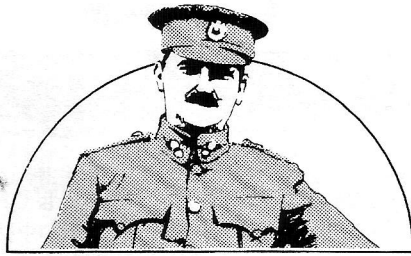


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THE COLONEL

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THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY
*for enthusiasts of the light and narrow gauge railways of
Colonel Holman F. Stephens*

THE COLONEL'S STORES

Subscriptions *The Colonel* is distributed to members of the Colonel Stephens Society only. Membership of the Society costs £7 annually in the UK. Joint membership for two people, one *Colonel*, same address, is £9. Overseas membership is £12. Applications to our Membership Secretary (address on p.31).

An Index to *The Colonel* issues 1-106 is available on our website (see below).

Back numbers of *The Colonel* from 2 to the latest issue are all in stock. They are available from our Secretary (address on page 31). Price to members for up to 20 issues is £1.10 per issue, including UK postage. Orders above 20 at cost after contacting the Secretary. Excess postage for overseas orders will be charged at cost. Issue 1 was a single sheet. It can be supplied on request free of charge with any other order, or separately on receipt of an A5-size stamped addressed envelope.

DVDs containing 39 rare **Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway photographs**, mostly of locomotives, from the WD Detachment photograph album, provided by Mike Christensen, author of *The SMLR under Military Control*. Book and DVD were reviewed in *Colonel 104*. This superb DVD is available from our Secretary (address on page 31) at the bargain price of £3 including p&p.

Drawings 47 drawings of a variety of locomotives, rolling stock and infrastructure of the railways of Colonel Stephens are now available. Drawn by the Society's chairman, these famous scale drawings may be ordered by post from our Secretary (address on page 31). They are printed on A3 paper. They cost just 60p each for 1-5 drawings. They will be dispatched rolled in a cardboard tube. Post & packing cost £2.50 for 1-5 drawings, each additional drawing costs an extra 10p. A list of the drawings appears on our website (together with images) and in *Colonel 104* p11.

Car Stickers Proclaim your membership of the Society by displaying one of our elegant car stickers. £2 each including p&p from our Secretary (address on p.31). Visit our website to see a colour image of the sticker.

Badges Chic Colonel Stephens Society badges may be purchased from our Membership Secretary (address on page 31) at £4.25 including postage. Visit our website to see a colour image of the badge.

The Colonel's Guide, over 80 pages of sources of books, magazine articles, models, videos and films of the Colonel's railways, available from our Secretary (address on page 31) at £3, including p&p.

Biography of Colonel Stephens *Colonel Stephens - a Celebration*: we have a limited supply of this excellent booklet at £4 each, including UK p&p, available from our Treasure (address on page 31).

Cheques In all cases please make out cheques to "The Colonel Stephens Society".

Discussion Group Enrol for the Colonel Stephens e-Discussion Group by opening a Yahoo account with a user name and password. After logging on to the Yahoo Groups.com link (*not* .co.uk), log on with same details if asked, search for ColonelHFStephens and follow the prompts to register.

Website: Visit our constantly updated website
www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk

Editorial: Quirkiness Rules

Amid the shiny, pampered record breakers such as Mallard, Tornado and the sleek modern high speed trains such as the Javelins and the Voyagers at the National Railway Museum's Railfest jamboree at York, tiny Gazelle brought a big smile to almost everyone who came by while we there. Despite the gloomy, damp weather which prevailed for most of the time, the smiles were even greater when we explained something of the history of the little locomotive - described by Brian Janes in some detail on page 10 of this issue.

There were, of course, other exhibits which could well claim the description 'quirky'. The replica of Spooner's boat which dominated the Ffestiniog Railway's stand in the Societies tent is certainly one candidate. The 'tin turtle' Motor Rail petrol locomotive would be another, along

with the fragile-looking Hunslet diesel engine which gave shuttle rides with a lovely Derwent Valley balcony carriage and a Southern 'Queen Mary' bogie brake van.

But for some, Gazelle, in its splendid 1937 green livery, was one of the stars of the show. So much so that several people asked if there were plans to restore her to working order! There's no harm in dreaming of course. And there are many examples of completed restoration and new-build projects that were decried as impossible when they were first mooted.

So, never say never!

Ross Shimmon

Front cover: FR George England 0-4-0STT Palmerston in charge of the Society's charter train taking water at Tanybwllch and displaying the special headboard.

Photo: Pat Shimmon

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Record membership total

David Powell, our Membership Secretary was able to report at the AGM that the Society's membership had reached record levels. See page 13 for more details.

New gifts for sale

Thanks to Nigel Bird and Colin Shutt, several new goodies were launched at the AGM including mugs, key rings and coasters all featuring the Colonel. More details on page 23.

Ashover next year

Continuing the successful tradition of organising a visit to a railway site with connections to the Colonel, next year's Members' Weekend will be held at Ashover to enable a visit to the remains of the ALR. It will be one week earlier next year - 11th & 12th May 2013.

STEPHENS & THE ISLE OF WIGHT

The Colonel is not normally associated with the Isle of Wight but, as LAURIE COOKSEY explains, he did have a brief involvement with the Isle of Wight Central Railway

At the beginning of the 20th century, it was being claimed that a small locomotive permanently joined to a carriage would be a cheaper option than operating a conventional train on lightly used branch lines. It was at the Isle of Wight Central's (IWC) board meeting on 23rd December, 1903, that Charles Leonard Conacher, the railway's manager since 1896, was instructed to make enquiries concerning the use of "motor carriages" on its Ventnor West branch. At a following meeting, correspondence was read out from the Avonside Engine Co. (who had built railmotors for the

until March 1905, this inspection could only have taken place at the manufacturer's works, if it happened at all. Apart from the seating capacity of 31 being too limiting, it was thought that the vehicle would not have been capable of managing the over half-mile climb of 1 in 58 from the station throat at Ventnor West and the 1 in 55 up grade on a 12/14 chain radius curve through the St. Lawrence (High Hat) tunnel. It was just as well that the purchase did not go ahead, as the KESR's steam railcar turned out to be something of a white elephant and, after appearing to be out of service more than it

was in, was recorded as being non-operational from 1915. The IWC did later order a steam railmotor from Hurst Nelson of Motherwell on 25th October, 1905, but the locomotive portion was sub-contracted to Hawthorne, Leslie of Newcastle. It cost £2,350 and it arrived on the island on 4th October, 1906 but it, too, proved to be troublesome in service¹.

KESR steam railmotor at Rolvenden

(Leslie Darbyshire Collection)

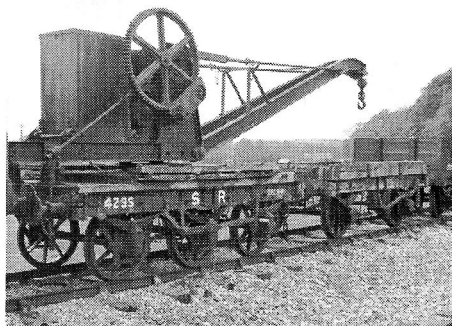


Taff Vale Railway) and Stephens, who was experimenting with the idea of a small 4-wheel steam railcar for use on his Rother Valley Railway between Robertsbridge and Tenterden. Messrs RY Pickering of Whishaw, Lanarkshire, who were building the RVR vehicle, offered a similar machine to the IWC for £400, but the board wisely decided to first make an inspection of the RVR's railcar and to make further enquiries. As the vehicle was not delivered to the (by then renamed) Kent & East Sussex Railway

Engineering Matters

Just as he had seen the successful opening of his Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway (S&MLR), Stephens's main involvement with the IWC began in April, 1911 when he was entrusted to look after all of the railway's engineering matters, including the supervision of the locomotive and permanent way departments, on a salary of £100 per annum, plus expenses. That month, an independent report was commis-

sioned into the condition of the rolling stock, the poor standard of which resulted in Robert Guest, the locomotive superintendent, resigning in July! Much of the IWC's passenger and goods rolling stock was also in poor condition and Stephens considered that some vehicles were not worth rebuilding - they must have been in a dreadful state. Later that year, six 1878-built 5-compartment 4-wheel third-class carriages were purchased from the Great Eastern Railway², plus some



open wagons, a mobile crane³, an additional brake van, 3 timber trucks and 3 ballast wagons from the Midland Railway. Several obsolete carriages and vans were transferred to the permanent way department for use as grounded bodies and £200 was put aside to refurbish the remainder and convert them to coal gas lighting in preference to their current inadequate oil lamps.

Capital items

Stephens was present as a shareholder at the Company's half-yearly meeting on 11th August and in September, a further range of capital items was approved by the Board, including the provision of a waiting shed at Havenstreet station and "extra umbrella tanks" for Newport. One of these survives at Havenstreet and is similar to the one that was at Shrewsbury (Abbey) station on the SM&LR, that is now at Wittersham Road on today's Kent & East Sussex Railway. There was formerly another at the western end of the K&ESR's Tenterden station, adjacent to the loop points close to the level crossing.

Weekly visit 'too much'

With more than enough to do with his

SMR Shrewsbury Abbey station showing water tank (Leslie Darbyshire Collection)



other existing railways, plus the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway, of which he became manager in 1911, the East Kent Railway, that also opened to goods traffic that year, and the rebuilding of the Criggon branch on the S&MLR, Stephens's connection with the Isle of Wight Central Railway was all too soon to come to an end. The Board of Directors Minute Book, dated 24th October, 1911, recorded:

... With Reference to Board Minute of the 26th last it was reported that Mr Stephens found the weekly visit which was required occupied too much of his time and retired from the 30th September last which was noted.

Thus ended Stephens's all too short a time with the IWC, but at least we are fortunate in that two of the items of rolling stock that he acquired have survived to be preserved. ●

NOTES

¹ The railmotor was withdrawn in May, 1913 and the locomotive and carriage portions were separated. A second "odd" bogie was purchased from the LSWR for the carriage section and it gave useful service until withdrawn in 1949. The frames of the 0-4-0 locomotive were extended at the rear to provide an enlarged bunker. Buffing and coupling equipment were added. It was sold for use on Middlesborough Harbour works.

² These carriages became IWC nos. 18, 20,

Continued on next page ►

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25-7 and 31, Southern Railway nos.2445-2452 respectively and they were easily recognisable by their long door grab handles. Four were withdrawn on 27.2.1926, but nos.2445 and 2452 survived in service until 14.2.1931.

³ The Midland Railway 5 ton mobile crane, IWC no.5, later SR no.429s and match truck no.28 (SR 429sm, later DS139) were not withdrawn until the end of steam on the Isle of Wight in 1967. Both had been acquired for the abortive Vectrail project to re-open the railway between Ryde and Cowes and are now preserved on the Isle of Wight Steam railway at Havenstreet.

Sources

The Isle of Wight Central Railway, RJ Maycock and R Silsbury. Oakwood Press, 2001.

Isle of Wight Steam Passenger Rolling Stock, RJ Maycock and MJE Reed. Oakwood Press, 1997.

Rails in the Isle of Wight, Robert Hendry. Midland Publishing, 1997. (This book is not to be confused with the similarly entitled book by PC Allen and AB MacLeod, published by Allen & Unwin in 1967.

Colonel Stephens in the Isle of Wight, Stephen Garrett, in: *Tenterden Terrier* 45, Spring 1988, pp42-43.

The photograph of the crane and its match truck on the previous page is taken from the IOWSR website:
www.iwsteamrailway.co.uk/the-railway/carriages-a-wagons/81
The description reads:

Both vehicles were acquired for the VECTRAIL scheme, when this foundered ownership passed to the Wight Locomotive Society in 1971. That this old crane, still having grease axle boxes, survived into preservation is remarkable and it saw much use during the early days of the Steam Railway being particularly active during the construction of Wootton Station. It has now been honourably retired from active use. ●

The Colonel goes to Railfest

At first sight, the Colonel and his railways would seem to have little to offer at Railfest, the huge celebration of railway record breakers held at the National Railway Museum, York in June. Not a bit of it! Billed as the 'world's smallest standard gauge steam locomotive', *Gazelle*, was moved from the Colonel Stephens Museum at Tenterden to York. She had been repainted in the authentic 1937 green livery for the occasion (*pictured on page 11*). A rota of volunteers, including some CSS members, took turns to look after her and tell her fascinating story. One visitor told us that he had come to see his 'all-time favourite loco'. Several asked whether there were any plans to restore her to working order. Given that the new-build *Tornado* was nearby, they could be forgiven for thinking that anything is now possible for railway enthusiasts.

Also in the show was a K&ESR pump trolley from the CSR collection and the Tenterden horse bus from the NRM itself. The Ffestiniog Railway was also well represented with the George England 0-4-0STT *Palmerston*, last seen hauling our charter train to and from Porthmadog, giving short rides on a temporary track with FR bogie carriage No.15 (the first bogie carriage in the world) and replica curly roof van No.1. The shuttle was occasionally 'topped and tailed' using 'Tin Turtle' Motor Rail 4WPM No.435, normally based on the FR. Meanwhile, the replica of the famous Spooner's Boat took pride of place in the Societies' marquee. The Bluebell's Terrier No. 55 *Stepney*, notable for working on the K&ESR in its last days, was in light steam near the entrance to the show.

Was the shade of the Colonel gently smiling from above *Mallard*, *Princess Elizabeth* and the *Voyager* at the sight of some of his charges in such company? ●

Several pictures from Railfest appear on our website at:

colonelstephenssociety.co.uk/Railfest

OWNER'S PLATES ON THE COLONEL'S RAILWAYS

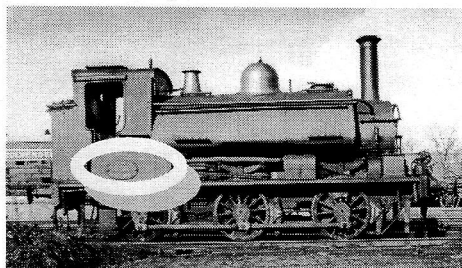
STEPHEN GARRETT *ponders the reason for the 'works plates' fitted to some locomotives and carriages on the Colonel's empire*

The sale of the WC&PR carriage plate reported in Colonel 106, p.8, prompted us to try to find out a little more about these plates. A search of the index to the Tenterden Terrier revealed that an article on the very subject by Stephen Garrett had been published in the Spring 1990 issue (no.51). As it was published so long ago, we thought that it would bear a reprise - Ed.

Since none of Colonel Stephens's railways actually built their own locomotives, it is curious that at least three of them should have found it worthwhile to produce brass or iron 'works plates' carrying the name of the owning railway in full. These plates were used by the Kent & East Sussex Railway, the Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Railway and the Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway and were usually oval in shape, although square or oblong examples are also known. Curiously, whereas the K&ESR and the S&MR fixed their plates on their locomotives, the WC&PR chose to use their plates on their carriages.

Only four on the K&ESR

On the K&ESR only four locomotives were equipped with these plates. These were



No.3 Bodiam, No.7 Juno, No.8 Hesperus and No.9 Rother. The three locomotives

purchased new from Hawthorn Leslie, Tenterden, Northiam and Hecate, came with large Hawthorn Leslie plates which were obviously considered adequate for whatever purpose the management had in mind and the second No.4, acquired in 1932, appears to have arrived too late to qualify for a plate. However, there seems no good reason why No.5 Rolvenden should not have been so fitted.

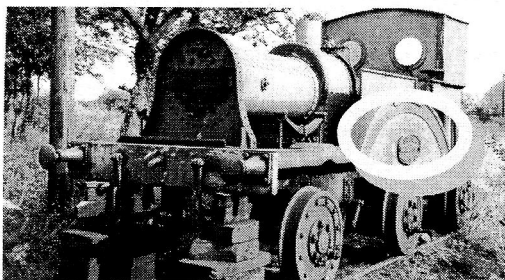


Photo above: SMR Gazelle dismantled at Kinnerley, October 1934, (RG Jarvis, Midland Railway Trust), and below left: KESR No.8 ex-Hesperus, Rolvenden, March 1937 (JM Jarvis, Online Transport Archive). Owner's plates are enlarged.

Did WWI prompt the use of plates?

Comparing K&ESR practice with that of the S&MR may give a clue as to the period when these plates were fitted. On the S&MR, plates were fitted to *Gazelle*, *Hesperus*, *Morous*, and the second *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*. Plates were not, however, fitted to the three *Terriers* obtained in 1921 and 1923, nor to the *Colliers* obtained in the 1930s. As there do not appear to be any photographs of S&MR or K&ESR locomotives carrying these plates prior to the First World War, there seems to be a good chance

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► *Continued from page 7*

that they were fitted for some identification purpose connected with that war. Certainly there were plans for Kent & East Sussex locomotives to be evacuated in the event of invasion and some sort of identification would have been useful under those circumstances.

Government Control

The fact that the East Kent Railway and the Selsey Tramway evaded government control during the war lends some slight weight to this argument by explaining the absence of plates on these lines. The absence of plates on the WC&PR locomotives might similarly be explained by the fact that all but one were clearly identified by their various makers' works plates. The exception was *Hesperus* but, as with *Rolvenden* on the K&ESR, every hypothetical rule needs an exception!

Vanity Decorations?

It may, of course, be that these plates were merely vanity decorations and too much should not be made of their presence or absence from particular locomotives, carriages or even railways. Their existence constituted, nevertheless, yet another link in the mysterious web binding together the various railways under Colonel Stephens' management.

In the same issue of the Tenterden Terrier, the late John Miller provided an interesting postscript - Ed.

The "works plate" shown here [not reproduced here] was mentioned in an advertisement for an auction of railwayana held at Myers Grove School, Sheffield on 16th December [1989]. A catalogue was sent for and luckily the item was illustrated and could be identified as an owner's plate. The likelihood of one of these becoming available had seemed remote and it was felt to be too important an item to be missed. Arrangements were made for a contact of Doug Lindsay to bid on our behalf. At first, an upper limit of £300 was set but at the last minute it was decided to raise this to £350. In the event, we secured the plate for £320 which doesn't leave much in our museum and archive

budget for 1990. The railwayana collectors' journal *On The Line* thought it a "great bargain" and we hope our members will think so.

One of a pair

We have established that the plate was one of a pair acquired some years ago from Ashford Works. About 1972, the original owner sold the pair for £25, one going on display at Chasewater, Staffordshire, and the other was resold to the Winchcombe Railway Museum, Gloucestershire. The first owner was informed that the plates were from No.4 *Hecate*, but as the locomotive left the K&ESR in 1932 it seems unlikely that the plates had survived at Ashford for so many years. Much more likely is that the plates were removed from No.3 *Bodiam* in 1949 when she exchanged her K&ESR livery for that of British Railways. It is the Chasewater plate, after 17 years on display there, that we have acquired.

An Interesting Comparison

An interesting comparison may be made with what is undoubtedly a carriage and wagon owner's plate. Two examples of these are in the museum collection. These are also in cast iron, measuring 9½in x 2½in and, presumably would have been fixed to the solebars, though as far as I am aware, no photographic evidence exists. ●



▲ *The owner's plate on Gazelle, pictured at the CS Museum, Tenterden just before departure to York for Railfest (Ross Shimmon)*

As we reported in the last issue an owner's carriage plate from the WC&PR, similar to the K&ESR example referred to in John Miller's report, realised £820 at Great Central Auctions in January 2012.

Time Team visits Robertsbridge

Interesting artefacts have been revealed during the reconstruction of the bridges at Robertsbridge, reports MARK YONGE

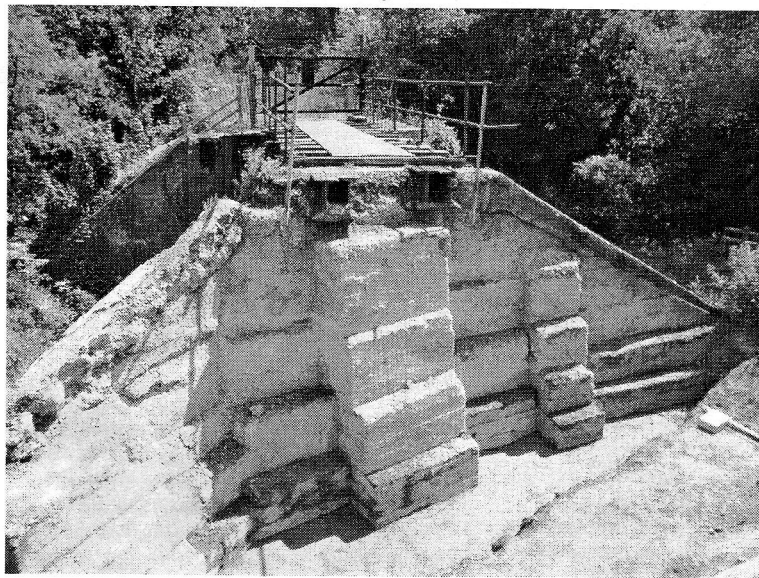
During the restoration of the Rother Valley Railway at Robertsbridge, several interesting artefacts have come to light. Major excavation into the embankment that was built by the Rother Valley Railway 112 years ago was required.

On the surface, items from the early sixties were uncovered, including a carriage steel panel and various track components. However, excavation of the soil at bridge No. 3 on the western side, next to the Robertsbridge cricket ground, exposed a very early rail chair which had clearly been abandoned by platelayers because it was damaged. This artefact dates back to the time when the spiked track was replaced by chairs housing 60lb per foot rail. This chair is currently residing at the RVR headquarters in the station yard in the historic collection.

The most interesting observation has been on the Western abutment of bridge

No. 1. As can be seen from the picture below, excavation to the base of this concrete structure revealed that it was built by means of concrete blocks acting as large bricks. These were rather crudely placed as a wall which then begged the question as to how the higher blocks were levered into place. It is now thought that the soil to make the embankment was added as the wall gained height and this created an opportunity to create a series of working platforms during the construction phase.

Excavation of the embankment on the western abutment revealed the remains of one of these levels. This has been photographed for posterity and now covered up again by re-instating the soil that was removed earlier. This clearly shows the importation of foreign material in a distinct layer which was used in the bridge construction. ●



◀ *The Western abutment of bridge No 1 exposed and receiving strengthening with new concrete and steel work. Note the method of construction by use of concrete blocks that were levered into position. The excavated working platform is at the bottom right hand side of the picture. (Mark Yonge)*

GAZELLE: **A SHORT HISTORY**

Gazelle's appearance at the NRM at York for Railfest in June prompted BRIAN JANES to tell us her story

Although the precise reasons for *Gazelle* being called into existence are obscure the simple hard facts are that she was commissioned by the wealthy Kings Lynn miller William Burkett from neighbouring engineer Alfred Dodman, the first and only locomotive that firm built. She certainly had her design oddities. A well tank with built-in seating for passengers on an express style 2-2-2 wheelbase, wooden Mansell wheels (for quietness) and non standard buffer heights, the designers apparently making use of traction engine, and perhaps even fairground engine, components.

Dodman seems to have been working on the designs as early as March 1892. By mid-January 1893, *Gazelle* was complete. A trial trip followed soon after but final delivery seems to have been only early summer 1893, with an illustrated description appearing in the *Railway Engineer* for August 1893. During the recent repaint one oddity on this timeline appeared. Close examination of her LNWR style engraved worksplate/nameplates revealed that the date had been changed.

The '3' in 1893 had been carefully doctored. The date was originally 1892 but the bottom of the '2' had been carefully drilled out and filled to be, somewhat crudely, over-engraved '3'. Was the loco delayed or was Burkett keen to have it demonstrate the date he took final delivery? Rather as a modern motorist displays his latest registration number.



She seems to have been little used for the next four years but then made her epic return journey to Chesterfield in July 1897. Of little real use thereafter she was offered for sale in 1900 when there were no takers, but William Burkett's death in 1906 precipitated another sale attempt. About 1909 she was sold to dealer Thos. W. Ward & Co who in turn advertised her for sale in both January 1910 and February 1911. Stephens bought her, almost certainly before the latter advertisement date, for use as an inspection engine light enough to venture out on to the abandoned track of the soon to be resurrected S&MR.

Still in use as a 2-2-2 inspection engine on the reconstruction of Criggion branch, which was to be fully opened in August 1912, it seems to have occurred to Stephens that she made a rather handy railmotor to supplement the otherwise infrequent mixed trains on the lightly populated branch. Thus it was in that November that the vicar of Criggion, Rev Brock, wrote his notorious letter of complaint about mixing with enginemen and the smuts on his wife's dress. This probably brought about *Gazelle's* first important visual change, a proper if rudimentary cab and a somewhat basic cover on the passenger area, which was to be renewed in subtly different forms until the Second World War. Then came reconstruction as an 0-4-2WT to give the traction needed to haul the ex-London horse tram that was to accompany her for the next 30 years. The first hard evidence of this reconstruction is a report in the July 1913 *Locomotive Magazine* and this, combined with the first record of its new wheel arrangement in the 1913 statutory returns, suggests that the changes were made early in that year. As can be seen on the locomotive today this recon-

struction was quite simple, if ingenious. The work was probably done at Kinnerley. The new driving wheels in particular are one-piece castings from a pattern that was clearly made from the carrying wheels. Apart from the new connecting rods and new patch plates on the motion plate the only other changes were minor ones to brake hangers, springs, etc. Thereafter she was employed on some of the Criggion passenger services till the late 1920s. A reconstructed working diagram for winter 1927/28 shows that it undertook one round trip, Kinnerley to Criggion, each day.

Gazelle fell due for overhaul around 1930, and with the Criggion passenger service effectively abandoned soon after, the work was suspended and she fell out of use. However, in the mid-1930s the Ford Railmotor was still used for excursion, parcels and inspection duties but was falling apart. Austen, who had little sentiment but a keen eye for minimal costs, then decided to resurrect *Gazelle* for these jobs and she came back into use in June 1937 emerging from Kinnerley repair shop in a smart green livery and with a new chimney. To accompany it, the old Wolseley Siddeley railmotor body was fitted to the underframe previously used for the tramcar body.

Gazelle thus survived to serve the Military when they took over the railway in 1941. She proved particularly useful for running early morning patrols to detect possible acts of sabotage on the line and was used unofficially for pleasure trips to quieter pubs than those at Kinnerley. Finally taken out of service about 1943 when the army's new Wickham petrol trolleys arrived, she was kept around Kinnerley rather than scrapped. Appearing, reputedly in steam, for a Nation-



al Savings drive in 1945, she had so endeared herself to the military authorities that they claimed her for permanent display. Transferred to the Longmoor Military Railway, Hampshire from 1949 she was formally placed in military care in 1950. She remained there, latterly on the parade ground and, in the last year or two at least, painted in Longmoor blue livery with military style bulled-up white tyres and scarlet trim.

With the closing of Longmoor in 1969 she was reclaimed for the National Collection, for some years at NRM York then at the Museum of Army Transport, Beverley. With the closure of that institution in 1997 she went, at very short notice, to the newly-opened Colonel Stephens Railway Museum at Tenterden. Her journey to York for Railfest is the first outing since then. In celebration of that and the late John Miller's long-expressed wish to restore her to an authentic colour she has been cosmetically restored to her 1937 condition, though without the passenger cabin and associated entrance door welded shut in her military days. ● *Gazelle was at Railfest from 2-10 June and is expected back at Tenterden from 26th June.*

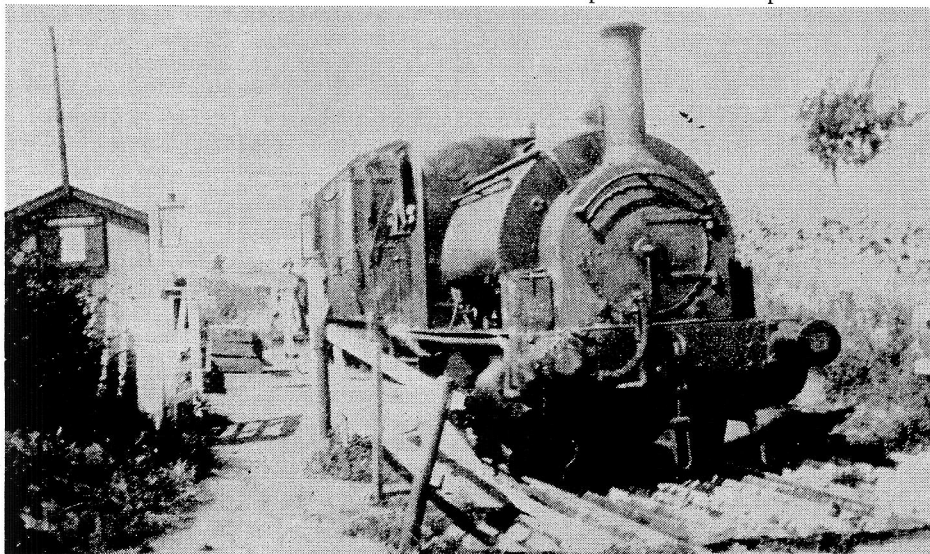
A visual inspection of the smokebox and firebox of *Gazelle* (**writes an engineer**) revealed that the tubes appeared to be in excellent condition with no burning away of the protruding ends, there appeared to be no wastage of the firebox plates and stay heads. The firebars were in excellent condition with a small amount of clinker still in place. There was no ashpan. The front tubeplate had some wastage but the nuts on the longitudinal stays were in good condition. An examination by ultrasonic testing would reveal the thicknesses of the various internally accessible boiler plates. A picture displayed on the K&ESR stand showed the loco with the smokebox removed - it was evident that the insulation was by longitudinal pieces of wood. Therefore no worries of asbestos should be encountered. The loco had been moved on the rails to its display point so the motion was free. No trace of cylinder drains could be found, but slide valves can accommodate condensation, if care is taken, but with the downside of a short warm shower. To carry out such an examination, without disturbing any of the external components, would not cost a great deal of money and give a good indication of the condition of the remainder of the boiler plates.

Perchance to dream? ●

East Kent No.1 – rare photo

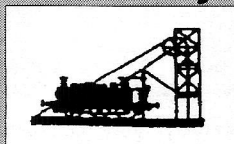
John Keylock of the Welsh Highland Heritage Group sent us this fascinating photograph. It came to him from the late Arthur Rimmer, who was a good friend of John. Whether he took the shot we do not know, nor do we know the date. We gave it to Brian Janes to study. Here is his assessment.

coach appears to be ex-London Chatham and Dover 6-wheeled brake carriage No 10, which arrived in 1926 and badly damaged and repaired in 1927. No 1's tall slim copper capped chimney enables us to fix the latest date for the photo as it was replaced in December 1932 by a new fatter chimney. She was last seen in steam on 22 September 1934 and was reported as broken up in 1935. ●



This is an interesting, probably unique, picture of an event which I have never seen before. It is of EKR locomotive No 1 on a very rare, perhaps only, outing on a passenger (mixed) service between 1927 and 1932. Indeed the loco has never been recorded as getting as far as the station featured, Wingham Canterbury Road. It has been generally considered that her only duties in this period were as Tilmanstone colliery shunter, where the EKR was contracted to provide shunting, but much of that time seems to have been spent dead at Shepherdswell shed. The station was opened in 1925 and the building shown added later so we can narrow down date the picture a little, particularly as the

The East Kent Railway



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Shepherdswell to Eythorne**

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AGM NEWS

Chairman Les misses outstanding weekend

Society chairman, **Les Darbyshire**, was unfortunately not well when he was ready to set out for Porthmadog for this year's annual get together which members described as 'best yet'. However, we're glad to report that he had fully recovered by the time the get-well card members signed arrived a few days later.

BLUE PLAQUE for the Colonel at last

In his annual report which was read on his behalf to the AGM, Les was able to report that Tonbridge & Malling Council had agreed to put up a traditional heritage Blue Plaque on the Salford Terrace building in Tonbridge where the Colonel had his headquarters. The plaque will be of the usual circular pattern with white lettering on a blue background. It will read:

**Lt-Col Holman F
Stephens**

Light Railway Pioneer
1868-1931
ran his light railways from
here

The Society is paying for the plaque and its erection on the building. The dates for its erection and unveiling are to be fixed. We will try to advertise the unveiling in advance. As Les said in his report: "At long last the Colonel will get the public recognition he deserves."

"Higher and higher" - Powell

Membership Secretary, **David Powell** reported that 54 new members had been recruited during the year, compared with 49 in the previous year. Total membership now stands at 377, compared with 340 last year. Our churn rate (the percentage of members not renewing) was just 3% - a very satisfactory performance.

Officers re-elected

All the existing officers had indicated that they were willing to stand for another term. There were no other nominations received by the advertised deadline. **Joe Whicher**, seconded by **Alan Garner**, proposed that the existing officers be re-elected *en bloc*. This was agreed. A list appears on page 31. At the end of the meeting, **John Simmonds** proposed a vote of thanks to the committee which was agreed. Members then took the opportunity to look at and buy from the range of new merchandise (*see page 23*) and the 16mm Baldwin loco and RCH maps brought in by **Graham Langer**.

NEXT YEAR: ASHOVER ON EARLIER DATE

The meeting agreed that next year's AGM and Members' weekend will take place a week earlier on the weekend of 11th and 12th May 2013, to avoid clashing with other popular events. Our Secretary **Kerry Baylis** will co-ordinate the event which will be based at the site of the Ashover Railway, followed by a visit to the Crich Tramway Museum.

2014: Ideas pondered

Several ideas were mooted for Members' Weekend, 2014, including the Isle of Wight, where the Colonel had a brief involvement and some of his acquisitions survive (*see page 4*), Torrington to explore the remains of the ND&CJR, or the East Kent Railway. Comments on these possibilities would be very welcome.

Watch this space!

COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY
Financial Statement year ending 7th May 2012
 (£ (2011 FIGURES IN BRACKETS))

INCOME

Subscriptions	£2639.00	(£2246.00)
Donations Received	£993.70	(£908.14)
Badge Sales	£32.00	(£34.00)
Card Sales:		
Gazelle (2009)	£36.00	(£102.25)
Beddgelert (2011)	£1005.00	(£705.55 KESR)
Car Stickers	£37.00	(nil)
DVDs	£76.00	(nil)
Back Issues (<i>The Colonel</i>)	£77.00	(nil)
Adverts	£20.50	(nil)
Guides	£9.00	(nil)
Les's Drawings	£101.90	(nil)
Colonel Biography	£103.50	(nil)
Transfer to current a/c	£150.00	(nil)
AGM 2012		
Open Top Bus Fares	£1260.00	
F.R. Charter Train Fares	£2275.00	
WHR Train Fares	£564.00	

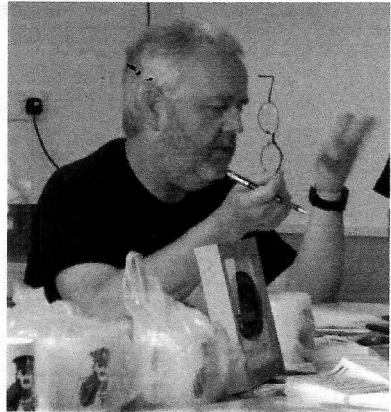
Total £9379.60

EXPENDITURE

Printing <i>The Colonel</i> (4 issues)	£1148.00	(£1038.00 - 4 issues)
Printing <i>Colonel's Guide</i>	£259.00	(nil)
Postage and Stationery for The Colonel	£777.41	(£530.50)
Printing Membership Forms	£390.00	(£115.00)
Donations Made:	£720.00	(£775.00)
Made up thus-		
£500 - Rother Valley Railway		
£200 - WC&PR Society		
£20 - Welsh Highland Heritage Group		
Committee, etc. expenses.		
D Powell	£132.30	(£98.27)
R Shimmon	£35.04	(£21.07)
R Shimmon (Computer Upgrade)	£150.00	(nil)
K Baylis	£132.66	(nil)
Cards (<i>Christmas-Beddgelert</i>)		
Printing of	£682.62	(£360.00)
Reimbursement of postage & stationery (to N Bird)	£155.43	(£71.92)

EXPENDITURE (continued)

Website Costs	£19.74	y/ending May 2012
Ditto	£20.16	y/ending May 2013
Car Stickers		
Design	£25.00	(nil)
Printing	£101.40	(nil)
Colonel Biography for stock	£40.00	(£70.00)
Subscription (WHHG)	£15.00	(nil)
Advert- <i>Rly. Modeller</i> re Camrail	£210.00	(nil)
Insurance (3 rd party etc)	£172.18	y/ending May 2012 (nil)
Ditto	£172.18	y/ending May 2013
Stamps for stock	£524.00	(nil)
AGM 2010 costs		
NRM Catering (Tea/Coffee)	£52.88	
AGM 2011		
Bus Hire	£400.00	
Room Hire with refreshments	£102.50	
AGM 2012		
FR Charter Trip (Deposit)	£300.00	
	Total	£4215.64
Cash at Bank (Current a/c) 7.5.11	£1616.07	
Deposit Account		
Balance at 7.5.11	£3399.86	
Less Transfer to Current Account	£150.00	
	£3249.86	
Plus interest earned	£22.03	
Balance at 7/5/12	£3271.89	
Current account Balance	£4701.05	
TOTAL CASH ASSETS:	£7972.94	(£5015.93)



*Nigel Bird, pictured at the AGM by
Bruce Hunt*

Bird: “Good progress - despite gloom & doom”

Presenting his report (reproduced above), Society treasurer, **Nigel Bird**, said that numbers of new members, subscription receipts and donations were all up on last year. The decision to expand the range of commercial activities to include DVDs, Les’s scale drawings and car stickers, in addition to Christmas cards, had proved worthwhile. So much so that several new items were announced and available at the meeting (See page 23). •

Subs increase likely next year

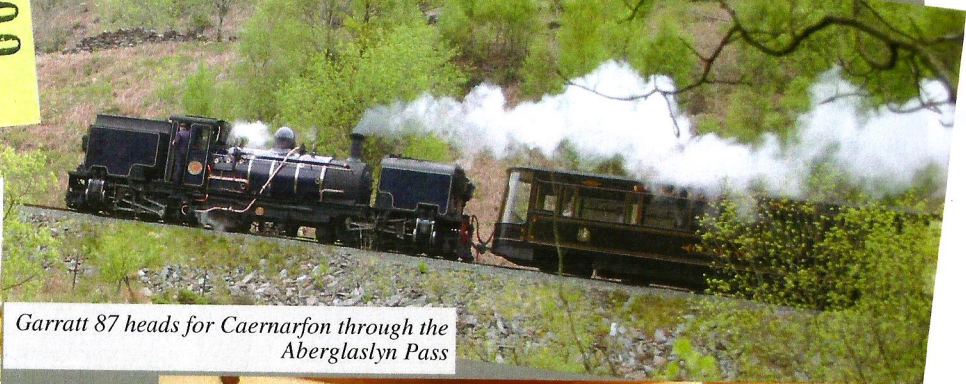
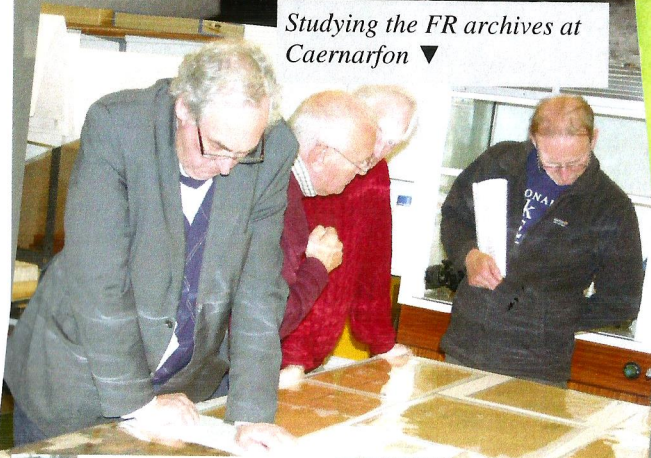
Nigel reported that the committee, in the face of the “massive hike” in postage costs, had agreed to buy a substantial stock of stamps at the old prices which enabled him to recommend that the subscription rates could be held for a further year. “However, I do expect that a small increase will be needed from September 2013”. He stressed that the apparently large current account balance was deceptive. He still had to pay most of the costs for this year’s Members’ Weekend. •



Palmerston sets back our charter train into the platform at Harbour station

FESTINIOG RAILWAY
 Colonel Stephens Society
MEMBERS WEEKEND
 Charter Train
 19 MAY 2012 (cw)
 0019

Studying the FR archives at Caernarfon ▼



Garratt 87 heads for Caernarfon through the Aberglaslyn Pass



The 'air conditioned' zoo car on our charter train



Norman Bond, Carriage Works Manager at Boston Lodge, shows off the plaque presented to him to mark the contribution made by the CSS to the cost of painting the replica Bug Box carriage.

Photos by Bruce Hunt, Nigel Bird, Albyn Austin and Ross Shimmon.



Many more photos of the weekend can be seen on our website:

www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk

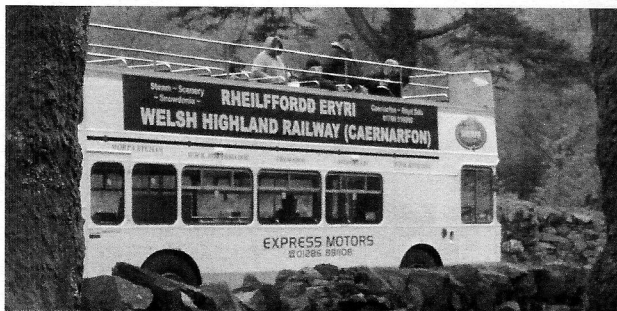
Heads down for the AGM

A WEEKEND IN WALES

The by now traditional Members' Weekend was this year based in Porthmadog. It began on Friday 18th May with an open top bus trip to Caernarfon.

Alan Garner reports:

Forty three members/wives/friends assembled at Porthmadog Harbour station to join an appropriately decorated open-top bus (pictured below). Despite the rather chilly and overcast day, most headed for the top deck, although the numbers on the lower deck rose after each stop! We headed for the Aberglaslyn Pass where we found suitable vantage points, having been assured that the



train would be along at about 11.25. By 11.40 we were getting concerned, especially as we had heard that a locomotive had failed the previous day. However, a few minutes later the train duly emerged from the tunnels with Garratt No 87 at its head, but with a diesel pusher behind. Re-joining the bus, we bypassed Beddgelert and parked just south of the summit. Here we were rewarded by the sight of the Garratt blasting up the final part of the 1 in 40 climb with no diesel on the back. It transpired that there had been a problem with the vacuum brakes, which had been fixed at Beddgelert.

We continued to Rhyd Ddu, arriving in time to see the two trains in the station, although a brief shower rather spoilt the views. Back on the bus we chased the train, giving us some fine views of it drifting down the

gradient. We arrived at Waunfawr in time to photograph the train arriving before adjourning to the adjacent Snowdonia Parc Brewpub for an excellent buffet lunch of home cooked food, plus tea and coffee, all included in the price of the trip. Refreshed and warmed up, we returned to the bus for the trip into Caernarfon and our visit to the Gwynedd Archives.

Gwynedd Archives

"Like many others my railway research has taken me to archives to study original documents" reports **Robin Fielding**. The visit to the Gwynedd Archives proved to be more than a chance to view documents.

Volunteer Patricia Layzell Ward and the Archives staff had arranged a look behind the scenes, as well as a display of materials relating to the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways. I found the presentation by the conservator, Rowena Doughty, particularly interesting. Using drawings from the Ffestiniog archive, she took us through the process of rescuing two drawings which, at first sight, seemed to be pretty hopeless. One, a tracing of a George England drawing of 1863, had been particularly difficult. It had been stuck to cheap cardboard in the past in an attempt to stop it disintegrating. The removal of the cardboard and the adhesive had presented considerable problems but these had been overcome. Much of the original had been saved and was displayed for us to see. The second drawing, dated 3.10.1876, was of a single Fairlie. Again conservation work had resulted in the preservation of much of this original general arrangement drawing. The methods and materials used in the different types of conservation work undertaken at the archive were covered in a clear and readily understandable manner. All in all a brief but fascinating insight to the work carried out.

We were able to see three of the strong

rooms used for the long-term storage of material. One was for the newspaper collection and the second, rather larger, for row upon row of steel shelving carrying many collections of documents, including the Ffestiniog archive.

Photographs & negatives

The third room housed the collection of photographs and negatives held in the archives, together with a collection of cassette tapes of one-to-one interviews. The fragile nature of the latter meant work was in hand to transfer the recordings to safer means of storage. A relatively new building, the Archives is purpose-built. The strong rooms have natural light excluded, air conditioning to maintain temperature, humidity at appropriate levels and sophisticated and expensive fire suppressant systems. With the growing prevalence of electronically held records, work continues to establish satisfactory ways of holding and accessing such material; a major headache, given the speed with which modern systems change.

Early Material

Finally there was the display of Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland material. Included in the earliest items was correspondence between Charles Spooner, C.M.Holland and George England relating to engineering developments between 1860 and 1863. Original documents with sketches amongst the written word to better illustrate what was being described. Then there was the Boston Lodge Engine Repair Book. Again an original document showing work carried out to different locomotives during the 1890's. The photograph album of George Spooner,

son of Charles, containing many early photographs, was there to be examined. Correspondence from the Colonel's time gave an indication of the difficult financial circumstances in which the two railways found themselves. However, there was also an indication of the very human side of the man with a memo requesting a wreath be purchased for the funeral of a deceased engine driver (pictured below).

Patricia told us there is much of interest to be found in the archive material from the two railways. There are no problems for prospective researchers. Of the 38,000 items in the Ffestiniog Archive all, except two, are in English. The two in Welsh are requests from brake-men for an increase in their wage. They were written in Welsh, it is said, in the hope they would receive more attention than their previous unsuccessful attempts in English. The result is not known.

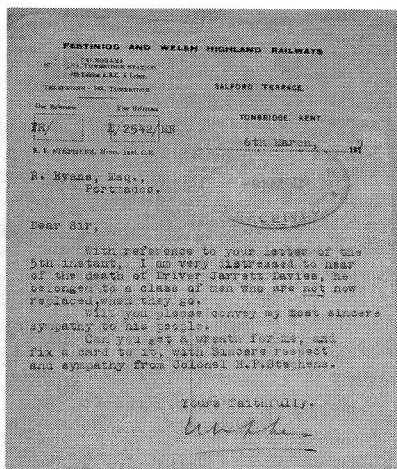
Our Charter Train

After the swiftly completed AGM and lunch we gathered at Porthmadog Harbour station on Saturday to watch George England 0-4-0STT *Palmerston* set back our charter train (a first for the Society) in the platform. Consisting of 2 'bowsider' bogie carriages, the '4-wheel 'zoo car' and Van No.2, all in Stephens era livery of dark green and red, it made an attractive sight. Judging by the number of photographers at the lineside, the word had got out that a special was on the line. Someone remarked that it was good to see a 'proper train' on the FR! (See the pictures on the cover and on pages 16 & 17).

Inside Boston Lodge

We were granted a rare visit to look round Boston Lodge Works on the evening of Saturday 19th May, reports **Albyn Austin**. We were very grateful to Norman Bond, the Carriage Works manager and his colleagues who gave up their own time to show us around and to Iain Fraser who ensured the visit took place. The works are the oldest

Continued on the next page ►



► *Continued from previous page*
 railway workshops in the world still in operation. As well as carrying out work for the Ffestiniog and Welsh Highland Railways they also carry out contract work, being one of very few heavy engineering works in North Wales and the second largest carriage works in the UK, after Derby! Outside the works was the recently rebuilt tender for the WHR 2-8-2 NG15 class loco being currently restored at Dinas. It is hoped that this loco might be cheaper to operate than the Garratts, which are now costing £1000 per round trip in coal and oil. There was also the works Hunslet diesel shunter *Moel Y Gest*. This was later joined by the WHR Garratt loco that was stabled overnight for our morning train to Caernarfon.

Carriage shed

Our visit began with the carriage shed, where the contract job to restore the former WC&P ex-Metropolitan coach 353 had transformed the drab body I saw last year in the LT Acton store. In golden teal livery, the partly restored coach looked lovely. Far too nice to carp about removal of the WC&P end doors, and a real tribute to the craftsmen at Boston Lodge. Nearby was FR carriage 12, built by Boston Lodge originally as a passenger brake van in the 1880s, but rebuilt several times since as a brake third, and being rebuilt once more after a "temporary" rebuild in the 1980s.

In the next bay Tallyllyn coach 21 was also being rebuilt - with a completely new body. The FR "Porthole Bug Box" 4-wheel coach was nearly restored nearby. This is the coach that the Society has assisted financially in its restoration. At this point Norman Bond was presented with one of our plaques. Behind was *Busta* a restored World War 1 speeder. A replica 1863 FR "Sentry Box Guard Van" was also being built on an old chassis.

Paint Shop

In the paint shop for a new varnish coat was FR carriage 15, a Brown Marshalls brake tri-composite, and one of the 1872 bogie coaches, lined in an elaborate Victorian livery. The FR was the first British railway to run bogie coaches. They also had

iron frames, a rarity at the time. This coach went to Railfest at York in June. Finally two of the 15-year old Winson coaches supplied for the reopening of the WHR were being repanelled.

Much interesting information was provided on materials and techniques used. Roofs are now generally covered in the material used for the side curtains of lorry trailers rather than the traditional canvas, as this material requires much less maintenance. Only a few of the historic vehicles retain canvas roofs. Several young apprentices and former apprentices are employed at the Works to retain skills, encourage youngsters and provide local employment. This gives the Works a good age range of staff.

Engine shed

In the engine shed were the replica L&B tank *Lyd*, the 1860s George England loco *Palmerston*, which had hauled our charter train earlier in the day, the 1879 double Fairlie *Merddin Emrys*, one of four built for the railway in the 19th century, plus the two modern ones built in 1979 and 1992, which were working the scheduled trains. Quarry Hunslet *Britomart* was also here and also *Taliesin*, the nominal rebuild of a single Fairlie, though only the hand brake standard and chimney were original, and the loco was built over-scale at 13:12.

The mechanical workshops contained the chassis for the Metropolitan coach and the 1860s George England loco *Prince* in bits, as well as an impressive collection of machine tools, some very large. A large casting for a double Fairlie was being machined. The workshop retains overhead shafting, though no longer used. It was very doubtful if much of *Prince* was original except for the hand-brake column and perhaps the regulator.

Across the FR mainline, in the old engine shed from 1863, was the large quarry Hunslet *Lilla* with new boiler built at Boston Lodge and the newly restored quarry Hunslet *Hugh Napier*, as well as *Blanche* and *Linda*. The George England loco *Welsh Pony* had recently been moved for restoration by volunteers, having last worked in 1946. There were also the vintage train coaches used by the Society that day in their 1930s livery. This included No. 2, an 1873 bogie brake

third rebuilt in 1921 and again in the 1980s when a new wooden underframe was fitted, No.19, a Gloucester bogie 1st/3rd composite, No.18, an 1876 Brown Marshalls bogie 1st/3rd composite and the replica knifeboard semi-open 4 wheel coach No.1. Also stored in this shed were modern semi-open coaches 37, 38 and 39 built on bogie Hudson underframes of World War 1 vintage.

Disc signal

Outside is a magnificent early rotating disc signal of which not many can survive. For many of us this trip was perhaps the highlight of the weekend and we could have probably detained our guides all evening but we eventually let them go home without, I hope, delaying them too long.

John Simmonds adds:

“Approximately 40 of our group survived the route from the car park and road crossing to the upper levels of Boston Lodge Works in time to see the special rake of coaches from our chartered train shunted into the carriage shed and *Palmerston* having her fire dropped. We were then introduced to Stuart McNair, a civil engineer who has been responsible for many of the engineering works through the route of the Welsh Highland. In groups we passed through the heavy engineering works, where the locomotive *Prince* was undergoing a complete rebuild, like some giant’s kit of parts. It was interesting to note from various drawings that Imperial still rules as a method of measurement. Is this due to the fact that many of the older machine tools are still calibrated in Imperial? (answers on a postcard please). The carriage works are always a great pleasure to see, smell, and touch; the various timbers, glues, oils and varnishes leave a wonderful aroma in this work place, and the paintwork with mirror like finishes is a joy to behold. The teak carriage which is due to be out shopped in November was having interior framework renewed, and interestingly where cross members abutted the side frame special cast iron brackets are used to make the joint, not a timber joinery junction. Old carriage no.5 was also receiving attention and details of previous changes made in the Colonel’s day

Continued in the next column ▶

RVR Progress

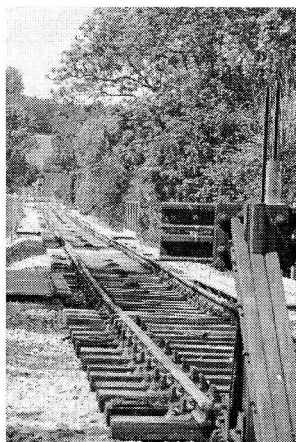
Mark Yonge reports

Robertsbridge Village Open Day

As the five new and restored bridges between Robertsbridge Station and North-bridge Street neared completion, a village open day was organised for the end of April. This allowed the local population to walk the half mile route prior to track being laid. The plan was to offer a power point presentation in the village hall prior to the walk taking place. The attendance was stunning with over 200 people turning up. As the village hall was overflowing the presentation was performed twice and even then, the RVR ran short of tour guides. Local opinion is unanimously supportive.

Track Laying Started in early June

Track laying has begun and, at the time



of writing, rails have been laid between North-bridge Street to a point just west of bridge no.1. The next phase is more complicated as the yard and site of the new terminus is constructed. This will involve several parallel tracks and the installation of five new points.

From previous column ▶

exposed by the current renovations. The ‘Bugbox’ was awaiting the attention of painters, and the previous Metropolitan carriage 353, ex-WC&P, was being prepared for its 1877 livery. I only wish we could have recorded all comments from the numerous conversations from our members during the visit.” ●

WESTON CLEVEDON & PORTISHEAD RAILWAY

THE STATION
CLEVEDON
SOMERSET

TELEPHONE: CLEVEDON 240

Dear Colonel Stephens,

29th May '12

With reference to your letter of the 12th inst. I would like to report on your representatives' visit to the newly completed Welsh Highland Railway on Sunday 20th May '12.

I can report that the 54 members of the party boarded the 9.35 am train from Porthmadog in the specially reserved carriages afforded by the Company. The train was hauled by one of the Beyer Garratt locomotives no. NG143 that you obtained from South Africa.

The train was made up of 9 coaches which were filled with Excursionists and, I have to report, that there were not many available seats for those passengers joining at the intermediate stations. Fortunately, this was compensated by the various Walkers and Ramblers who alighted from the train to enjoy the magnificent scenery that the line affords.

A spirited departure from Porthmadog was made, a few minutes behind the advertised time, using the new crossing, having ensured that the progress of Road Motor Vehicles and Charabancs had been stopped. The train called at the new Stations at Pont Croesor, Nantmor, Beddgelert, and smart station work by the staff ensured that some time was made up. Our train passed the Porthmadog bound train at Rhyd Ddu.

We soon passed Snowdon Ranger station, which affords superb views of Snowdonia still running a few minutes late. However at the next station, Waunfawr, I have to report that several members of the party left the train to dine at a local hostelry and, I regret to report, partook of intoxicating liquor on the Sabbath. This was followed by another portion of the representatives who left the train at Dinas Junction as there were Marquees purveying alcoholic beverages at something called a 'Beer Festival'.

This left a handful of your representatives who inspected the line recently re-laid on the former London & North Western Railway trackbed to Caernarfon, where we partook tea and light refreshments before returning to the train. A full list of those people leaving the train early can be supplied if you feel that appropriate action should be taken against them.

The return working to Porthmadog left Caernarfon on time and at Dinas Junction and Waunfawr, we picked up the members of the party that had left the train previously. The scenery en route is spectacular and the Glaslyn pass after Beddgelert a triumph to the Engineers who built the line. All too soon the train arrived at Porthmadog, where the various members bade farewell and returned to their boardings or Road Motors for the return to their lines to resume their normal duties.

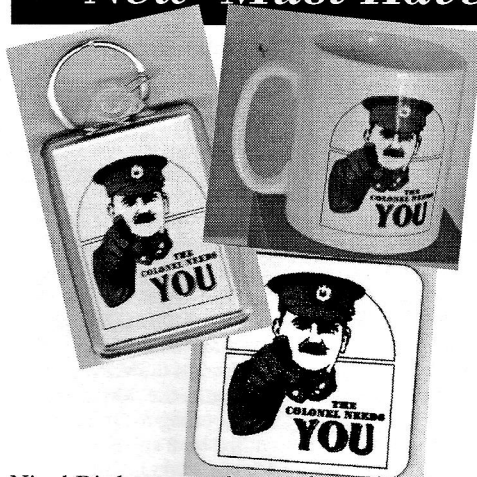
I must make a special mention to the organiser of the Inspection party, a Mr Nigel Bird of the Llwyn-y-Groes Tramway and the local Festiniog Railway representative Mr Iain Fraser, who ensured a seamless and unforgettable three days of activities. I would ask that they are mentioned in despatches.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Bladwell
Superintendent of the Line

Unfortunately no reply by Colonel Stephens to this report can be traced - Ed.

New 'Must Have' Items for Sale



Mugs

with Colonel Logo at
£7.50 each,
including p&p.

All three items can be ordered from
Kerry Baylis
(address on page 31).

Also available to order

T Shirts (3 designs)

- * "The Colonel LIVES",
(with Colonel Logo)
- * "It's a railway station NOT a
train station"
- * As above, but with Welsh
translation on back

Black only

Sizes available: L, XL and XXL
£18 each including UK postage.

(please allow up to 4 weeks for
delivery). Orders for T shirts to
Nigel Bird (address on page 31)

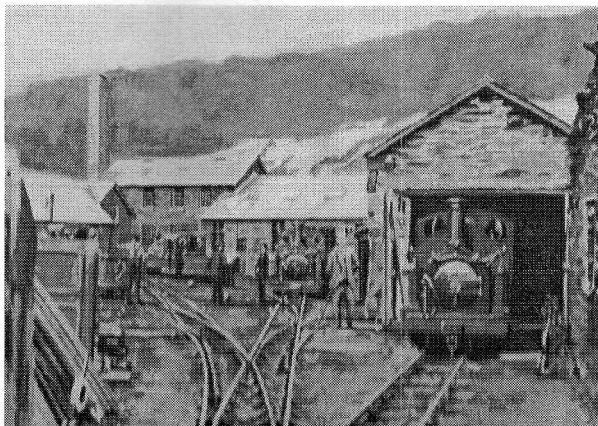
Nigel Bird presented several new 'must-have' items for sale at the AGM in Porthmadog, most were brokered by Colin Shutt. Several of them are now available for ordering by post.

Key Rings

with Colonel logo at £1.75 each,
including p&p.

Coasters

with Colonel logo at £2.08 each,
including p&p.



◀ A superb, limited edition colour print of Boston Lodge Works featuring the Colonel standing in the centre can be yours for £10, plus £4 postage (UK). Only 25 have been printed, all numbered and signed by the artist, Jonathan Clay. Only a few are left. Orders to **Nigel Bird** (address on page 31).

PRESS DIGEST *Our regular round up of the railway press*

In 2009 there was some discussion on our Yahoo discussion group about the quality of coal emerging from the **East Kent coalfields**. This resulted in an article by Albyn Austin in *Colonel 95*, summer 2009. In an article by R N Hardy in *Steam Railway 401*, April 2012, on the *Golden Arrow* hauled by a *Britannia*: 'The 7MTs thrived on soft coal, provided it was burned through, and they were naturally at home with our hard stuff in the hopper at the [Stewarts] Lane. Betteshanger coal was as good as the best Welsh; Snowdown and Chislet varied and Tilmestone [sic], universally known as ' - - - Tilmo' was impossible stuff to be avoided at all costs'. He doesn't explain how it could be avoided, however.

Also in *Colonel 95*, Nigel Burbage and Paul Lewin of the **FR** and **WHR** explained why the FR was converting its oil burning engines to run on coal - economics dear boy, economics. In the May/June issue of *Narrow Gauge World (No.81)* editor Andrew Charman explains not only why the conversion from oil to coal has gathered pace, but exactly what is involved. The conversion of replica L&B 2-6-2T *Lyd*, which was built at Boston Lodge is described in some detail.

In the same issue of *NGW* there is nice aerial shot of the extensive engineering works at Porthmadog to widen part of the Cob to allow for the construction of a new platform to accommodate **WHR** trains. On the very same page there is a photo of the replacement replica footbridge, built at Boston Lodge to carry a footpath across Tan-y-Bwlch station. The bridge was transported from the works to the station by rail, pro-

pelled by works diesel *Moel Hebog*. We saw the bridge in position when *Palmerston*, in charge of our charter train, took water at Tan-y-Bwlch.

Did you know that **heritage railways** earn around £84 million a year, employ 2,100 people and attract 17,800 volunteers, generating more than £200m for their local economies? These are some of the facts and figures contained in a piece in the same issue by Paul Lewin, GM of the FR and WHR, entitled 'What has the HRA ever done for us?' He is pictured driving the replica L&BR 2-6-2T *Lyd* at Caernarfon. In the very next article, Peter Johnson marks the 30th anniversary of the FR's re-opening to **Blaenau Ffestiniog**, accompanied by a splendid photo of Double Fairlie *Merrin Emrys* with a vintage train at Blaenau. Other photos include a shot of the pilot bore of the new Moelwyn Tunnel and construction work at Blaenau in 1981 to enable the FR terminus space alongside the BR station.

Elsewhere in the same issue, we learn that the **Welsh Highland Heritage Railway** has awarded a contract to Alan Keefe of Ross-on-Wye to complete the overhaul of the famous Hunslet 2-6-2T *Russell*. •

Stop Press

Rother Valley Trust chairman Gardner Crawley has just been made a Fellow of the Institution of Civil Engineers in part in recognition of his role with the RVR. Fellowship is the most senior grade of membership of the ICE. Congratulations

THE ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY

Robertsbridge Station, East Sussex TN32 5DG

REBUILDING THE RVR FROM ROBERTSBRIDGE TO BODIAM

Visitor centre open Sundays and Bank Holidays 9.30 to 17.00 (or dusk if earlier)

For membership, telephone: 01580 881833, or go to www.rvr.org.uk

BLASTS FROM THE PAST

Did you ever have a holiday in a railway camping coach? You can wallow in nostalgia if you did, or regret what you missed if you didn't, by reading the 'Golden Heyday of Camping Coaches' by Pete Kelly in the May issue of the *Railway Magazine*: "At quiet country stations, where birdsong and the lazy droning of insects were the only sounds to disturb the peace between the arrival and departure of the short and infrequent passenger trains, the stationmaster would be called away from his gardening to greet the new arrivals, escort them to their accommodation and hand over the keys to both the camping coach and the station toilet. The guests would be handed an inventory listing everything they could possibly need for their self-catering family holiday - crockery, cutlery and household utensils (in the case of the Southern Region's **Bere Ferrers** site) one colander, one pie dish, one dripping tray, six egg spoons, one pudding basin, one broom, five oil lamps, one oil heating stove, one oil cooking stove, six folding armchairs, one card table and two ashtrays. One document [revealed by the Search Engine at the NRM] has opened the doors to a long-lost world. John Snell, the booking clerk at **Bere Alston**, received grocery orders from the holiday makers at nearby **Bere Ferrers** and passed them on to Mr Hughes, the local baker, who would duly make the delivery." Happy days? Certainly they appear more innocent in retrospect. If you have any memorabilia relating to the use of the famous (infamous?) camping huts offered on some of the Colonel's lines, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Southern Way, naturally enough, normally concentrates on the 'big railway', but No.18 includes a superb double-page spread of one of the **KESR** railmotors in excellent condition at Robertsbridge. It is taken from a Press Agency photo dated 1924 which may explain the number of well-dressed people waiting to board. Lots of interesting detail, including a superb signal. You can also find it on the internet at Bettman/Corbis, photo

reference: BE032740. Elsewhere in the same issue, there are reminiscences of **Robertsbridge** from 1947-50 by Alastair Wilson. The accompanying photos include a shot of 32670 as it 'drifts eastwards towards Hodson's Mill with a short cut of wagons' in Spring 1951. The text recalls memories of the **KESR**, as he could see from his bedroom, not only the main line, but 'this other embankment which disappeared off eastwards...' We'll see if we can obtain permission to reproduce some of the stories in a future *Colonel*.

We're not done yet, because in the same *Southern Way*, there is the first part of a substantial feature on SR goods brake vans by Mike King. The first illustration is of an ex-LSWR 10 tonner No. S54900 at **Robertsbridge**, in August 1952, branded "To work between Headcorn and Robertsbridge via Tenterden only". It is suggested that the livery might still be SR brown with red ends, but of course the photo is black & white. Browsing in the local newsagent, we thought that the May issue of *Railway Bylines* had nothing of interest HFS addicts, but as it was about go back on the rack, the familiar shape of a Terrier caught attention. It is a truly sad image of ex-**WC&PR** No.5 *Portishead* hemmed in by GWR 4-6-0s, daubed with slogans. But remarkably it still has its number and name plates in place.

Meanwhile, back to the **KESR**, *Steam World* No.299, May 2012 has a well-illustrated article by Neil Sprinks entitled 'No more passengers to Tenterden'. The photographs are nicely reproduced, featuring Terriers 59 and 78 and O1 31065. In familiar situations. Worth noting are the charismatic three-arm signal at Tenterden, the water tower, the pile of new concrete fence posts at Rolvenden (in November 1953) and the impressive number of freight wagons in the mixed train leaving Robertsbridge. But the pick of the shots is a colour image (from Colour-Rail) of No.3 fresh from its overhaul in Brighton in 1947, in fully lined-out green. Magic! ●

MODELLING NEWS

The range of ready to run models now available is remarkable, especially to those of us who remember the rare occasions when Hornby Dublo announced a new model. Even the railway modelling magazines are bringing out their own models. *Model Rail* has announced models of the SR USA tanks used at Southampton docks, two of which were allocated to Ashford works and, thanks to a swift bit of opportunism, were acquired for the **K&ESR**. One of them (No.65) is currently in service on the line in Southern livery.

Meanwhile, Hornby is to release a model of the GWR 2-8-0Ts. As we have reported, a group of members of the **K&ESR** has acquired 4253 of this class and restoration is already making good progress. Heljan has already begun delivering models of the little four-wheel railbuses, one of which (an AC cars example) ran on the **K&ESR**, shuttling between Bodiam and the short-lived *Dixter Halt*. Although we imagine that they are unlikely to reproduce the chocolate and cream livery then used by the line.

If you don't model in 4mm, then Dapol may be the answer for you. Several magazines report that they are planning a 7mm model of a class 08 diesel shunter. Both the **EKR** and the **K&ESR** have one of these 'Gronks'. Heljan already has available a Class 33 diesel, also in use at *Tenterden*. So it is becoming easier to model some of the Colonel's standard gauge lines, at least in the preservation era, especially if you take into account visiting locomotives for galas and other special events. Apart from *Terriers*, it is of course more difficult to replicate the pre-preservation era.

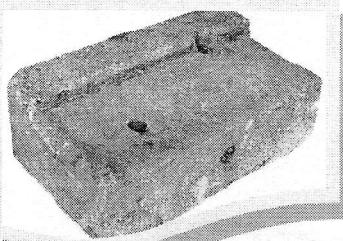
Alan Bone reports that the undoubted star of the recent *Rother Valley Railway's* model railway exhibition at *Robertsbridge* was Jez Laming's '*Acol*' which has featured in these pages (*Colonel 100, pages 18,19*). Many CSS leaflets were distributed. Jez displayed a large folder of memorabilia relating to the Colonel. Plans were also on view

of the proposed new station at *Robertsbridge*. There was also a *Rye & Camber* diorama provided by a local club. Next year the event should not clash with our own *Members' Weekend*. Alan has also asked us to mention a charity toy and train fair on *Wednesday 29th August* at *Falconwood Community Centre, Welling, DA16 2PG* from 6.30 to 9.30 pm. Sounds like good fun in aid of *Bexley* charities. More info from Alan on 0208310 5018. ●

'Pot luck' for WC&PR Group

Paul Gregory reports that the **WC&PR** Group has recently been donated 16 of *Colonel Stephens's* concrete sleepers or 'pots' by a *Weston-super-Mare* resident whose garden backed onto the railway at *Ashcombe Road*. They had been used as edging for a patio. "They were in good condition and we removed them from the garden to storage. We were surprised to find that there were two sizes, not just the one size quoted in the books. Half were the 'standard' size of 20" x 12" x 6" and the

others were 24" long, perhaps for use at rail joints. (Photo left). The pots were made by the railway in *Cleveland* and



installed on parts of the line to replace defective sleepers, usually replacing two out of three wooden sleepers. Two holes on the top held wooden pegs into which the rail spikes were driven. On the side is a hole to take the iron tie-rods used to maintain gauge. We hope that one day we can find a site where we can use them to lay a length of track". ●

BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MUSEUM

BRIAN JANES *Announces some recent important acquisitions*

I had intended to give you all a rest from the chronology of Museum events to take a detailed look at selected exhibits. With the Editor's consent you will find elsewhere a potted history of *Gazelle* to celebrate her temporary perambulations to York and, perhaps, elsewhere. However this plan is on hold for a while as events at the Museum have attained a pace of their own. In April we were able to acquire (and afford!) at auction some important exhibits.

The first and most obviously impressive of our acquisitions was the nameplate DENNIS from the **Snailbeach District Railways**, one of very few artefacts surviv-



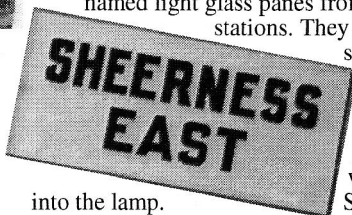
ing from that somewhat obscure but interesting line (for a brief history see:

www.hfstephens-museum.org.uk/colonel-stephens-railways/snailbeach-district-railway/a-short-history-of-the-snailbeach-district-railways).

The plate, which celebrates the then chairman's surname, comes from a very compact and powerful 0-6-0T built by W G Bagnall in 1906 (works No. 1797) which had something of the same air as the, near contemporary, Welshpool and Llanfair locomotives. *Dennis* did all that was required of her and for much of her career was the only working locomotive, but by 1923 the loco was set aside for repairs. This was the year of Stephens's takeover and he gave her the number 1, but with the acquisition of three further locomotives she was destined never to work again. Hopes of resurrecting such a potentially useful loco, indeed with some repair work, continued during the period of

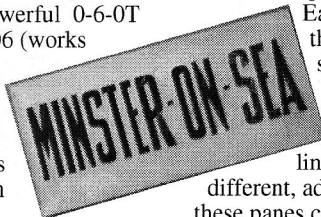
Stephens's active management but then Austen, with his more pragmatic attitudes, disposed of her remains in 1937. Eric Tonks, however, was recording the SDR's history in the late 1940s and discovered a nameplate (presumably discarded c1923) 'amongst the ashes of the forge' and acquired it. Although it did not come direct from his estate, we believe this is the plate we have.

Our other exhibits come from the **Sheppey Light**, a railway that few, except ourselves, associate with Stephens for, despite his obvious signature on all its structures, it disappeared quickly into the South Eastern & Chatham maw. Two of the stations graced with Stephens's buildings and proper lighting were the equally obscure Sheerness East and Minster-on-Sea. We have acquired named light glass panes from these stations. They are in



standard SE&CR blue lettering on glass that was clipped Sheerness

into the lamp.



East probably dates from the line's earliest days but Minster-on-Sea was only so named from June 1907 (to avoid confusion with Minster (Thanet) that was until 1899 on a rival line) and the lettering style is different, adding further interest. Both of these panes came to auction after a lady at Wateringbury found them in her attic in pristine condition. Miraculous survivors, for the line closed in January 1950.

The Museum itself looks pretty spruce, the new passes exhibit is very impressive already and we are overflowing with good second hand books thanks to generous donors. Pay us a visit - entry is free to Society members! ●

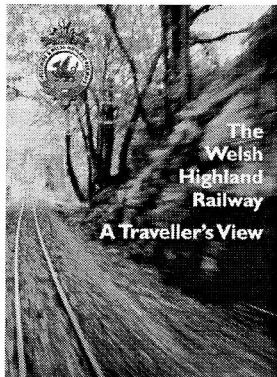
REVIEWS

***The Welsh Highland Railway: A Traveller's View.* DVD 48 minutes. £12.95. FR & WHR Shop, Harbour Station, Porthmadog.**

Last summer, a family holiday took me to Snowdonia. A walk up Snowdon itself alongside the railway enabled real enjoyment of the unforgettable sights and sounds of the trains labouring up and down. However this was nothing to the highlight of a return trip from Porthmadog to Caernarfon on the Welsh Highland. The first glimpse of one of the mighty Beyer Garratts was stunning as it waited for our train to be shunted out of the Harbour station – they are truly magnificent machines!

However, I was disappointed to find the only DVDs were very enthusiast-oriented, and none captured anything of these engines at work, or of the experience of our ride. But no longer, for *The Welsh Highland Railway: a traveller's view* is a splendid film now available that really does convey the travellers' experience.

The film covers the whole line, with particular attention to the curves and gradients and amazing scenery around Beddgelert and Aber Glaslyn. The editing is outstanding, and must have used a vast number of video shots from all sorts of locations throughout the year – by people who clearly know the line very well. It is all interwoven into an absorbing record, taking in the whole expe-



rience, with everything from distant shots of the railway dwarfed by the mountains to close-ups of the locomotives hard at work.

I would have preferred the history text to be spoken rather than as a sub-title, but that is a personal thing and does not take from the film. A nice touch is the feature at the end teaching the viewer how to pronounce the station names.

This is a DVD that will entertain everyone, railway buff or not, and really does capture the experience of this amazing railway line.

David Grimwood

***The District Controller's View No. 16 North Cornwall.* Xpress Publishing, 2012, 93pp. Illus. £14.95.**

This book covers a summer Saturday in July 1961 predominantly from Okehampton to Bude and Padstow plus the Wadebridge to Bodmin branch, the two lines to Plymouth and the Bere Alston to Callington branch. The coverage of this Colonel's line is 5 photographs, which include the dozen lines of commentary offered plus the carriage set allocations, the working timetable and a chronological list of arrivals and departures on the branch and mainline at Bere Alston.

The publisher's claim, "Apart from dealing in a thoroughly detailed manner with subject, this book has one principal aim-to ensure value for money by compressing as much new and unpublished detail as possible", is however fully justified for the 'Withered Arm' section. The expanded WTT covers 15 pages and the traffic graphs 4 pages. The core of the book is 31 timed slots on the track diagrams between Okehampton and Bude/Padstow.

The position of trains is shown and there is informative commentary from the synthesised controller's log, sometimes as

witty and believable dialogue between control and signal boxes. GWR/SR banter makes an inevitable appearance. Whilst not covering the Colonel's ND&CJLR the arrival and departure of the two passenger trains from/to Torrington is shown on the track diagrams at Halwill Junction. There is one paragraph of evocative and accurate commentary on the line with the track diagram for the 10.52 departure to Torrington.



At first glance it is a book for a restricted audience; operations enthusiasts and people with some local connection or memory. I found it engaging in noting certain trains such as the Surbiton/

Okehampton car train. There is a suitable commentary on the novelty of that train.

You could take a virtual journey on the Atlantic Coast Express from Padstow through five 30 minutes slots on track diagrams learning how the stock was assembled, what turn the loco did before, its depot and working number, where the crew changes are, the crew duty number and content, what trains you cross at passing places and similar detail about those trains. The number of goods trains on the graphs and their slow progress working yards en route is a reminder of a different age. There are 37 photographs of appropriate location and date.

Ray Bentley

Advertised in the latest *Model Rail* are two DVDs entitled *East Kent Railway Then and Now, Parts 1 (£12) & 2 (£15)*. Available from Heritage in Motion at:

www.heritageinmotion.com

We haven't seen them yet so we can't comment on content or quality. ●

Don't Miss This One!

The ultimate book on the rebuilding of the WHR

Welsh Highland Railway Renaissance - the Story of the Restoration of the Welsh Highland Railway 1991-2011, by G Rushton. 448pp Ills.

For members who came on the Porthmadog weekend and anyone who is interested in the rebuilding of the WHR.

The complete story of the rebuilding of this amazing line in North Wales, a line that most enthusiasts thought would never get rebuilt. Due mid-July. Bound to be a hot seller. I may have a few signed copies - first come first served.

£68, plus postage & packing.

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DISPATCHES

Letters to the Editor

WC&PR coach locks

At the end of Albyn Austin's informative article on the WC&P coach that London Transport Museum is restoring (*Colonel 106*, p.4) he commented that the cast iron number 7 had disappeared.

I have been in contact with various parties about this coach since I became aware of its continuing existence some years ago. One of the most active has been the Shrivensham Heritage Centre, who are doing some very interesting research work on the coach's uses when it was in the village. One of their discoveries has been the cast iron WC&P plate and the number plate 7, which are nicely mounted over one of the villager's fireplaces. It is not only railway enthusiasts that take care of their heritage.

Brian Janes
Colonel Stephens Railway Museum

Centre fold waste

Another excellent *Colonel (106)* except for the centre fold, which I feel is rather a waste. You cannot see the photo properly and it gets in the way of reading the text. So my vote goes against that one.

Alan Garner
Via email

[Yes Alan. It was an experiment which didn't quite work. I hope to use the photo again in the future without any text. Members who want a plain copy of the table of wagon movements can have one by email attachment by request or by post by sending me an SAE. My addresses are on p.31 - Ed.]

Muddled up

Fabulous *Colonel* as ever with so much useful information for all of us "Stephensites". However, you do appear to have got a little muddled up with your editorial comment at the end of my article *Criggion 100*, on page 12. You mention the photograph of Meole Brace station taken by HC Casserley in 1958 and featured in the Middleton Press book *Branch Line to Shrewsbury*, but it is Shrewsbury West station (1 mile, 7 chains from

Shrewsbury) that I referred to. Plate 110 of the same publication shows this most basic of stations. Meole Brace (1 mile, 69 chains from Shrewsbury) was opened with the S&M in April, 1911. It always boasted a wooden building, comprising a waiting room, flanked by a goods office and a booking office. Similar buildings, replacing the lost "Potts" originals, had been provided by Stephens at Hookagate (known as Red Hill from 1920), Edgebold, Shrawardine and Maesbrook.

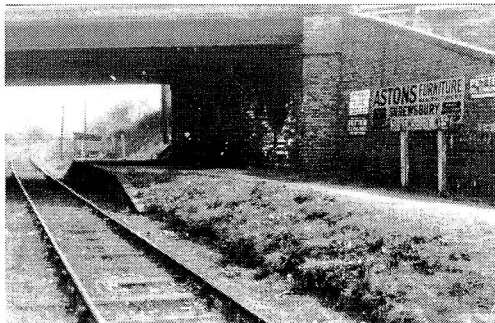
Brian Janes has also noticed a typing error in that in my last paragraph I have suggested "A third inspection resulted in a further rejection and it was not until 17th June 1870 that Rich reluctantly agreed to the opening of the branch to passenger traffic". This should, of course, read 1871. Sorry.

Whilst I fully appreciate that the captions to the photographs on page 14 are as written in *Archive No.71*, the top one falls into the trap of so many historians in stating that "the replacement carriage [came] from the body off one of the Wolseley Siddeley railmotors". As should be well-known by now, there was only ever one Wolseley Siddeley railmotor.

Perhaps you would be kind enough to "put these records straight" in the next edition?

Laurie Cooksey, Ramsgate

[Happy to do so Laurie. The picture below, from the CSR, shows Shrewsbury West in April 1938 - see no shelter! - Ed.]



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Corrections

In *Colonel 106 p.21*, reporting the possibility that *Gazelle* might make a detour (which, sadly, did not happen) to visit Shrewsbury on her way to the NRM, we referred to Bob Jones as a Member of the Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust. He isn't, but he liaises closely with the Trust on matters relating to the S&MR. We also inadvertently changed the surname of the chairman of the Trust. He is, of course, Mansel Williams. Thanks to Bob for pointing out these errors. *Apologies - Editor.* •

Raffle winner

During the brief period at Blaenau Ffestiniog while *Palmerston* ran round our Charter Train, the draw for the specially made headboard was held. Peter Johnson, the well-known railway journalist, drew out the winning ticket. It was won by Ian Hammond. Congratulations Ian! •

FR and WHR timelines

Peter Johnson kindly compiled timelines of the major developments on both the Festiniog and Welsh Highland Railways to go in the information packs received by all those who took part in this year's Members' Weekend. They have now been uploaded on to our website at:

[www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk/
Ffestiniog%20Railway](http://www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk/Ffestiniog%20Railway) and:

[www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk/
WHLR](http://www.colonelstephenssociety.co.uk/WHLR)

Many thanks Peter. •

Deadlines for 2012/13

Copy for *The Colonel* should be submitted to the Editor by the following dates:

108: Autumn 2012: 10th August

109 Winter 2012: 10th November

110: Spring 2013: 10th February

111: Summer 2013: 10th May

These are final dates, but we much prefer earlier receipt if at all possible. •

Jackson's Jottings

The funding challenge remains

CHRIS JACKSON *continues his trawl through the Railway Gazette*

Money was proving a major constraint on light railway development, both in terms of the high costs to meet regulatory requirements and the problems of raising finance. Although provisions in the 1896 act allowed local authority support, these were not often used, as mentioned in the Derwent Valley report [in Colonel 106]. Treasury funds were only available to projects supported by an existing railway. Measures to address the situation were envisaged in the 1912 Light Railways Bill, but this was making slow progress.

August 9 1912:

Narrow Gauge Railways

The question of the cost of railway construction has been a good deal to the fore lately, both in India, in connection with Mr. Neville Priestly's paper, and with the Board of Trade report regarding Continental light railways. On another page we deal with the paper of Mr. R. M. Livesey on Irish narrow gauge railways, read at the Conference of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers, held in Belfast last week. The paper stated that the cost of narrow-gauge lines should not exceed £5,000 a mile, but, as Mr J. A. F. Aspinall pointed out in the discussion, no narrow-gauge railway in Ireland had been constructed for less than £6,000, or in England for less than £8,000 a mile. The reasons for this have often been discussed, and in part it is doubtless true that it arises from the requirements of the Board of Trade. The splendid system of the *Chemins de Fer Vicineaux* in Belgium, whose average cost per mile is less than half the English cost, should teach us something, but the Bill recently promoted by the Board of Trade does not go nearly far enough.

[Note: Livesey was Loco Superintendent of the County Donegal, and his paper was primarily about the design of locos and rolling stock for Irish narrow gauge railways. Aspinall was CME of the Lancashire & Yorkshire, and a strong advocate of the Belgian approach to light railways.]

July 19 1912: Light Railways Bill

In the House of Commons, on Monday,

Mr. Asquith informed Mr. Munro that while aware of the desirability of the early passage into law of the Light Railways Bill, he was not sure whether it could be taken before the Autumn session.

Meanwhile, some money was still on the table, even if the projects themselves were making little headway.

July 5 1912: Treasury Grant for Scottish Light Railway

It is officially announced by the Treasury that the Treasury grant of £7,000, promised in aid of the proposed light railway from Fraserburgh to Rosehearty, which was practically withdrawn some time ago owing to the delay of the promoters in proceeding with the scheme, may now be given, as the Treasury Department has extended the time limit for the grant until June, 1913.

August 9 1912:

Vale of Rheidol Light Railway

The report for the half year ended June 30, 1912, states that the accounts show a gross revenue from all sources of £1,326. After due provision has been made for all fixed charges, there remains a debit balance on net revenue account of £75, as compared with a debit balance of £1 6s. 7d. in the corresponding period of 1911. The half-year's working has been adversely affected by the coal strike. An amicable settlement has been arrived at in respect of a long-outstanding claim against the Company for legal services. The directors have agreed to pay £350 in full settlement, and of this amount £200 has been paid during the half-year, and is dealt with in the accounts. ●