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# THE COLONEL

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The beginning? Page 9

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THE JOURNAL OF THE COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY  
FOR ENTHUSIASTS OF THE LIGHT AND NARROW GAUGE  
RAILWAYS OF COLONEL HOLMAN F. STEPHENS

## Editorial: NEW DRIVER, SAME CAB

*WITH considerable trepidation I take over the regulator of The Colonel from Stephen Hannington who has decided to step down from the footplate after five years. He has developed the journal both in appearance and content to its present state as a model of its kind. Our society owes him a debt of gratitude which was expressed eloquently at the AGM in April.*

*We are fortunate that, despite being forced to give up the post by the demands of a new day-time job, Stephen has agreed to remain as Secretary and assume the role of the long-vacant post of Publicity Officer.*

*As Stephen said in his last editorial, any publication of this kind is only as good as the material contributed, so please keep the material coming.*

*I hope you like the consist that makes up this issue, including the report on Mark Yonge's talk on the resurgent RVR, Lawrie Cooksey's attempt to 'Set the Record Straight' and the extract from the full report by the Southern Railway on the HM&ST. Feedback will be very welcome.*

*Please forgive me if I falter in my attempt to live up to the high standards of the previous occupant of the driving seat.*

Ross Shimmon

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## Society News

# Membership up for fourth year, cash also up, AGM hears

**MEMBERSHIP** of the Society had increased for the fourth year in a row. David Powell, the Society's Membership Secretary reported to the AGM held at the Vine Inn, Tenterden in April. Membership now stands at 275, compared to 262 last year.

The meeting attracted 25 members. After the business was transacted, they were treated to a fascinating talk by Mark Yonge on the missing link between Bodiam and Robertsbridge. (A report of this talk begins on page 9). Members then enjoyed a trip on the K&ESR to Bodiam and back. On their return they were treated by the Colonel Stephens Museum to a preview of some newly discovered Pathe News cine footage of one of the Ford railcars making a trip from Headcorn to Robertsbridge when it was new. The video will shortly become part of the museum's public display.

Our cash assets had also increased by just over one thousand pounds, partly because authorised donations had not yet taken place. Nigel Bird, treasurer, was nevertheless moved to remark in his report that Society "remains in a strong financial position which may well

not be in the spirit of the colonel, but is what I feel members like to see." Subscription rates were frozen for a further year.

Stephen Hannington stepped down as Editor. Tribute was paid to his five year tenure of the post during which The Colonel has gone from strength to strength. Stephen was persuaded to continue as Secretary and to take on the long-vacant post of Publicity officer.

A full report of the AGM Proceedings start on page 4. •

## STOP PRESS

### Shrewsbury gift goes ahead

The Society's committee has authorised a second payment of £250 towards the restoration of the former S&MR Shrewsbury Abbey Foregate station. Secretary Stephen Hannington received news that the Borough Council had agreed to fund 50% of the estimated cost of repairing the building. The building will be used to create a Railway Visitor Centre on the old station site. The committee was authorised by the AGM to make the donation. •

## Blue plaque for the Colonel?

A proposal made at the AGM for a blue plaque to be placed at the site of the former West Sussex Tramway station at Chichester was raised at the Society's AGM in April. Membership Secretary David Powell said that it was "a brilliant idea". It was agreed to pursue the proposal. •

### Notes for contributors

Contributions to *The Colonel* are always welcome. Please send them to the Editor at the address shown on page 2. They may be in the form of a Word document sent as an email attachment, or a floppy disc, or a CD. Those still in the steam age may send them as a typescript or manuscript—but please write legibly. Photos, either in electronic form or traditional print, are also welcome, but please ensure they are capable of reproduction. •

## News

# AGM 2004 : editor steps down, more donations agreed

**The meeting** was chaired by membership secretary David Powell, in the absence of the chairman, Derek Smith. These minutes were taken by Stephen Hannington.

1) **Apologies for absence:** Nigel Bird, Helen Brett, Ian Dack, Richard Jones, Robert Kosmider, Ron Mann, Derek Smith and Les Spratt.

2) **Actions from the previous AGM:**  
*Binders:* Stephen Hannington reported that no progress had been made in re-ordering binders for *The Colonel*, but promised to action the matter.

*Questionnaire:* Stuart Marshall reported that no progress had been made on this project—to compile a central list of archive material held by members—either. It would be followed up later.

*Donations:* The committee had disbursed the £500 sanctioned by the previous AGM as follows: £250 towards the restoration of the planet diesel on the Ffestiniog Railway; and £250 towards the refurbishment of the former S&MR station building at Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury.

3) **Committee Reports**

*Chairman Derek Smith was unable to attend*

*because of transport difficulties. He sent the following written report which was read out at the meeting:* "Once again I am pleased to report another successful year for our society. Our membership is right up. This must be our best year. The Potts photo collection [acquired by Jon Clarke as reported in recent *Colonels*] is most important. Very little is known about the PS&NWJR before the Colonel took over. Thanks must go to Jon, who by the way, was our first editor in the early days of the society.

"Which brings me to say how sorry I am to learn that Stephen Hannington is to stand down at this AGM. Since I asked him to take over as editor some years ago, the journal has gone from strength to strength. I am pleased to know that we have a volunteer who would like to be the editor.

*(AGM report continues on page 12 ►)*



**Brakevan rides soon at Roberts-bridge? See page 10**

## River Rother changes course

According to 'Phoenix' the journal of the Rother Valley Railway Supporters Association, the river Rother has scoured out around 10 feet of railway land and has just started to eat into the embankment. A meeting with the Environment Agency was arranged at which it was pointed out that it was the railway's responsibility to recon-

construct the river bank. As this is in a stretch of line slated for early re-opening, it is hoped to get started on this major, but unexpected work later this year, "hopefully before winter sets in."

Meanwhile the RVR is currently advertising for a Volunteer Operating Manager. The post carries responsibility for "all train workings, safe operation of the railway and the health and safety of train crew and maintenance staff." •

## KESR 'loses' a Terrier

**"Sutton"**, the Brighton Terrier used on the first train of the re-opened KE&SR in 1974 has transferred to the Spa Valley, based at Tunbridge Wells. According to *Heritage Railway* magazine, its new owners plan to have it in steam for a 10-year period. Formerly 32650 "Whitechapel", the engine was once earmarked to be exhibited in the civic centre at Sutton to mark the role of the railway in developing the town. But it was loaned to the KESR and has latterly been an immobile exhibit at Tenterden Station.

The Kent & East Sussex has two other Terriers; number 3 "Bodiam", a genuine KESR engine, which is currently in works and 32678 "Knowle", currently in service. ●

## Fairlie boilers found in Burry Port

Gwendraeth Railway Society members have found two standard gauge double Fairlie boilers in Burry Port. One of the boilers is believed to belong to an early locomotive built by the Fairlie Company in 1869. Originally named *Pioneer*, but later renamed *Mountaineer*, it became the Burry Port and Gwendraeth Railway's first new engine. According to a report in the June issue of *Heritage Railways*, the GRS members were carrying out a survey of the area when they found the boilers forming a storm water culvert beneath a road in the town. ●

## R&CT modelled in G

*The Railway Modeller* recently featured articles by John Golding describing the construction of the Rye & Camber Tramway petrol locomotive and the Bagnall coach. Both vehicles were constructed almost entirely in plastic card. Mr. Golding's next project is the tramway company's other coach, the Rother Ironwork's carriage. These models are precursors to the author's "main project" of modelling the R&CT station at Rye. The models are to 1:20 scale, using a track gauge of 45 mm. The articles appeared in the March and May issues of the magazine. ●

## THE ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY

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or write to: RVRSA, 375 New Hythe  
Lane, Larkfield, Kent ME20 6RY

# The Southern Railway's report on the Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramways Company Limited

*Robert Kosmider has submitted a copy of the entire report on the HMST compiled by the Southern Railway in 1934. The first extract appears below.*

## 1. History and Legal Status

The Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramways Company was registered as a limited liability company in 1896 with nominal share capital of £12,000; it was promoted largely by local interest and the first subscribers thereto, with the exception of Colonel Stephens the Engineer, were all residents in Sussex.

It is understood that the Lewes firm of Estate Agents, Messrs. Powell & Company, secured the land for the line between Chichester and Selsey by private treaty and also negotiated the crossing of the public highway at several places with the County Council.

Although there is a provision in the memorandum of Association of the Company to the effect that authority is given "To apply for, promote and obtain any Act of Parliament, Provisional Order or license of the Board of Trade or other authority for enabling the Company to carry any of its objects into effect", there is no knowledge that any such authority has ever been obtained by the Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramways Company Limited, and apparently operations commenced in 1897 without any legal status and have continued to the present time except in so far as they may be covered by the West Sussex Railway certificate, referred to below.

In 1899 an increase of share capital from £12,000 to £16,800 was authorised but of this amount £2,400 remains unissued. At the commencement Debentures at 4% amounting to £7,000 were issued and a mortgage of £1,000 was obtained on certain property at

Selsey. Between 1911 and 1924 a further £5,000 of Debentures were issued at 5% and owing to the impossibility of redemption those previously issued in due course were raised to 5 1/2%

In due course Colonel Stephens became the Chairman of the Limited Liability Company and steps were apparently taken to give the Tramway some legal status. With this in view a certificate under the Railway Construction Facilities Act 1864 was secured from the Ministry of Transport, the order being known as the West Sussex Railway Certificate 1924 (Statutory Rule and Order 1924 No. 935). This Certificate authorised *inter alia* the following powers:-

- (a) The incorporation of a Statutory Company known as West Sussex Railway Company, of which Lt. Col. Stephens, ▶

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## SR report on the HM&ST, *continued*

Messrs. Henry Bates and Luther Clayton, already directors of the Tramway Company, were to be the first directors.

(b) The construction of a railway on the lines of the Selsey Tramways between Chichester and Selsey.

(c) The purchase by the West Sussex Company of the existing undertaking by the Tramway Company, together with any debts and liabilities.

Under this order regulations were made regarding the crossing of the public roads at various places and the maximum axle load and speed. It further empowered the West

***"It appears that the expenditure in obtaining the West Sussex certificate, was borne by Col. Stephens out of his private resources."***

Sussex Railway Company to enter into agreement with the Southern Railway company with regard to the re-construction, working and management of the line. On and after the appointed date the charges to be made by the West Sussex Company were to be determined by the Railway Rates Tribunal.

At an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Hundred of Manhood and Selsey Tramways Company Limited held on 17th December 1923, the order which was not made by the Ministry until 15th July 1924, was approved, and the directors of the Tramway Company were empowered to make such arrangements for carrying out the powers granted by the certificate as they thought fit. This resolution was confirmed at a further Extraordinary General Meeting held on 2nd January 1924.

On the returns rendered by the Tramway Company to the Registrar at Somerset House an item "Light Railway Order—£181, 8s. 3d." appeared as an asset and in

successive years this item was increased until it stood at £453, 9s. 4d. in 1925. It is understood that the amount refers to expenditure incurred in connection with proposed extension to Patcham and Bognor and also Wittering but the Order was never issued. It appears that the expenditure in obtaining the West Sussex certificate, which is not a light Railway order, was borne by Col. Stephens out of his private resources.

Though the nominal capital of the West Sussex Railway Company under this certificate was £45,000, only £150 has ever been issued, and this is held equally by Mr. Austen, Mr. Luther Clayton and the executors of Mr. Macveagh. The provisions of the agreement of 1928 have never been carried out, and according to Section 22 of the Railway Construction Facilities Act 1864 the certificate expired except as to so much of the railway as was then completed, 5 years after the date of commencement. Although, of course, the matter is one for the Solicitor to decide, it does appear that there arises a strong presumption that the Tramway company is operating without any status whatsoever. The decision of the Railway Rates Tribunal (S.R. & O 1929 No.148) referred to later is, however, somewhat at variance with this view.

### 2. Topography

The principal features of the line, including all public road crossings are set out hereunder, with the approximate distance from Chichester shown at the left.

M. C. **Chichester.** The Selsey tram station is situated of the south of the Southern Railway coal yard. It consists of the passenger station with run-round facilities and also a goods siding. There is a connection to the Southern Railway, and other sidings serving Messrs. Sadlers and certain oil companies tenancies (see section 7). From Chichester the line curves sharply in a southerly direction (radius 6 chains) and crosses an occupation road leading to Messrs. Sadlers. (*continued on next page*)

## SR report on the HM&ST, *continued*

- M. C. Stockbridge Road Crossing. This is a public road carrying appreciable traffic. From this point the line runs in a direction parallel to the city of Chichester Canal, until it crosses it at the drawbridge.
- 1 51 Canal Drawbridge. The canal which is the property of the City has ceased to be used for commercial purposes. At a point further down the canal the County Council have recently abolished a road bridge and substituted therefore an embankment with culverts for the water; there seems no reason why this course should not be followed with the Tramway.
- 2 6 Hunston. The main public road from Chichester to Selsey is crossed here, and on the south of the crossing there is a station and siding. The station is at the south end of the village.
- 2 65 Hoe Farm Private Halt and Siding. These were provided as part considerations in the conveyance of land for the tramway.
- 3 50 Chalder Station and Siding. The village of Sidlesham is really in two parts, and Chalder Station, which is named after an adjacent farm, serves the north part of the village. This station is within 1/4 mile of Sidlesham Church and about 1/3 mile from the main road from which access to the station is obtained by the private farm road, the user being covered by an agreement the Tramway Company paying £2 per annum.
- 3 70 Church Farm Private Siding. Provided when the line was built.
- 4 30 Mill Pond Halt and Public Road Crossing.
- 4 75 Sidlesham. Station, siding, crossing place and public road crossing. The station is in a good position to serve the south part of the village. Between Sidlesham and Ferry the line skirts Pagham Harbour, being *canted* [ms correction: *constructed*] on an embankment constructed after the sea breach in 1910.
- 5 54 Ferry. Halt, siding and public road crossing over main Chichester-Selsey road.
- 6 53 Golf Club Halt.
- 7 7 Selsey Bridge. The main Selsey road crosses the line by means of an overbridge. There is a halt, the ballast pit of the Company and a private siding serving the Trojan Brick Works.
- 7 27 Selsey Town Station. This is situated about 1/2 mile from the centre of the town, 1/2 mile from the East beach and fully 1 mile from the West Beach. The Loco. Depot is here, and the yard holds approximately 50 wagons.
- 7 40 End of line. The line originally proceeded for another 1/2 mile in an easterly direction to Selsey Beach Station but about 1912 the line between Selsey and Selsey beach ceased to be worked and was sold. ■

*More from the SR report on the HM&ST in the next issue.*



# THE MISSING LINK - WILL IT BE RE-BUILT?

*Mark Yonge's fascinating post-AGM talk to members on plans to restore the line between Bodiam and Robertsbridge, reported by Stephen Hannington and Ross Shimmon. His talk was illustrated by 61 slides, some of which are reproduced here with permission.*

Mark Yonge began by declaring that his talk would not be "about faded historic documents—important though they are" but about the restoration of a complete Colonel Stephens Railway; the Rother Valley Railway. It would be the fulfilment of a personal dream to restore the link to the main line at Robertsbridge. It was an exciting time for the RVR because it seemed that it was now feasible, but it would amount to building much of the line from scratch. Mark distributed photocopies of plans of the line from the KE&SR headshunt just beyond Bodiam (pictured on our cover) to Robertsbridge, showing the landowners.

**"We could restore the halt at Salehurst if the demand was there"**

The track bed from Bodiam to Udiam Farm is to be rebuilt "this summer". Although most of the track bed was still in place, it had been ploughed back into field immediately beyond Bodiam and at other places. Further track bed clearances would be completed next winter. Part of the track bed still has sleepers in situ, some of them steel sleepers from the Elham Valley line. Bridge 2370, dating from 1947, remains intact and in good condition and is probably re-usable. The remains of the original RVR bridge girders still lie by the side of the track bed, where they were probably dumped

when it was being rebuilt. Nearby are fence posts made from original RVR half-round sleepers.

Mark urged members who wished to see the track bed for themselves to respect the owners' land and to avoid discussion of plans to restore the line, because delicate negotiations were in hand. It may be necessary to build a short diversion at one point to avoid an area where the original line runs through what is now a landscaped garden.

Robertsbridge is "a big problem area for flooding" - which was pointed out by the inspector when the line was first opened. Negotiations have taken place with the Environment Agency and engineers. New flood defences have been built away from the railway. Mark believes that it would be possible to tunnel under the bypass, which he would prefer to a level crossing. But it would be the most expensive and difficult

*(Continued on next page ►)*

## RVR's Mark Yonge addresses AGM



part of the re-instatement. It is possible that the by-pass will become a dual carriageway, in which case the a tunnel would have to go under the road and up a 1 in 50 bank, but as Mark said: "that's within the ruling gradient of the railway."

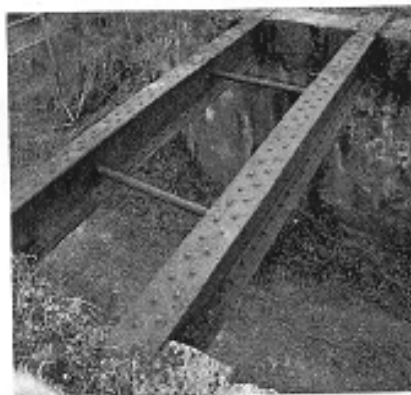
The RVR has bought Robertsbridge station yard and the first half-mile of track bed. A three-way point has been recovered from a former gas works site now occupied by the Millennium Dome. The RVR is getting a lot of support from local people for tidying up the site and renovations. Network Rail still owns the bridges on this section, but the company is awaiting the outcome of negotiations. A brand new bridge constructed by Southern Water in connection with new flood prevention works in the area is in

place, but there are several others over a relatively short distance outside Robertsbridge station. The so-called 'first bridge' out of Robertsbridge is a "nightmare" and financial support is required to rebuild it so that brake van rides can be operated as soon as possible. These need to be run at the Robertsbridge end of the line by 2007 and by 2010 at the Bodiam end to fulfil legal requirements.

Mark concluded his talk by announcing that the RVR plans to build a new Colonel Stephens style station at Robertsbridge rather than use the bay platform, currently in use as an engineers' siding. Eventually this may form part of a run-round. ●

**"The first bridge out of Robertsbridge is a nightmare"**

*Right: An original RVR chair and sleeper, near the track bed.  
Below: Bridge girders still in place.  
Photos: Mark Yonge*



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# DISPATCHES

*Letters to the Editor*

**Enclosed** are two articles from last week's *Shrewsbury Chronicle* (3rd June 2004) re: the Potts Railway Trust. The prospect of restoration is clearly raising the profile of the S&M, witness the recent appearance on two local websites:

[www.shropshireroots.org.uk](http://www.shropshireroots.org.uk)

Shropshire Archives resource for teachers and pupils. "The Abbey station" is a topic used to illustrate "Transport and communication" in Shropshire.

[www.bbc.co.uk/shropshire/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/shropshire/)

BBC local website. In the "History" section is "The railway that refused to die" by Leslie Oppitz. Quite a full, illustrated history of the line. Modern pictures of remaining structures are featured as well as archive photos.

**Phil Scoggins, Shrewsbury.**

## Young people could help drive railway trust forward

A NEW heritage group will link up with youngsters as they launch a number of projects to rekindle interest in the railway history of the town.

The Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust, established last year, was set up to preserve the town's heritage.

S.C. Chronicle 316/04

## Full steam ahead on station project

**THE FIRST** step to restoring Shrewsbury's old Abbey Station has been taken after several trees growing in the crumbling relic were chopped down.

*Letters to the editor should be sent to the address on page 2*

## AGM 2004: Full Report from Tenterden

*Chairman's report, continued from page 4:*

"Our Treasurer, Nigel Bird, continues to do a first class job looking after funds. Membership Secretary David Powell is doing a wonderful job, with our membership going up all the time.

"The ex-S&MR wooden jib crane has not been moved to its new site at the Cookham Pumping Station. In Shrewsbury we have the Abbey station project. The old S&M railway station building has been saved from the bulldozer and is to be rebuilt at a cost of £120,000, of which the council will make a grant of £60,000. The rest is to be raised by the Shrewsbury Railway Heritage Trust on a pound-for-pound basis.

"I must mention local Councillor Mansel Williams who has done so much to get this off the ground, and also many others, including myself.

"David Powell has reported how significant the Colonel-related Thomas Ward-Green papers are to our society. I would like to pay tribute to the work carried out by Stuart Marshall, our archivist, on this and for printing *The Colonel*.

"I know that 2004 will be a good year for our society. Thank you all for the help during the year. I am willing to stand for re-election as chairman."

***Treasurer Nigel Bird was unable to attend because of business commitments. He sent the following written report, which was read out at the meeting:***

***"The Society remains in a strong financial position, which may well not be in the spirit of the Colonel."***

"Once again I am delighted to report substantial progress within the society. Both subscription income and donations rose substantially in the past year. This has once again enabled us to make donations to 'worthy causes': £250 to the Ashover Railway diesel [the Planet referred to above] based at the Ffestiniog Railway; and a further £250 is 'set aside' for the Shrewsbury Abbey station project when called for by the restoration group.

"The Society remains in a strong financial position which may well not be in the spirit of the Colonel, but is what I feel members like to see.

"I am sorry that, due to business commitments, I am unable to attend this year's AGM. Please accept my apologies. I am happy to stand for re-election."

***The Treasurer had prepared a balance sheet which was distributed at the meeting and is reproduced on page 19.***

David Powell added "a very big thank you" to those who had made donations to the society, which had risen from £419 last year to £591 this year. He clarified that his personal expenses listed in the accounts were mainly for postage, envelopes and address labels for mailing *The Colonel*. ►

*Members wait for AGM proceedings to begin*



*Photo: Ross Shimmon*

Regarding requests for subscriptions to be paid by credit cards, David explained that Nigel's practice is to keep Colonel Stephens Society finances entirely separate from his own book-selling business. This means that, although Nigel Bird Books can accept credit card payments, this facility is not available to the society. We could, he said, set up our own arrangements, but this would incur overhead costs, such as the commission payable to the credit card company.

#### *Membership Secretary*

David Powell began by thanking all those who had sent their best wishes as a result of his absence from last year's AGM because he had "his near-side main bearing re-metalled, a reference to his recent and entirely successful hip operation. Membership had increased for the fourth year in a row. The headline figure (overall membership) stood at 275, compared to 262 last year, in-

year, including 254 full members (241 last year).

"As in previous years", he said, "the volatility in membership continues to give me some headaches in trying to forecast the print numbers for *The Colonel*, but this is a problem we are ready to entertain."

David placed on record the Society's condolences to the family and friends of Robin Penfold, who had passed away last year. Significant sources of new members, David reported, included our web site, membership brochures and our stand at the Warley National Model Railway Exhibition at the Birmingham NEC. David thanked newcomers Keith Patrick and Bob Taylor for their help at this show, as well as "hardened stalwarts" David Greensill, Les Spratt and Ned Williams. He appealed to members to renew promptly.  
(continued on next page ►)

**AGM report** (continued from page 13)

"Chasing those having 'senior moments' is still a significant task. Last Christmas, 44 members had to be 'hastened', of whom 23 responded in some way. Sadly, I know at least two of my discontinued members, if not more, will probably be renewing in the near future. And they will still expect the full year's back issues of *The Colonel*."

In conclusion, David reminded the meeting that he had the Society's display boards and "several hundred" copies of the Society's promotional brochure, copies of which were handed out. He added: "May I thank my fellow committee members for their help and understanding over the last 12 months. I am willing to stand for re-election."

**Editor**

Stephen Hannington expressed his regrets at having to resign as editor due to the time commitments of his new career as a college lecturer. He expressed his gratitude to all those who had contributed to *The Colonel* over the years and invited members to continue to provide such support for his successor.

Although several people had volunteered for the post, only one candidate was standing for election: Ross Shimmon. Stephen nonetheless thanked those who had come forward for their expression of good will.

Stephen said that he was willing to remain as Secretary and to stand for the vacant post of Publicity Officer, promising to make constructive use of the outstanding publicity budget of £150 sanctioned by the 2001 AGM.

The meeting passed a formal vote of thanks to Stephen for his contribution to the Society as editor of *The Colonel* for the last five years.

**4) Election of officers**

David Powell proposed that the committee be elected *en bloc* as follows:

**Chairman:** David Powell; **Treasurer:** Nigel Bird; **Membership Secretary:** David Pow-

ell; **Editor:** Ross Shimmon; **Secretary and Publicity Officer:** Stephen Hannington; **Archivist:** Stuart Marshall.

This proposal was accepted and passed by the meeting unanimously.

**5) Subscriptions**

It was agreed to make no change.

**6) Donations to related organisations**

Stephen Hannington expressed his willingness to continue to administer this side of the Society's activities. The meeting once again voted in favour of a donations fund of £500 to be disbursed at the committee's discretion to suitable conservation and preservation projects.

Suggestions for recipients included: possible plans by the East Kent Railway to rebuild the 'camping hut' at Shepherdswell; the restoration of an ex-WHR buffet car by WHR (Portsmouth); a project to rebuild a half-mile of track bed beyond Bodingham on the K&ESR; and the restoration of a Baldwin 4-6-0T by the WHR (Portsmouth).

Further funding of up to £250 is to be set aside for potential use by the Colonel Stephens Museum to acquire artefacts. The museum can bid for the money in relation to specific proposed acquisitions as needs arise. Granting of funds will be at the discretion of the Society's committee.

**7) Any other business**

**Video:** Hillside Videos was believed to be still preparing the promised two-tape package of Colonel Stephens material. Referring to the Society's involvement, David Powell said: "Without new material, there is no point in [the society] producing the video. It's not a dead duck; it's just on the back burner." Laurie Cooksey mentioned the existence of about 30 seconds of footage of the Shefflex railcar on the Selsey Tramway. **E-Group:** Robert Kosmider had offered to set up an e-group; a facility for members to exchange emails on Colonel-information related topics according to an authorising 'mailing list'. (continued on page 15 ►)

**AGM report continued**

This would allow members to exchange information on Colonel-related topics more quickly than via the pages of *The Colonel*. Further discussions with Robert will ensue.

**Ward-Green letters:** David Powell has transcribed the portion of this archive that consists of letters from the Great Man himself, whose handwriting David described as "absolutely lethal". Photocopies of the documents were provided for inspection at the meeting. Electronic copies of the transcriptions, available as a Word 97 document, can be supplied by David on request.

**AGM 2005:** Nigel Bird reported that member Mark Bladwell has offered to arrange next year's AGM at Bristol Temple Meads), including an outing to trace the remains of the Weston Clevedon & Portishead Railway "probably on an old bus." The meeting approved this proposal and set the date for Saturday 23 April 2005.

**Nameplates:** Les Darbyshire reported that the Historical Model Railway Society has donated to the Society a small selection of 4mm scale etched nameplates for S&MR owner's plates. If you are interested, stake your claim via the secretary, Stephen Hanington (address on page 2).

At this point David Powell declared the meeting closed. •

**Right: CSS members wait to board the train for Bodiam** Photo: Ross Shimmon



**Above: Robertsbridge station, K&ESR bay platform, currently in use as an Engineers' siding.**

**Photo: Mark Yonge**



## THE ROTHER VALLEY RAILWAY

Robertsbridge station, East Sussex TN32 5DG

### REBUILDING THE K&ESR 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, go to [www.rothervalleyrailway.co.uk](http://www.rothervalleyrailway.co.uk)  
or write to: RVRSA, 375 New Hythe Lane, Larkfield, Kent ME20 6RY



*RVR Bridge  
from Mark  
Yonge's talk  
at the AGM*

A small number of S&MR loco nameplates is available from the Secretary, in return for a donation to CSS funds. First come, first served!

## Setting the Record Straight

*Laurie Cooksey begins a new series in which he sets out to correct the record on some Colonel Stephens lines. Contributions from other members in the interests of historical accuracy are welcome.*

**Over** the years, many inaccurate reports have been written in books and magazines of the many and varied railways in which Colonel Stephens had an interest. I feel that it should be the duty of this Society to put these records straight to provide as accurate an account as is possible of the Great Man and his works.. Within our membership there are many experts on their own favourite lines), and I would like to suggest that these members help to "set the records straight" in a series of articles aimed at doing just that, taking one publication at a time. This series

should in no way be intended to belittle the work of others, but to help prevent future authors from falling into the traps inadvertently laid by others. New information will, from time to time, come to light, and the pages of this journal should be where the records can be corrected.

### **The Rye & Camber Tramway**

I should like to start the ball rolling with *The Rye & Camber Tramway*, compiled by Colin Judge, published by the Oakwood Press in 1995, beginning with the picture captions. **On page 4**, a picture of the terminus at Rye is said to have been taken 'just before the opening'. However, the evidence is that it dates after, but within a few months of the opening on Saturday 13th July 1895. A sash window has been added to the side of the booking office and (compare with the lower photo on page 12) a water tank  
(continued on page 17 ►)



(from page 16) fed with rain water from the station building gutters, has been sited behind the lattice fence.

The Rother Ironworks carriage is referred to many times as the "Jones coach" see for example the caption to the upper photo on page 12. In all my researches, I have found no reference to this carriage being described as such. CSS member Richard Jones, great grandson of E.P.S. Jones, the proprietor of the Rother Ironworks, not, incidentally, the "main carpenter" as described on page 13, has never heard of this title.

Rather than being an "early view", the lower photograph on page 12 is the earliest I have seen. It was taken at about 12 noon on opening day, prior to *Camber* and the solitary Bagnall carriage making a belated trial trip to Camber and back. The young man acting as driver standing on the ballast alongside the locomotive is said to be none other than William Henry Austen. This is the only picture that I have seen facing towards Camber. "Note that all the windows have been removed from the second class section of the carriage, no doubt because of the hot weather." As delivered the second class portion was completely open above the waist as shown. By March 1896, two windows mounted on a single wooden panel had been supplied (probably by Bagnall). It could be bolted to the roof supports between the waist and the cantails of the centre section of each side in inclement weather. Similarly sized sections of planked panelling were used to block off the remainder of the carriage sides; see the upper picture on page 12. Each of these four sections (two per side) was held in place by six bolts, so they were easily and quickly removed in good weather.

The conductor shown on page 19 (upper) is most definitely not Percy Sheppard, as he did not begin working for the tramway company until his 17th birthday on 4th

August 1914. The young man pictured is more likely to be Charles Thatcher, whose career ended abruptly when he fell from the moving tram whilst he collected fares on 8th October 1898.

The "dejected guard" in the upper photograph on page 21 is probably Frederick Sheppard, younger brother of Percy, taking over his duties when he left to serve in the Royal Navy.

The caption to the picture on page 22 states: "Note the carriage shed had not been constructed at this time." This refers to the large shed constructed in 1922 over the 1901 sand siding. The maintenance of all the rolling stock was carried out here and the shed played host to the open wagons and the petrol loco when it arrived in 1924. The original carriage shed had been built alongside the engine shed in 1896.

The petrol locomotive, in contrast to the description in the caption, is shown in earlier condition in the lower photograph on page 24 compared with the upper one. It can be dated to c.1926.

The upper photograph on page 25 shows the petrol locomotive in its 1933 condition. George Wratten later confirmed that it was he who removed the round brass-rimmed spectacle glasses from the out-of-service *Victoria* and fitted them to the petrol locomotive.

On page 26: "The Bagnall coach still has the balconies at either end and the 'Jones' coach just one in this view." However, the Rother Ironworks carriage always had only one balcony, at the Rye end of the vehicle. The incorrect description of the "two-road carriage shed" has already been mentioned. The view dates from 10th April 1909, not 1910. The photograph on page 28 is a blown-up portion of the previous picture. "One report stated that an outside running board was provided for the conductor to take fares whilst the train was running.

(continued on next page ►)

## Jackson's Jottings

*Continued from page 20*

### WC&P receivership

Western [sic] Clevedon & Portishead Light Railways Company. The company's solicitor said he had been instructed to submit to the making of the appointment, and his Lordship made the order, appointing the chairman of the company receiver and manager. •

### Setting the Record Straight

*Continued from page 17*

but no evidence or photographs show this." With the delivery of the Rother Ironworks carriage at Easter, 1896, a continuous wooden footboard was added to the platform side of both carriages, so that the conductor was able to collect fares whilst the tram was in motion. To help him keep his footing on this precarious perch, a brass handrail was fitted above the windows to the cantrail of each carriage. See the pictures 20 and 29 in my *The Rye & Camber Tramway: A Centenary History*, published by the Plateway Press in 1995. Picture 20 is also shown, colour-enhanced on the cover of *Judge*. "However, a handrail is evident, but it has been removed in this view." On fine, but windy days, a white canvas screen would be attached to the open western side of carriage, held in place by three hooks on the cantrail, with the lower edge tied to a rail two-thirds of the way up

the side, which ran the length of the second class compartment. The eastern side, away from the prevailing winds would be left open. While a new window, replacing the fixed original on either side of the first class compartment, adjoining the partition easy being fitted c.1905, the afore-mentioned rail on the western side of the body was moved along the carriage, so that the canvas screen provided some shelter for first class passengers as well. This photograph shows the lugs that held the rail along with the temporary rail, replacing the original books on the cantrail. Next to the partition in the second class compartment are the two fixed windows on their single panel, whilst the first permanently fixed sash windows, two per side, replaced the "wooden" windows at the Rye end of the carriage c. 1907.

The caption to the photograph of the open passenger wagons on page 30 says: "the style of seats and opening doors in the sides to these vehicles on the platform side only) can be clearly seen. However, there were no doors fitted to these wagons—they were open. Photograph 106 in my book shows the arrangement.

The photo on Page 31 (lower) is hardly a rare one as claimed as this is a blown-up section of the photo of *Camber*, the original carriage and these two open wagons that appeared in Peter Harding's excellent little booklet and in my book as well. • *Laurie Cooksey continues to 'Set the Record Straight' in the next issue.*

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or write to: RVRSA, 375 New Hythe Lane, Larkfield, Kent ME20 6RY

## Financial statement presented to the AGM

COLONEL STEPHENS SOCIETY  
FINANCIAL STATEMENT YEAR ENDING 20/4/04

Balance brought forward	£33.25	
<u>INCOME</u>		
Subscriptions Received	1436.00	(1331.00)
Donations Received	591.00	( 419.00)
Back Issue Sales	66.50	
Badge Sales	45.00	
Binder Sales	nil	
Sale of Society Display Cabinet	100.00	
Transfer ex Deposit a/c	220.00	
Current a/c Interest	1.06	
	<u>SUB TOTAL £2459.56+</u>	
	£2492.81	
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Printing "The Colonel"	423.40	
Postage & Stationery Re "The Colonel"	278.53	
Donations Made	250.00	
Corporate Membership	8.00	
Committee Expenses (D. Powell)	69.48	
<u>AGM 2003</u>		
Room Hire/Food/Size Admission etc	208.50	
	<u>SUB TOTAL £1237.91-</u>	
	Balance	£1254.99
Plus 1 unrepresented cheques		661.83
Balance as per bank statement 20/04/03		£1316.73
<u>Deposit Account</u>		
Balance at 20/4/02	£3165.70	
Less transfer to current account	220.00	
	£2945.70	
Plus interest earned to 20/4/03	36.11+	
Balance at 20/4/04	£2981.81	
<b>TOTAL CASH ASSETS</b> .....	<u>£4236.71</u>	(£3198.45)

## Jackson's Jottings

# Potts makes progress

*Chris Jackson browses through more clippings from the Railway Gazette*

**July 30 1909:**

### **Reviving a Derelict Railway.**

About two years ago the Light Rail Commissioners gave their sanction to the re-opening and working as a light railway of certain parts of the old Shrewsbury, Potteries & North Wales Railway, which had been derelict for 29 years. Under the title "Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway", the scheme has now been modified and confirmed by the Board of Trade, and seems to have a good chance of being carried out. The estimated cost of putting the line in order and providing rolling stock is £32,000, and some of the local authorities have been given power to subscribe to the extent of £5,750. At the quarterly meeting last Saturday, the Shropshire County Council voted £2,000 of this amount, to be handed over to the promoters when the line is passed by the Board of Trade as fit for traffic.

The history of the old line is remarkable.

Twelve Acts of Parliament, dating from 1862, are concerned with it, and it was not until 1880 that the Board of Trade ordered it to be closed in the interests of public safety. The intention was to build a line from Stoke-on-Trent to Shrewsbury via Market Drayton, thence to a junction with the Cambrian Railways at Llanymynech, thence to Llanbyddwel and across the Welsh hills to Bala, Festiniog and Portmadoc on the Cardigan Bay coast. But only 18 miles of "main" line were constructed – from Shrewsbury to Llanymynech – and three branches – Kinnerley to Criggion, 6 miles, Llanymynech to Llanbyddwel, 2 ½ miles, and a spur line to

connect with the London & North Western and Great Western joint line at Shrewsbury. All these lines were constructed, and, except for the spur line, were put into operation. These are the railways which are expected to take a new lease of life as light railways. *Meanwhile, there is also encouraging news from two of the Colonel's other projects:*

### **July 16 1909: Light Railway Order.**

The Board of Trade has confirmed the order made by the Light Rail Commissioners authorising the reconstruction and working as a light railway of certain parts of the Burry Port & Gwendraeth Valley Railway, in the county of Carmarthen.

### **October 8 1909: Plymouth, Devonport & S.W. Junction Railway.**

Gross receipts for the past half year show a small increase on the main line, due to the additional traffic arising on the company's light railway and passing on to the main line. The actual main line receipts show that goods traffic has been stationary, whilst passenger traffic has fallen off. The directors recommend a dividend at the rate of 1 per cent per annum (as compared with 2 ¼ per cent for the first half of 1908), carrying forward £1,250.

*And one step backwards:*

### **October 29 1909: Light Railway Receivership.**

In the Chancery Division on Tuesday, Mr Justice Joyce heard the petition of a judgment creditor for £888 19s 9d for the appointment of a receiver and manager, under the Railway Companies Act, 1867, of the  
*(continued on page 18 ◀)*