



Vintage Carriages Trust

Members' Newsletter: December 2013

Yes it is nearly Christmas which means it is time for the December 2013 edition of VCT's *Newsletter*. The year seems to have flown by, starting with all the activities connected with the London celebrations of the 150th Anniversary of the Metropolitan Railway. These included the visits of our Metropolitan Railway carriages both to the Epping Ongar Railway and to the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre – where of course our Nine-Compartment carriage No. 465 is now on loan. Otherwise activities at the Museum have centred on continued excellent restoration work. Our Engineer Chris Smith completed work on the underframe of our Metropolitan Railway Brake No. 427 and then went on to varnish to very high standards our near-completed six-wheeled Great Northern carriage No. 589 and is currently re-varnishing Great Northern bogie carriage No. 2856. Meantime, Stuart Mellin with Ian Wild and a very few others has very nearly completed everything else to do with the GN six-wheeler – and has now been able to start the challenging restoration of our Midland six-wheeler, No. 358. The photo shows this coach at the very beginning of December, with work well started – albeit at this stage largely demolition work!

The Midland coach will certainly be a significant project for 2014, but it will be far from the only project – some further work is planned for the bogies of No. 2856, to be followed by cleaning and painting the underframe of our Southern Railway-built "Chatham" coach No. 3554. Also there's the prospect of a "new" vehicle for the Trust, only 55 years old – but more of this later. These and many other plans and aspirations for this coming year of 2014 are of course very much thanks to the much appreciated continuing support of you, the Members of the Trust. This

seems an opportune moment to remind those of you who pay their subscription yearly that it's now time to do just this. Our Membership Secretary *Jeanette Achilles* is pleased to report that the Annual Meeting agreed that the Annual Membership be held steady at £10 for another year. She assures all Members that subscriptions and any donations you might like to give mean that we can continue to preserve and restore the carriages in our care. The

support and encouragement we receive from all Members is so very important and is a great help towards our Trust's continuing success.

So, if you pay your subscription annually, please seek out the renewal form which you will find enclosed with this edition of the *Newsletter* and please consider supporting the

"Midland Appeal": certainly our carriage No. 358 will need much support towards its restoration! For this reason, if you pay your annual subscription by Standing Order or if you are a Life Member, would you please consider making a separate donation towards this project?

As well as donations in money we do of course very much welcome donations of your time. Please consider whether you would like to join the "Front of House" team, looking after the Shop and the Welcome Desk: or would like to help with the ongoing task of sorting magazines, which is very important to us commercially: or with general administration and especially record keeping: or (if you have a reasonable level of "handyperson" skills) in the Workshop. If so, please contact us: telephone, email and postal details are at the very end of this *Newsletter*. Alternatively, just call in and speak with whoever is on duty at the time!



Midland six-wheeled Composite coach No. 358, built 1888

This coach has been owned by our Trust since July 1968. Despite it being the only Midland Railway coach on the Worth Valley Railway – itself a Midland Railway branch line – the Trust has done surprisingly little work on this coach over this 45-year period. This is why it's been rare to see mention of this coach in any of the VCT *Newsletters*, even in the briefest way. But as our Vice Chairman Mike Holmes writes: "the time has come for the Cinderella coach in the Vintage Carriages Trust's collection to come to the fore." And it is this coach which is the subject of our **2014 Appeal** – it certainly deserves our full support!

Jackie Cope has found very little written about this coach, either in the Trust's *Newsletters* or in the archives from the early 1970s through to the 1980s. One of the 1978 *Newsletters* describes the coach as "standing outside the Oxenhope green shed. No change but a quick repaint would do no harm (any volunteers?)". A later *Newsletter* tells us that "although the external appearance of this vehicle has not yet changed significantly the interior is a very different story. Internal partitions have been reinstated and the roof is now much better supported. Hopefully the next few months will see equally rapid progress on the exterior". The author of this piece was obviously an optimist as the pressing needs of developing our Museum at Ingrow together with the restoration of other coaches and of the two locomotives pushed our Midland coach still further back in the queue.

The photo shows the Midland coach still outside the green shed at Oxenhope but having received its "quick repaint". In the event and as reported by Trevor England in a *Newsletter* of the very early 1980s



this was "a professional re-paint by the KWVR contract painter as a preservative measure to avoid any further deterioration before any major work can be carried out". The date of this photo isn't known, but the car registration letters of E179BNC mean that it can't be before 1987.

This coach was then destined to spend many years in the "shoddy manure dock road" at Ingrow, between the Station and what is now Bahamas Locomotive Society's "Ingrow Loco" museum. Recovery from here

to our Museum involved a rather large crane and took place in 1997. Filming assignments in 2000 and 2001 meant that some attention was given to quick repaints and to the running gear. Otherwise nothing very much was done to this coach – until very recently! But here is the good news: *work has now started on the full restoration of this coach*. Stuart Mellin, aided by other volunteers including Ian Wild, is progressing well with the first steps in this full restoration.

Ian now takes up the story: *"the roof had sagged and the roof struts flattened out, the tenons between the roof struts and the side pillars had pulled out. Initially Stuart Mellin and Chris Smith tried to pull the components back to shape using jack and ratchet straps. This was unsuccessful so after some experimentation Stuart formed new roof struts from ¾ inch thick wood laminations glued together using a jig. Stuart was then able to trial machine the radiused edges to the struts so that they replicated the originals.*

The next step will be to remove the roof planks completely, thus enabling the new roof struts to be installed after which new roof planks will be fitted.

In the meantime I have burned the paint off all the woodwork on the centre road side of the carriage and made a start on the outer side. The plywood panels are in good condition and Chris has sanded some of the plywood main side panels to good effect. He plans to apply two or three coats of brushing primer to seal the grain of the wood before starting to paint.

The window frame bottoms of all of the fixed glasses has deteriorated to such an extent that replacement will be necessary. All the compartment doors need removing and repairing as necessary on the bench. New safety glass needs to be sourced and fitted.

An early task will be to remove the steel panel which covers the Keighley end of the carriage to see what, if any, problems lie underneath.

Chris Smith has started to sand down the interior woodwork in two of the Third Class compartments and this is in surprisingly good condition with only limited replacement needed.

Mike Holmes has ordered luggage rack brackets in conjunction with two other restoration groups thus reducing the cost."

By the beginning of this present month (December) Stuart had removed the replacement bulkheads to allow the body shape to be brought back to its correct profile, allowing this view of the interior of the coach – very much “open plan” just at present! The other shows the present exterior appearance following Ian’s work and should be compared with the photo opposite.



Workshop: progress continues

Events in the Workshop have been somewhat overshadowed by work now having started on the Midland six-wheeler. Chris has been involved with this to some extent but is essentially a “steel, paint and varnish” man rather than a “wood” man (although he’s learning!). His recent activities have been primarily “paint and varnish”. Following his work on the **Metropolitan Brake No. 427**, Chris has now re-varnished the **First Class Met. No. 509**, and is currently re-varnishing our **Great Northern bogie coach No. 2856**. As always, having coaches in the Workshop for whatever reason also gives the opportunity to catch up with little matters requiring attention. In the case of 2856 this has included repainting the roof (white is never a good colour for roofs, regardless of how authentic it might be!) and will include correcting the rather ad hoc route taken by the vacuum pipe at each of the two ends.

After due consideration we bowed to the inevitable and have sent the set of four lifting jacks to Messrs Mattersons of Rochdale for full overhaul. This was at a very fair price but nevertheless will cost us rather a lot of money! The jacks are expected back within the next few weeks and will very significantly improve our means of lifting coach bodies.

Chris Lawson’s **North Eastern Railway Saloon No. 1661** – better known as the “Old Gentleman’s Saloon”, of *Railway Children* fame – is still with us. We had hoped to be able to lift the Keighley end of this coach to allow the necessary removal of the drawbar spring at that end, but we found this not to be possible with our present (non-Matterson) jacks. Sadly having the Matterson jacks available will not help with this particular exercise as we would first need to provide concrete jacking pads at the Keighley end of the Workshop. This in turn looks to be “on hold” pending news of the “Further Rearwards Extension” project, as it is thought expedient to attend to these concrete pads as part of any larger “Rearwards” concreting work. The saloon is therefore expected to move shortly to Oxenhope for this and other necessary attention, using the Railway’s similar jacks.

Once again we can report the **Great Northern six-wheeled Brake No. 589** as being “very nearly finished”. The outstanding item is to provide an emergency communication cord. Peter Eastham and the Worth Valley’s Carriage and Wagon Department have kindly provided the necessary operating valve and associated hardware and we now have just about everything else needed – so hopefully it won’t be long before *full* completion!

Bellerophon

Ian Smith writes: "Our historic locomotive was test-steamed at Buckfastleigh, on the South Devon Railway, on 21st November [see Ian's photo]. The



old engine ran so well that we were able to get him on to a low loader the following day [see Ian's other photo]! The engine successfully ran at Foxfield over the weekend of 23rd/24th November and is now officially back in service.

As Members will remember, the initial problem with the engine was that the wheel began moving on the middle axle, left hand side. Investigations showed that at a previous repair a Contractor had removed the key from its original place on the wheel and made a new one, which destroyed the integrity of the joint, causing the movement. Whilst we initially thought all three axles might need replacement, further examination when at the South Devon's workshops showed that only the

centre driving axle was in need of replacement.

A new axle was manufactured and the original keyway reinstated to do the job it was originally designed to do. The now defunct new keyway has been machined and "filled in" but no longer contributes to keeping the wheel on the axle.

Whilst the engine was being looked at, we decided that some work was needed on the chassis, as it had been leaning to the left for some years and we knew this was affecting the axle boxes. So, all the springs have also been tested and certificated, with the rear one plus its supports being replaced completely. The old engine now sits perfectly straight for the first time in some years! Work has also been done on the axle boxes to eliminate some wear and tear and a new ash pan has been manufactured and fitted.

All of this work now means the engine is fitter than he has been for some considerable time and will be an easier proposition to overhaul when the 10 year boiler certification comes around because much of the chassis work has now been carried out!"



Sir Berkeley

Sir Berkeley has had a quiet but successful few months at the Middleton Railway, interrupted by visits to Embsay and to the Ribble Steam Railway for their Galas.

Ian Smith's photo shows *Sir B* running round at Bolton Abbey Station on the Saturday of their Gala weekend. The loco had to work rather harder the next day when the "J94" failed at Bolton Abbey and *Sir Berkeley* had to haul not only that locomotive but also Embsay's Vintage Train back to Embsay. *Sir B* well and truly rose to the occasion!

VCT's Committee has agreed that we would like to see the engine remain at Middleton for its next ten-year period and we are commencing negotiations with Middleton to see that this can happen.



Membership

Jeanette Achilles reports that the following new members have joined since the last Newsletter: Mr Brian Cain (Halifax), Mr Peter Fletcher (Dublin). We also are pleased to report that Mr Mark Warr has converted to a Life Membership.

The late Charles Meredith: It is with great sadness that we report the death of Charles (Chas) Meredith of Dublin, a great friend to and member of the Trust. Chas was very well known in railway preservation, both in this country and in Northern Ireland and the Republic. He frequently visited the Worth Valley Railway and our

Books, Books and more Books

Our Retail Manager Mick Halcrow has in recent months attended to a special donation of some 7,000 books covering all areas of transport. Although rather daunting and definitely not good for the back when carrying them around, this donation has been dealt with, with non-railway titles being sold on to other organisation with that particular interest. This still leaves a very good number, kindly supplemented by a further collection gifted to VCT by the late David Howitt. The Worth Valley Railway's Gala Weekend in October provided an ideal opportunity to sell books from these former collections which although very interesting in the case of the larger collection included many which were ex-Library and in not very good condition. These were put on sale on the VCT's well worn market stall outside the front of the Museum selling at £2 a

Annual Meeting

October 19th was the VCT Annual Meeting day. This year it coincided with a special event at Bahamas Locomotive Society's Ingrow Loco Museum at the other end of Ingrow Yard as LNWR "Coal Tank" locomotive No.1054 celebrated its 125th year. The Institution of Mechanical Engineers acknowledged the occasion by presenting BLS with the IMechE Engineering Heritage Award.

Our Chairman Trevor, realising that the Coal Tank would then haul a special train on the Worth Valley Railway, arranged for one of the carriages to be reserved for VCT members attending the Annual meeting. So, both BLS guests and VCT members enjoyed a pleasant trip on the Worth Valley Railway.

This was an interlude before VCT members gathered at 2 pm in our Museum's upper room for the Annual Meeting. The various reports gave a picture of a fully-Accredited Museum busy with carriage restoration and interpreting the Collection by use at home and away on other preserved railways and in TV and films.

Museum, especially on Gala weekends. VCT valued his interest in and knowledge of coach restoration. In the Republic he was involved in coach restorations, a special one in recent years being the Irish State Coach No. 351 which he took to Holland in 2010 for an exhibition of royal coaches. Chas did not limit his interest to railways. He was a keen ornithologist, a very talented jazz musician playing a variety of instruments, and at one time presented jazz programmes on RTÉ (Raidió Teilifís Éireann). He will be remembered by so many for his kindness and for his joy and his love of life.

time and at the same time videos at 50p each, both with a discount for quantity. Many folk were seen staggering up the yard weaving between the marvellous display of traction engines in steam, carrying a stack of books or videos or both, followed by a rather disgruntled-looking partner (can't think why!). The weather did not help being increasingly damp. In spite of this Mick and his team were very successful with the sales over the weekend.

Do call in at the Museum Shop. Mick now has a range of new souvenir items all of which are useful and advertise our Trust. Keith Pitt's framed pictures continue to attract customers. In the meantime do remember the Trust if you are clearing out any **railway related** items, books, magazines, slides, pictures, hardware, etc.

Members were asked to vote on one major piece of business, the proposal to change the Trust into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This was agreed. The Charity Commission website www.charitycommission.gov.uk explains what this means and how it will affect the Trust. The Commission states that CIOs have been created in response to requests from Charities (such as VCT) for a new structure which could provide some of the benefits of being a Company without some of the burdens. The Trust will keep the same name and any existing Gift Aid declarations and legacy plans are not in any way affected. Jim Pickles is looking into the constitutional changes necessary. As with any new way of working, it will not be an overnight change. We will of course keep members informed.

Would anyone who would like a copy of the Annual Report and/or the Minutes of the meeting please get in touch with our Hon. Secretary Dave Carr: contact information is at the very end of this *Newsletter*.

Wallace and Gromit Award

No VCT Annual Meeting of VCT ends without two rituals: the cutting of a large cake decorated with a photo of the latest VCT activity, and even more importantly the presentation to a VCT working member of the VCT Wallace and Gromit Award. Those of you who are long time VCT members will know of this prestigious award, represented by a model of Wallace and Gromit in the motor bike and sidecar for which they are famous. This is presented by the Chairman at the Annual Meeting to the working member who has most given themselves above and beyond the call of duty to the VCT.

Its origins go back into the mists of time when working member John Wallis joined the small band of working volunteers who met on a Wednesday evening to carry out various activities such a changing fluorescent tubes high up in the museum roof. He held ladders, he stood by light switches and plugs; he cast his eye over jobs to seek out any glaring errors in Philip Walton's work. All these vital activities made him indispensable. Much to all our sadnesses (especially Philip's) John moved on to a remote area of Scotland and Philip has to manage as best he can with lesser mortals.

This year's winner of the award is **Ian Wild**. The award was presented for his sterling work in helping to complete the Great Northern six-wheeler coach and for supporting Stuart in his work. As you will have read in the last *Newsletter* he even persuaded his wife to take up luggage rack knitting or is it knotting for the benefit of the GN 6-wheeler (and hopefully will do so again when the Midland comes to that stage!).

...and now for something different: two recent marketing tools used by the Trust:

QR Codes

Paul Holroyd explains:

"You may have noticed advertisements in newspapers, magazines and on billboards containing a small square with what appears at first glance to be something like a jigsaw pattern or maze. These are QR (Quick Response) Codes, and they contain a www. Website address embedded in the pattern. If you have a smart mobile phone,



you can simply hold your phone in front of the pattern, and then the website will be displayed on your phone. The code can also be stored on your phone for you to look at later. We produced a new museum leaflet in June which features a QR Code. With technical help from Graham Holroyd, we also have QR codes displayed discreetly inside some of the carriages, telling you about that particular carriage, and around the museum which take you to our filming credits. We have observed visitors at the Epping Ongar Railway [whilst our Metropolitan Railway carriages were there] and the museum scanning the codes with their smart phones".

TripAdvisor

Again, Paul writes:

"TripAdvisor is a website where members of the public can write a review and rate hotels, restaurants and attractions all over the world. People are also able to upload their own photos. Ratings vary from one star (terrible) to five star (excellent). Based on the number of reviews and ratings received, an establishment gets an overall rating and an overall ranking for a particular town. You can sort the reviews into either date order, worst reviews first (which I think is instructive to read), or best reviews first. Alternatively, you can click on a particular ranking (Terrible, Poor, Average, Very Good or Excellent).

I always find mystery shopper reviews interesting, and it is interesting to look at www.tripadvisor.co.uk and see other people's perceptions of places like York Castle Museum,

East Riddlesden Hall, the Brontë Parsonage Museum and other Heritage Railways.

In April a listing for VCT appeared on TripAdvisor. We decided to register as owners of the attraction, which allows us to add our own description and respond to any comments made by visitors. We decided to incorporate four things in our description to pre-empt any negative feedback: We are a small volunteer-run museum, so sorry – we don't have a café – and please wrap up warm if visiting in winter. We are located approximately 400 ft after passing the totally separate Ingrow Loco Museum.

As at 1st December, we are ranked number 2 out of 12 listings in Keighley. We have 7 Excellent and 3 Very Good rankings, giving us an overall four and a half stars out of five. Please note we are not allowed to write reviews about VCT."

Filming assignment

Paul Holroyd is pleased to report that another filming opportunity came our way recently. On Wednesday November 13th two actors and a very small film crew visited our museum to film sequences for a short film about Louis Le Prince one of the pioneers of moving pictures who filmed moving picture sequences in Leeds in 1888, and who is commemorated by a blue plaque on Leeds Bridge. He disappeared on 16th September 1890 after boarding a train which was travelling from Dijon to Paris.



Short sequences were filmed inside the Chatham, and alongside our GNR 6-wheeler as can be seen by Paul's photograph. A trailer for the film was due to be screened at the Leeds Film Festival in November

Books (again)

....this time, a book recommendation from Mick Halcrow, who writes:

"Some of you may have noticed in our collection in the shop a group of fiction books about a railway detective. These are the Jim Stringer novels by Andrew Martin. These are very popular and are a good read.

Andrew Martin has visited our museum and was probably inspired on his visits to write the

locomotive *Lord Mayor* into one of his books. The seventh volume in the series "The Somme Stations" features several pages on *Lord Mayor* working on the Spurn Point Railway. Well written by some one who seems to understand the locomotive and gives good detail on how it was used. Could be a good buy for a *Lord Mayor* fan."

Le Tour Yorkshire – Grand Départ 2014

2013 was very much the year of the Metropolitan Railway and the Trust made good use of the strong link with our Collection which includes the three Metropolitan Railway coaches. 2014 however may prove more of a challenge as the official tourism agency for Yorkshire "Welcome to Yorkshire" waves the banner and shouts "Allez Yorkshire". Yes, Yorkshire is the venue for the Grand Départ of the Tour de France which is taking place on our doorstep – indeed, the Tour will pass by the gates of Ingrow Yard.

We are working hard to find ways in which we can encourage people to stay in the area before and after the event and experience our Museum and the Worth Valley Railway. It's probably slower but it is a just as interesting form of transport.

If you have some ideas on the subject or any materials which could be of use as exhibits please let us know. And no, we don't think that a pile of rusty bikes is the answer!

The Tour route takes the riders through Keighley, past Ingrow Station, up Haworth Main Street, to Stanbury, sharp left towards Oxenhope and then very sharp right to start climbing over Cock Hill to Hebden Bridge. A great number of visitors are expected to watch the Tour, which will result in quite a lot of dislocation with road closures from well ahead of the expected time of passing to some time after. Arising from this, the Railway will be running an intensive service all day – it will be the only means of travelling up and down the Worth Valley. The Grand Départ day should be quite a day – if you can get to it!

VCT's next vehicle

Noting the success of "outstationing" *Sir Berkeley* on the Middleton Railway, *Bellerophon* at Foxfield and now the Nine-Compartment Metropolitan Railway carriage No. 464 at the Buckinghamshire Railway Centre there has been considerable debate within your Committee as to what should be the next vehicle to be taken in hand by the Trust. The final decision was remarkably close to home and is Waggon und Maschinenbau Diesel Railbus No. E79962. This is one of the two DRBs present at Haworth since the earliest days of the Worth Valley Railway, but has been out of use and sheeted since 1994 or so. The only significant progress since then has been the full overhaul of the engine, this being by one Chris Smith. This was before Chris joined us as our Engineer. Incidentally, the engine is the original Büssing engine – the other Worth Valley DRB has been re-engined with an ex-road bus AEC engine.

Restoring E79962 not only to Museum standards

but also to operating condition presents challenges but hopefully no insuperable problems. The concept is that, once restored, this vehicle could see use from time to time on the Worth Valley Railway. Also, being relatively easily transportable it could be taken to other Heritage Railway sites to allow people the experience and



enjoyment of travelling in this interesting vehicle. At the time of writing agreement in principle has been reached with the Railway, with a meeting to sort out the final details planned for early next month.

The photo dates back to 1976 or so. E79962 is the one to the left, in green livery.

Other Notices

Every Saturday and Sunday (and sometimes also during the week, to help cover for holiday absences etc) we need volunteers to look after our sales counter, and our visitors. If you can help even if only occasionally do get in touch, in person or by ringing the Museum on 01535 680425 or by e-mailing us on admin@vintagecarriagestrust.org

Gift Aid. If you haven't yet completed a Gift Aid form in favour of the Trust and if you pay UK Income Tax, would you please consider doing so – please contact Membership Secretary Jeanette Achilles for the necessary form.

Giving through your Self-Assessment Income Tax Return. If you pay Income Tax through the Individual Self Assessment scheme, you may nominate a Charity to receive any tax repayments as a donation. Should you wish to support VCT in this way you may do so by quoting the Trust's unique code, which is: FAC78RG. So, please note this number and please consider using it to support our Trust.

Data Protection Act. VCT is registered under this Act. The Trust's Membership records are included within this registration. VCT Membership records are not made available to any outside bodies.

Donations: Please keep your donations coming! As well as financial contributions we welcome items either for the Museum or for sale – everything that's "railway" is of interest: railway magazines, books, "railwayana" of all descriptions, and especially model railway equipment for selling through our Shop and the website.

Our twinned French body is AJECTA, the "Association de Jeunes pour l'Entretien et la Conservation des Trains d'Autrefois". You can find full information about AJECTA on their website www.ajecta.org. Longueville is close to Provins, to the East of Paris at the outer extremity of the suburban rail network. Contact information: AJECTA, Dépôt des Machines, Rue Louis Platriez, 77650 Longueville, France. E-mail contact@ajecta.org. Tel: (00 33) 1 64 08 60 62, or try the Provins Tourist Office on (00 33) 1 64 60 26 26.

CAF 'Give as You Earn' Scheme. Those taking part in this Charities Aid Foundation scheme can make one-off or regular gifts to the Trust by quoting 'Vintage Carriages Trust' and our Registration Number 00230500 on your Choice Form or Coupon. Your support in this way is very much appreciated!

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