl@wyvernrail.co.uk and I shall enrol you into our elite band of guerrillas!



Two Old Boilers Rejuvenated - The Duke and Catheryn's Boilers get make overs.

Duke Boiler photograph courtesy of David Wright.

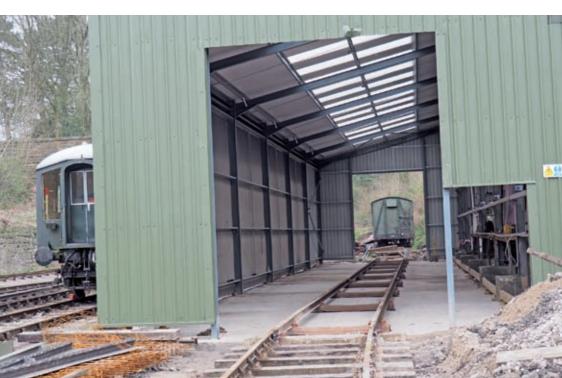
Our New Yard Diesel Shunter. converted from a Sentinel Vertical Boiler steam engine by Thomas Hill of Kilnhust for the CEGB. Was preserved at Statfold Barn Railway.





Training on the new folklift.

Maintenance Shed Extension Progress, early April.



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PERMANENT WAY REPORT, MARCH 2017 - Anthony Watt.

Spring has sprung, and winter is passed. It wasn't a bad winter really: we lost no days to snow and ice, although some very wet days were limiting. There was one day when, due to Storm 'Doris', only four brave souls occupied the brake van, tending to the stove and making pots of tea. We made up for our inactivity at other times.

Despite passenger services on Tuesdays, we've managed to commence regreasing of fishplates, heading south from the southern end of Shottle loop. We've completed a quarter mile section, and soon we'll need to consider the use of the Land Rover to reach the work site, and return at lunchtime.

On non-service days we've been spot re-sleepering (again!) on the 'Duffield Straight', around MP134. It won't take us long to work our way through the stock of replacements.

Shottle 'Down' platform was completed in time for the Diesel Gala, including fencing (courtesy of VCT) and steps to track level at both ends. Access for passengers and visitors hasn't been decided and installed, but that didn't stop a number of over-eager visitors crossing between the two platforms. Many litters of kittens were had. Still, it's true what they say: "build it, and they will come".

The weeks ahead see more of the same maintenance tasks, in addition to laying the track in the extension to the maintenance facility. This will be the first time that we've constructed concrete embedded track. Interesting!

Away from rails and sleepers, members of the gang have assisted with barrowing tarmac at Duffield (for the improved walk way), and will be involved with the two slabs of concrete to be cast at Idridgehay and Gorsey Bank. These will be the bases for Crossing Keeper's cabins, to be used when more intensive service trains are running (Diesel Galas and visiting steam locos). That's two more volunteer posts to be filled, in addition to the signalmen at both ends of Shottle loop. Please form an orderly queue.

ANDREW BARCLAY WINTER MAINTENANCE - Joseph Carver.

In the Spring Issue No. 58 2015 Dave Williams wrote about the general planned maintenance that is performed on the Andrew Barclay steam locos over the winter. He also mentioned other additional tasks that needed to be done over the winter period.

To bring you up to date, last winter Ferrybridge No. 3 stole the limelight receiving a full repaint which consumed some 500 hours of labour and consequently did not return into service until early May. During the running season last year, a broken leaf was discovered on the rear driver's side leaf spring on Henry Ellison (HE). With No.3 back in service the spring was removed from HE and sent away for a new leaf to be manufactured and a rebuild of the spring. On its return the reconditioned spring was replaced on the loco and it has performed well since then.

HE has Ramsbottom safety valves and they can be temperamental at times, so new valve inserts were made and fitted, which still left some issues to be resolved. So the decision was taken to have a new coil spring made for the valves because the old spring (probably the original 1947 version) was deemed not to be as effective as it had been. The fitting of the new spring produced a marked performance in the operation of the safety valves. This winter HE required no additional work over and above the scheduled maintenance.

At the end of the last season a detailed inspection of No. 3 confirmed that corrosion had created a large hole across the front plate of the ash-pan which was then removed for further inspection. Although it might have been possible to repair, it was found to be distorted due to the weakening of the front panel and its general condition was poor. Authorisation was obtained for a new ash-pan to be ordered which was delivered on the 17th January. To improve the operation of the loco the ash-pan was made 5 inches deeper, giving a better air flow and more ash collection space. It was also fitted with a bottom sliding inspection hatch similar to HE which means we will no longer have to remove the ash-pan to perform the yearly boiler inspections. The ash-pan was duly fitted and adjustments made to the rear damper operating mechanism because of the larger damper flap. The only other work that No. 3 required was a strip down and regrinding in the steam control valves to the vacuum ejector because these had started blowing through steam when shut.

At the time of writing both Barclay locomotives have passed their annual cold and insteam examinations by our Boiler Inspector and are ready for the coming season.

BAGNALL 2746 THE DUKE - Tim Oaks.

Boiler.

LMS at Loughborough have been busy with our boiler. A new "tombstone plate" has been made for the firebox throat plate and welded in place. It looks a bit like an ornate memorial, hence the name. The lower outer firebox sides have been cut away and the new copper tube plate is being machined.

It isn't all good news. Thorough NDT examination revealed many minor cracks in the firebox crown which have been ground out and welded up. Serious cracks were found in the foundation ring and back head and we have decided to replace these items. The price quoted for the new back head, which is the entire back end of the boiler, was surprisingly reasonable. The boiler work could be completed by the Autumn.

Boiler Fittings.

On careful examination many items were seriously worn. Simon and Ian are working through these, remaking the clearances and machining new components from scratch. We will buy at least one replacement safety valve, fortunately LMS keep these in stock.

Frames.

A substantial part of the mechanical sanding drive was missing. Mick and John have made and fitted replacements, including a few bits of left over 8F, so The Duke will have a bit of Stanier heritage in its makeup and will be all the better for it.

LMS propose to deliver the new bunker shell around Easter for us to fit out. The 8F group own a large diesel electric welder/generator which has been extracted from store and tested ready for this work.

Other work includes cleaning and painting vacuum and steam heat pipes. Thank goodness it is spring!

Oddingley Signal Box.

This project has been reviewed and on the whole the preference is now to install it as a signal box at Shottle. Mick Thomas calculates that all our requirements can be satisfied by a 14 lever frame, which will fit. There is the little matter of obtaining and modifying such a frame, but I gather Mick has his eye on one. Now the better weather is here we will need to organise refurbishment of the box structure. I had a look inside recently and it does not seem to have deteriorated over the winter. The finial has been remade.

DIESEL WEEKEND 18TH/19TH MARCH 2017 - Leigh Gration.

It was time for our Diesel Locomotive Weekend on 18th and 19th March, which was the first of many events to take place in this special gala year. We hired Class 14 D9537 from the East Lancashire Railway.

The Class 14 locomotives are ideal for preserved railways. They are in the shunter class of locomotive, being built by the British Railways Swindon works in 1965. They feature an economical 600hp Paxman engine with hydraulic transmission. They have a maximum rated speed of 40mph which is much higher than the maximum permitted 25mph speed limit on preserved lines. When you add in the fact that they have vacuum train brakes, you have the perfect locomotive for passenger and engineering works trains

Also featuring for the first time at the event was Class 31 31206 which we have hired for an extended stay of two seasons. The locomotive is normally based on the Rushden, Higham and Wellingborough Railway in Northamptonshire.

The weekend was successful, despite a hitch with the Class 14 on Sunday. We operated the two locomotives alongside stalwart Class 33 33103 in a variety of combinations both on the Duffield line and the Ravenstor incline. This included a special double header with the 31 and 33 to Ravestor in the morning as well as top and tail configurations at times on the Duffield line. The trains were very busy, especially on the Saturday with many visitors using the connection at Duffield to arrive by train. The bar in the recently restored Mark 1 Second Open coach was particularly popular

and seemed to be busy all day. On the Saturday evening, we operated a special featuring all three locomotives where the Class 14 pulled the train up the hill in the dark which was quite special.

We will next feature a visiting diesel locomotive at the August Diesel Gala with a visiting Class 26 26043 from the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Railway.

FARADAY LATEST - John Stokes.

The winter period has also slowed progress a little due to other commitments and inclement weather. However quite a bit of work has been carried out over the last few weeks. Investigations have been carried out on the old petrol donkey engine for the starting air. Little success was had with getting the original small Ruston engine to run. We have now decided to go with an easier to start diesel equivalent.

During January, we were approached by the railway to see if we could provide cab rides at the Volunteers Recruitment Day on 18th of February. We were honoured to be asked to perform this role. So, we set aside other jobs to concentrate on getting the engine in a fit state to run for this event. The main engine oil and gearbox oil were changed. The cab was also tidied in readiness; it had become a bit of a dumping ground. It was great to see so many new and old faces at the Recruitment Day. I hope collectively we have encouraged many more people to join our enterprise in whatever role they chose.

Now for the not so good news. Towards the end of February, we decided that with the pit now available we should check the condition of the axel box bearings. On removing the axel box keeps, large amounts of gunk was found in all of them. The oil has clearly not been changed in a long time. Many years of hauling p-way trains to Duffield seem to have taken their toll. We have discovered that at some point in the dim and distant past Faraday has run a hot box. The front left axle box contained a large amount of melted white metal. Fortunately, the axel itself has not been damaged, but the bearing will need re-metalling. This will be not an insignificant cost but is not impossible to achieve. We are working on a solution now and have found a firm in Burton–On-Trent that can re-metal the bearing.

EVRA 100 CLUB DRAW: 4TH APRIL AT WIRKSWORTH Andrew Denham.

The winners were: 1st prize: Number 132, £80.33: A. Johnson, Burton Joyce

Nottingham.

2nd Prize: Number 223, £48.20: M. G. Kingsley, Ripley, Derbyshire. **3rd Prize:** Number 169, £32.13: S. Harrop, Ridgeway, Derbyshire.

Thanks to all for your contributions.

EVR TIMETABLE: April - July 2017. For further details see website or printed timetable.

Day Rover Fares will be: Adults £13, Concessions £12; Children £6.50; Families (2+3) £33. Special Event Fares may be higher.

Wirksworth to Duffield, Trains between Wirksworth and Duffield will operate on Saturdays, Sundays and Tuesdays plus Thursday from 1st June. Please see below for the Special Events Weekends. The services in early May will be operated using Heritage Diesel Railcars but on weekends from 27th May they will be steam hauled.

Steam will operate on the incline service to Ravenstor May Day Bank Holiday weekend Saturday 29th April to Monday 1st May, late May Bank Holiday Weekend and weekends throughout June and July.

PLEASE NOTE THERE IS A SUPPLEMENTARY CHARGE FOR THIS SERVICE.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Saturday Evening May 20th: STEAM HAULED Cheese and Wine evening at £25 per ticket. DETAILS ON THE EVRA WEBSITE.

Saturday 27th, Sunday28th and Monday 29th May 2017 "Kids Go Free (under 15 years) ALL SERVICE STEAM HAULED.

Friday 16th, Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th June (Father's Day) 150th Anniversary Celebration Weekend. Help us celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the opening of the Duffield to Wirksworth branch.

Sunday 2nd July: Classic Bus and Coach Rally.

Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th July Classic Transport Weekend.

Full details at www.e-v-r.com or phone 01629 823076

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