



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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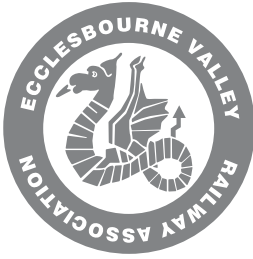
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Next Edition will be published in April 2015 – Contributions welcome by email or post to John Hastings-Thomson, see above, by **Friday 20th March 2015**.

Front Cover - North Pole Express, Duffield 24.12.2014 - John Weaver.

Back Cover - New arrival - Derby Lightweight 2 Car unit at Wirksworth.





NEWS UPDATE - Mike Craft

It has been agreed with WyvernRail plc that EVRA will operate steam on the incline to comply with the Heritage Lottery grant conditions. Passenger services will operate over all the Bank Holiday weekends, March 21st, March 22nd, weekends from 4th July until 20th September (except 15th and 16th August) and October 17th and 18th. Footplate rides will be available on these passenger trains at a cost of £10. See p14-15 for more details.

We shall also be operating steam engine experiences on the mornings of these dates and also in the afternoons of Fridays from June 19th until July 24th (when evening dining trains will run to Shottle). An hourly experience costs £75 and a two hourly one £140. So, if you are searching for that special gift for a friend or relative please visit our new website www.evra-shop.org to purchase experiences, tickets or footplate rides. At the time of writing we already have firm bookings for a number of dates and availability is changing all the time.

Our Model Railway Exhibition in October was one of our most successful in the 12 years we have been running it. Not only did we make £1485 profit but EVRA's shop and sales at the exhibition did well and the railway takings were also boosted. I would like to express our grateful thanks to all the volunteers, traders and the people operating the layouts for making the weekend so successful.

Arrangements have been made to hire a 2' gauge steam engine in July and August, when it is hoped that it will operate most weekends.

The Annual Draw was held on Saturday 20th December at Wirksworth Station and the results are on page 13.

We welcome the two new trustees, John Ball and Geoff Clark, who were elected at the AGM on 8th November.

Work is proceeding on both the SK and the SO coaches. The seats for the SK have now been re-upholstered in dark blue and will be replaced in four compartments at the start of January. The others, currently in store, will be installed before the end of February, once the new ceilings have been painted and varnishing of the woodwork has been finished. Work has started on the lighting – mainly so that work can continue on dark winter days! Following sand blasting, the outside has been primed, undercoated and had one top coat. All the welding work on the SO has now been finished and where it has been welded it has been primed. The whole of the SO undercarriage has been primed. It was discovered that there was a leak on the water tank, which meant that the tank had to be removed (not an easy task) and is now back awaiting further testing. All the ceilings in the SO have been replaced and some more of the catering equipment has been sourced and awaits fitting. Much of the work on the woodwork is also nearly complete. As you may imagine this all involves many hours of volunteers time and we are very grateful to all who give up their Tuesdays and Thursdays (and other days!) to ensure these projects are on time.

SALES MATTERS - Pat Craft.

The last quarter has been a bit quieter for the shop, with reduced running days, but it is also the time when there are a number of Model Railway exhibitions (including our own) to prepare for and attend.

Donated books and other items continue to come in to replenish our stocks and we are always grateful for them and for those who can Gift Aid them. I discovered in early December that I have labelled over 6,000 GAD items since we started the new system in March, simply because I had to order new labels!

January and early February, when the shop is closed, will still be busy, with another complete restock of transport books – we are lucky to have the stock to do this as it certainly attracts customers when we re-open. It also allows me to clean the shelves and this year to strengthen them, where necessary. The fiction and other non-railway books will also be changed.

Looking forward to our annual sale over May Day Bank Holiday, we welcome donations of any items, with the exception of clothing and electrical goods. Please can we have them by the end of March so that we can sort and price them in good time!

GETTING ORGANISED - Neil Ferguson-Lee.

I am writing this while digesting the last of our Christmas and New Year feast: I have nearly polished-off the last of the cheese and as we always do, we seem to have massively overprovisioned on drink. We should be stocked-up until at least the Spring! The last train of 2014 was a Santa Special and it is fair to say that June Cooke and her team succeeded in producing a cracking 'product' (to use the marketing vernacular) which has helped bolster our finances through the lean winter months. Other than a very jolly set of New Year specials, the railway will be quiet for a few weeks: we have a break in services until the second week in February when it is half-term and from then it's weekends and Tuesdays plus high days and holidays until the Autumn. This means that we will probably have the longest operating season to date and, hopefully, a welcome stream of revenue as a result.

The curious thing is that from a revenue perspective, the gap between Santa and the real heavy start to the season, Easter, seems agonisingly long, while from an organisational perspective it seems to pass in a heartbeat. And 2015 brings many changes for us to introduce!

As I recalled in the last edition, Martin Miller is retiring, while a new organisation headed by Mike Evans will gradually take the reins from May. With this reorganisation comes a range of new and revised offerings with the arrival of catering on the move headed by Anton Shone and, of great interest to us all, a regular steam service to Ravenstor operated by EVRA.

The way we control our enterprise needs to change too and this is the boring, dreary, stuff that needs to be done to make sure that we know how the business is doing and to ensure that we are operating legally. Most of this involves computers but, more

importantly, it involves people. We need systems to make the business work but these are as much people systems as computer systems.

Take certifications for example: we have around 200 people on our books in a volunteer capacity. The range of their responsibilities extends from meeting and greeting our visitors through to performing hugely safety-critical tasks, whether that be driving, guarding or performing maintenance on our locomotives and rolling stock. To manage all these responsibilities needs a combination of good paper records, the evidence; good computer records, to help us know who is and isn't qualified and whether their qualifications have lapsed; and good discipline, to make sure that the records are kept up-to-date and exceptions acted-upon.

Just managing these records is a big task. Two hundred people probably means 2,000 pieces of paper, some of which are confidential. It means around 500 individual computer records to keep, although the benefit there is that once they have been entered into the database, they pretty-well maintain themselves. The same applies to the accounts: every sale must be logged ranging from a ticket thorough to (hopefully) a large invoice when somebody comes to test their equipment on our line and every purchase from postage stamps through to coal and oil needs logging and recording against the accounts.

What does this have to do with running trains? The answer is that without these disciplines and systems in place, we would grind to a halt – literally and figuratively – in no time at all. This is the unglamorous end of our enterprise but one of the most vital. So, as we go into the 2015 season, please spare a thought for the people in the background who, away from the hustle and bustle of Wirksworth Station or our main line interchange at Duffield, are toiling away on their computers to keep your railway safe, sound and legal.

YOUR RAILWAY NEEDS YOU - Vince Morris.

Two comments collided in my mind this week. Firstly, a member commented that, reading between the lines, he thought that the last edition of the Ecclesbourne Express indicated that there was a looming crisis in volunteering. Secondly, members of the Permanent Way Gang were chatting as they shovelled away at yet another load of ballast. "You know" one said "this was far easier when we were doing it ten years ago". I looked around, only one of the gang had been with us for less than ten years. Conclusion: we are getting old, sometimes it feels very old.

Whilst our youthful DMU team increases in scope and reputation, other groups are suffering the effects of age, and, unless topped up with less geriatric members, will slowly wither away, taking the future of the Railway with them. Their bodies may not regret leaving the tasks of this world behind, but their spirits certainly will.

Times for all volunteer organisations are difficult: most rely on the retired who have the time to indulge their interests. But an increase in pension age (and a decreasing prospect of early retirement), and a plethora of activities designed for the silver haired has reduced the numbers able or willing to give up their time to our, and indeed any, heritage railway. If not addressed this is one issue which will go away, not because it has been solved, but because the protagonists are no longer around.

I pause here to read what I have written, and ask myself whether I am being too bleak and pessimistic. I answer myself no, it needs saying: so I will carry on.

Basically, we need new blood in the volunteer work force, we need keen people who are able to make a difference. This does not mean that they need to come with a full tool bag of the skills required to run a railway (although if they have so much the better!), but they need to come with the determination to learn, to accept the challenge of acquiring new skills, doing new things and finding new ways to enjoy themselves. Despite the foregoing, age is no bar: a lifetime in the office is complimented by a retirement in the open air (or vice-versa). But extreme age is not a requirement. Indeed, we must move away from the idea that volunteering is what one does when one retires and not before. Just a few days a year will be useful whether you are 18 or 58, it may even look good on your CV – ask the DMU team members who are now engineering apprentices.

I know that it is difficult to break into an existing group of friends, and not being “in the know” for the first couple of days can inhibit trying a third day, but we are a friendly lot and we happily gather all into our band of volunteers: the rumour that an encyclopaedic knowledge of the Goon Show scripts is required to work on the track is just that, a rumour, and merely shows our age.

So if you are just thinking of volunteering, don't hesitate: come to the station at any time and have a chat about what needs doing: you will be surprised at the range of tasks required to run a railway – be it editing the magazine or driving the road/rail vehicles. I recently totted it up, and I make it 18 people are involved in running a day's train service if you include the preparatory work on the rolling stock and the regular track safety work. And, of course, safety is of prime importance so for some activities you will need to acquire a PTS (Personal Track Safety) Certificate and specialist training for roles like driving and guarding are compulsory, but that is all progressed by our in-house training regime. It is fun, honest. I've got the blisters to prove it!

TRAVELLING TICKET INSPECTORS NEEDED FOR INCLINE SERVICE 2015

John Rhead.

EVRA will be operating a minimum of 35 STEAM services up the Incline during the 2015 season. Tickets will be available as a separate cost to the main line services between Wirksworth and Duffield.

We therefore need travelling ticket Inspectors to travel on all Incline services to sell and check tickets. Guards will be unable to perform these duties as they will be required to travel in the uphill cab at all times during the services.

There will be only two types of tickets on sale, so the sales are quite simple. Training will be given to anyone wishing to undertake this duty.

Anyone wishing to volunteer for this duty should in the first place contact John Ball (contact details on page 2 of this publication.) During the season, TTI's will be required to place their names on the E-V-R rosters on the dates of operations they wish to work.

PERMANENT WAY REPORT - Anthony Watt.

This edition of the Express is being prepared in the middle of December, when many people are “dreaming of a white Christmas”. Well, the members of the permanent way gang are not! We have just started yet another major project, which must be completed by the middle of January. This is a tight schedule, and it is not helped by the two Bank Holidays (the gang will be working in the gap between Christmas and New Year!), and would be compromised seriously by any bad weather. (Sadly the snow did arrive, see photo on p 8, but, as ever the team rose to the challenge! Ed.)

P8 is the three-way point which connects the car park, exhibition and steam shed lines to the northern end of road one, via point P10. The condition of both of these points has deteriorated, with rotting timbers, many of some length. P8 is being given priority, since it needs complete dismantling and excavation, before new timbers can be laid, followed by all the ironwork. P10 may need similar major work, but it might be possible to ‘spot’ resleeper it, or just reinforce it temporarily. In any case, it must wait until after the ‘Santa’ trains have finished, to allow for their maintenance and refuelling.

The urgency of this work is due to the arrival for testing at the end of January of two heavy battery locomotives. There may be followed by others, so the route from the loading/unloading area must be able to cope.

One critical factor is the availability of our old friend the Komatsu road/rail machine (the weight of the ironwork and long timbers makes powered lifting essential). A few weeks ago it failed, just as we needed it for other major work: the rotation of the single slip. A visit from a peripatetic engineer brought it back to life, and we were able to complete the task. Movement from line one to line two is much easier now, dispensing with a double shunt across line two, and then back onto the northern end of line two.

We were hampered also by Mick Thomas’s absence on sick leave. We would have drifted rudderless, but were rescued by the temporary return of Phil Tarry as project manager and Komatsu driver. Phil had been rebuilding the narrow gauge railway at Whipsnade Zoo and, with some of our antics, might have thought he was experiencing *deja vu*. Fortunately, Mick is returning to control and command us for the work on P8 and P10. When this work is completed, we can return to more routine matters and then we won’t mind if it does snow.

Editorial Comment.

By the time you read this the three-way point project will be complete. In the last 12 months the team has completed 3 major projects in Wirksworth Yard; moving the cross over from the far north to near the dust dock, the rotation of the single slip and now the rebuilding of the three way point. Any of these projects would have challenged the best UK heritage railway permanent way teams and would have been beyond many. We are extremely fortunate to have the expertise to do these jobs in house, supported by an experienced, if aging, team who turn out in all weathers, there was snow during the three way point rebuild! The team would welcome more volunteers to learn the skills and share the load. There is also the satisfaction of knowing that your efforts are essential to the future of the EVR!



Post Christmas work on the three-way point in the snow - *Richard Buckby.*

Nearly Finished, 13,1,2015- *Richard Buckby.*





Repairs to the Brake End of the MKI BSK.

Progress on the interior of the MKI SO.



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BAGNALL 2746 “THE DUKE” DECEMBER 2015 REPORT

Tim Oaks.

Over the last few months the brake hangers have been fitted with new pins and bushes, and are now back on the engine, together with the cross beams. However, when we came to fit the brake blocks, we found they simply did not fit, in fact we suspect that these came from a diesel shunter. That led us to visit Mr Wright’s emporium for the discerning Austerity locomotive owner at Loughborough, where we were able to buy a set off the shelf, and view progress on the new smokebox which is under construction.

The new blocks have been machined ready to fit; once these are in place we can move on to fit the side rods which have been cleaned down to bare metal and mostly painted, though final painting will now have to wait for warmer weather. We will be looking to re-assemble the motion after that, and a set of new piston rings have been ordered from HP Rings Ltd of Chesterfield.

The brake cross shaft has been dropped from the frames and cleaned down. The steel bush on the Driver’s side was badly worn and a new bush is being made from EN3 steel.

The sandboxes, which had been dismantled and cleaned out, have been bolted back onto the frames.

We have begun initial consultations with a reputable boiler repair contractor, and it may be that major boiler work will begin earlier than we had expected, in the early spring of 2015. If that goes well – and there are a lot of variables – then it is possible to think about a target steaming date of Autumn 2016.

Once again, we would be getting nowhere without the extremely skilled 8F volunteers.

Our 00 gauge wagons are selling well, especially the latest “Buggleskelly” item, but we still have plenty left.

DMU REPORT - Leigh Gration

It has been quite a busy time recently, with the arrival of the two-car Derby Lightweight set, possibly one of the most high profile in the country and has had lots of money spent on it already. The power car, M79018, was virtually complete having benefitted from £49,000 of Heritage Lottery money in the early 2000s. The set starred at the Railcar50 celebrations at the Severn Valley Railway in October 2004, the almost complete power car contrasting with the trailer car - a withdrawn shell.

The wiring on the power car was done to the original multiple working schematic of Yellow Diamond, with most other preserved DMUs being the more common Blue Square. This means that the two types cannot work together. However, when work began on the trailer car the decision was taken to wire it as Blue Square to make it more versatile. This is the reason why the power car has sat idle. It is intended for modifications similar to those made to fellow Derby Lightweight 79900 to make so that the power car will work with all our other units.

10 years on from the Severn Valley event, neither vehicle has turned a wheel in service and gradually the damp conditions have been affecting the completed interior. The trailer car, M79612 has had considerable work done to its shell already. It is water tight and is now having a full rewire.

Since arriving on site, the power car has had the ceilings stripped out as the damp had slowly rotted them away. The beautiful reupholstered seats have been taken for dry off-site storage. The team managed to get an engine to run, an achievement in itself. It is hoped that the set will be completed by 2017, with a fair wind.

Of course, these are not the only vehicles receiving attention at the moment. Work has been continuing with ex-Severn Tunnel single car 977975 for the Permanent Way team as funds are allowing. We launched an appeal for some funds which has brought about a moderate response so far. Details of this are on the website at www.e-v-r.com/bubbleappeal. We hired a shot blaster man in to completely remove all the paint and filler on the vehicle so that we could start from a solid base. It revealed some holes. This isn't a bad thing because it enables us to clearly see where the problems lie so that they can be sorted out. So far, the vehicle has some anti-corrosive primer applied and has had some attention to the interior lighting as there are not many windows! The lighting inside is intriguing in itself. The strip lights are in pairs inside their decorative shades, with one side being worked from the vehicle's on-board 24v battery system and the other half being worked from a 240v supply. Said 240v supply can come from either the on-board generator (missing at the moment but we have one to reinstall) or from a landline 16 amp socket. There is a switch on the 16 amp socket to switch between different sockets mounted on the underframe.

The refurbishment of Class 101 E50253 is continuing, with the tedious and laborious task of trimming around the luggage racks taking place at the moment. We hope to have this running by Multiple Memories. This popular event has moved to 26th/27th September in 2015 to coincide with the annual Railcar Association Convention which we are hosting.

Ecclesbourne Valley Railway Association Prize Draw 2015

Income Ticket: Sales £1222. Expenditure :Tickets £126, Prizes £225, Postage £10.04.

Net income £860.96

	Ticket No.	Prize	Winner
1st Prize:	7782	£100.00	M. Lake Wirksworth, Derbys
2nd Prize:	5103	£75.00	J. Weston, Duffield, Derbys
3rd Prize:	8072	£50.00	N. R. Wragg Allestree, Derbys
4th Prize:	3418	Book: Voices from the Railways by Julian Holland.	S. Millar Faversham, Kent.
5th Prize:	2488	Bottle of Black Doktor Rosli Dulce.	D. Bashford Wirksworth, Derbys
6th Prize:	0034	Book: The Lost Railway by Robert Day.	D. Styles Coventry
7th Prize:	2221	Book: Unusual Railway Pubs, Refreshment Rooms and Ale Trains by Bob Barton.	Mr Rivers Cromford, Derbys
8th Prize:	0714	Book: Last Years of Steam: London Midland Region by David Williams.	Mr & Mrs D Holland Wirral, Cheshire
9th Prize	4404	Book: Last Years of Steam: London Midland Region by David Williams.	Nathan Cooke Belper, Derbys.
10th Prize:	3639	Book: Branch Line Britain by Paul Atterbury Bottle of Grillo White Wine	R. Carlisle Ashbourne,
11th Prize:	5042	Map: LMS 1924 EVRA Diary 2015	J. Hill Knutsford, Cheshire
12th Prize:	3432	Books: Electric Trains a Pocket History & Victorian Steam by Robin Jones and an EVRA 2015 Diary	G. Smith Wallsend upon Tyne Tyne & Wear

EVR TIMETABLE: February - June 2015

Day Rover Fares will be: Adults £13, Concessions £12; Children £6.50; Families (2+3) £33. Special Event Fares may be higher. **NB this does not include the Ravenstor Branch which is run by The Ecclebourne Valley Railway Association as a separate service: Day Rover Fare £2.50; concessions £2.00.**

Trains depart Wirksworth for Duffield, Saturday, Sunday (from 14th February), Tuesday (from 3rd March) and Thursdays (from 2nd of April) at 10.15, 12.15, 14.15 & 16.15 to connect with the East Midlands Trains Matlock Branch Service return at 11.15, 13.15, 15.15 & 17.15. **NB There will be no 16.15 (Wirksworth) & 17.15 (Duffield) until Saturday 21st March.** The services are operated using Heritage Diesel Railcars. **Wednesday operating starts 27th May.**

Trains to Ravenstor at 11.53; 13.53 & 15.53, return 12.02; 14.02 & 16.02. This service will be steam operated and will run on the following dates: March 21 & 22, Easter April 3,4,5,6, May Day BH May 2,3,4, Spring BH May 23,24,25 July 4 & 5, July 11 & 12, July 18 & 19, July 25 & 26 August 1 & 2, August 8 & 9, August 22 & 23, August BH August 29,30,31, September 5& 6.

SPECIAL EVENTS.

HALF TERM TRAINS. Tue 10th, Wed 11th, Thu 12th February. See above for timetable.

MOTHERING SUNDAY. Sun 15th March 2015. Treat Mum to a day on the railway for Mother's Day. See above for timetable.

MIXED TRAFFIC WEEKEND. 21st & 22nd March. Services will be operated by our mixed Home Fleet on this weekend. The Ravenstor incline will be Steam operated.

EASTER WEEKEND. Fri 3rd, Sat 4th, Sun 5th and Mon 6th April 2015. Heritage trains will be running for the Easter weekend, with steam on the Ravenstor line. There will be plenty happening at Wirksworth Station! Alongside our Easter Egg Hunt, come along and see the fantastic Family Circus (Sat, Sun, Mon). The circus is included in the price of a travel ticket, or a small fee is payable for those who do not wish to travel.

ROCKS AND RAILS BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND. Sat 2nd, Sun 3rd and Mon 4th May 2015 The Wirksworth area is well known for quarries and stone. This special weekend is operated in conjunction with our friends at the Steeple Grange Light Railway which runs nearby within the quarries. The Ravenstor incline will be in operation (Steam) and joint tickets will be available for rides on both the Ecclebourne Valley Railway and the Steeple Grange Light Railway. The famous EVRA Book and Bris a brac sale also takes place during the weekend.

WIRKSWORTH CARNIVAL BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND. Sat 23rd, Sun 24th and Mon 25th May 2015. Come to Wirksworth by heritage train and enjoy the carnival in the town. There will be steam on the Ravenstor incline.

STRAWBERRIES AND CREAM EVENING LAND CRUISE. Sat 23rd May 2015. Join us for a gentle evening excursion through the valley with a service of fresh Strawberries and Cream on the train. Pre-booking essential.

DIESEL LOCOMOTIVE WEEKEND. Sat 6th and Sun 7th June 2015. Services will be operated by heritage main line diesel locomotive this weekend.

FATHER'S DAY. Sun 21st June 2015. Treat Dad to a day on the railway for Father's Day.

1950'S WEEK. Tue 23rd, Wed 24th, Thu 25th June 2015. Step back half a century in time with trains, costume and music from the 1950s for this weekday event.

MURDER MYSTERY EVENING LAND CRUISE. Wed 24th June 2015. Enjoy a Murder Mystery Evening with a difference on board our special train. Pre-booking is essential.

SHOTTLE SOIREES. Friday evening steam-hauled saunter through the Ecclesbourne Valley between Wirksworth and Shottle on board our new dining train. This service will operate on 19th and 26th June and 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th July. Advance booking is essential and booking will be available online in due course. Places are limited so early booking is advised. You may be seated with another couple.

AFTERNOON TEA TRAIN. 14:15 or 16:15 on Tuesday afternoons from 2nd June to 29th September on board our new dining train. Sit back and relax on our heritage diesel locomotive hauled train as we serve afternoon tea to your seat. Two Day Rovers, including one return journey in our new dining train with afternoon tea served at your seat. Further details, see www.e-v-r.com. Advance booking is essential and bookings will be taken online. Places will be limited and early booking is advised to avoid disappointment. You may be seated with another couple.

Train enquiries – Tel. 01629 823076 or see www.e-v-r.com for full details.

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