

Vintage Carriages Trust

Members' Newsletter: December 2014

VCT: 50 years - 1965-2015

In a very few weeks it will be the New Year – and time to celebrate **fifty years of the Vintage Carriages Trust.**

The first of our celebrations will take place at Ingrow on **Saturday 10th January.** Details of this follow – but first here's Founder Member (and our current President) Robin Higgins' outline of the founding of the Trust, 50 years ago in 1965:

"Tony Cox had bought the MS&L coach and had told me who to contact on BR to buy redundant six wheeled pre-grouping coaches in Engineers' stock. I had fancied acquiring an L&Y Birdcage Brake, such as Low Moor Shed's breakdown van. This had been scrapped, but I was sent a short list of available coaches and picked a GN Brake Third, lying at York. Payment made, transport was arranged including a permit to ride in the coach to Keighley and before long a stock movement took it up to Haworth. There followed a discussion with Tony about what to do next. The best thing was to safeguard these precious relics in a separate organisation and to encourage others to join and to save further carriages. The name "Vintage Carriages Trust" emerged, and the rest, as they say, is history."

(Robin's correspondence with what was then British Railways is safely recorded and is in VCT's Archives.)

We are certain that all Members will join in thanking Robin and Tony for this first initiative, also all those who have helped in any way over the past fifty years towards making Vintage Carriages Trust the success which it undoubtedly is today.

We now have the interesting situation that three items of our Trust's Collection enjoy "50 Year" celebrations in their own right, slightly before the Trust's own "50 Year" Anniversary. Between them these three vehicles are 3½ Centuries old – including between them 1½ Centuries in preservation!

All three are now part of our Trust's Collection and all three will be in action on **Saturday 10th January 2015.** You are invited to travel on this train, to help celebrate Vintage Carriages Trust's 50th Anniversary!

Here's the detail of this:

On Saturday 10th January, a special "VCT 50" train will operate a shuttle service between Ingrow and Keighley. The first train will depart from Ingrow Station at 12 noon for a trip to Keighley and back to Ingrow. This will be for VCT Members and invited guests. The seating capacity is 78. If as a VCT Member you would like to travel on this train please let our Chairman Trevor England know either by email at trevorengland@uk7.net or by telephone 07715 834750 (mobile).

Tea or coffee and biscuits will be available in the Museum at 11 am before we start. We will return to Ingrow for a light buffet lunch starting with a soup, to warm us up, at 12.45.

The train will run two further trips to Keighley and back at 1.30 and at 3 pm. These will be open to members of the Railway and associated organisations as well as our own members.

So: what's the locomotive, and what are the coaches?

The locomotive is Manning Wardle 0-6-0 Saddletank **Sir Berkeley**, which arrived at Haworth by road 50 years ago, on Tuesday 19th January 1965. It was only the second locomotive to arrive on the embryonic Worth Valley Railway. (The first, albeit only by a fortnight, was the L&Y 0-4-0 "Pug" Saddletank No. 51218, owned by the L&Y Saddletanks Trust). *Sir Berkeley* was at the time owned by Mr Roger Crombleholme.

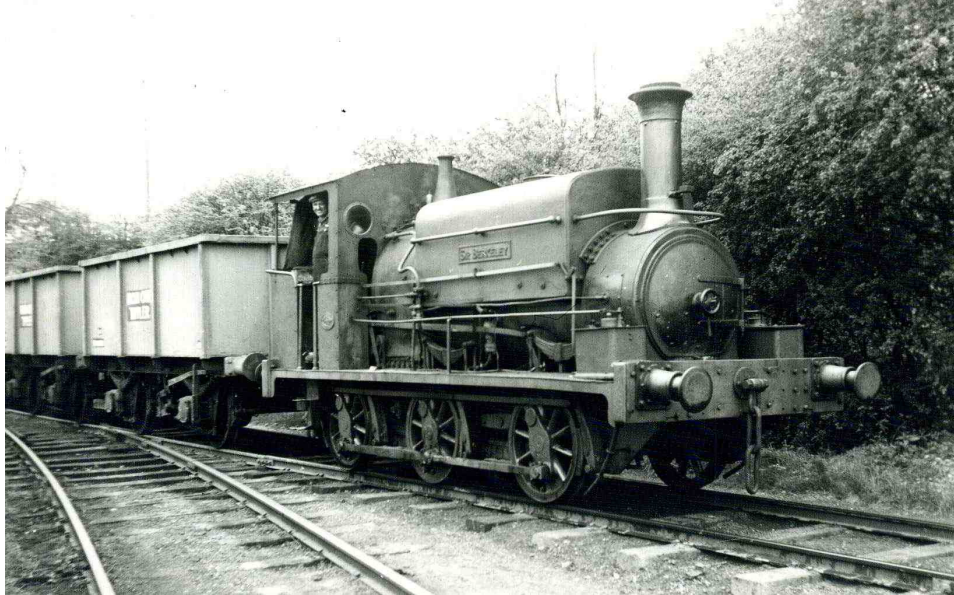
The locomotive came into VCT ownership in the early 1980s for restoration to running order. This was followed by a new boiler in 2006, this being with a much-appreciated Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

Sir Berkeley's

small size means it is not suitable for regular use on the Worth Valley Railway. VCT is very pleased that this locomotive (owned by the Trust) is well placed in Leeds at the Middleton Railway and fits well within Middleton's locomotive fleet. It is well looked after by the team there. The Middleton Railway is a particularly appropriate location for *Sir Berkeley* as this is only a few miles from where

it was built in 1891 by Manning Wardle at their Boyne Engine Works in Jack Lane, Hunslet.

Under VCT ownership *Sir Berkeley* has travelled to several locations around this Country, also to the Museum Buurt Spoorweg (MBS) at Haaksbergen in the Netherlands and to the Dutch National Railway Museum. Its diminutiveness appeals to all visitors, as does the lack of a cab roof!



This lack of a cab roof amazed the footplate crews when it visited Holland in April 1986. Having said that it looked fantastic toddling along

their long flat line with the Guard in his place on the roof of one of the coaches, enjoying the ride! The photo is by the late R M Casserley and shows the locomotive at work at Cranford Ironstone Quarry in April 1959. You will note that in *Sir Berkeley's* later working life working life they made sure that it has a roof!

The coaching stock for this train will be made up of a rare duo. The first of the two will be our **Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway** four-wheeled tricomposite carriage No. 176, built in 1876. This is the oldest coach in our

Collection and is seen as VCT's emblem, used on signs, literature, stationery and a number of souvenir sales items. You will have seen the logo at the top of this present *Newsletter*.

As a tricomposite carriage No. 176 has three classes. The sound presentation within this coach when on display in the Museum gives our visitors an idea of the class divisions in the society of the day. It features the imaginary Duke of Keighley with his wife and their servants (segregated into three different compartments) travelling from Manchester to their summer residence on the coast, at Cleethorpes. It also gives a reminder as to how the coming of the railways from the first time allowed travel over great distances over the whole of the Country – much more easily

than by horse, by stage coach or by foot. For the first time people of all classes were able to travel great distances in (for some) comfort. To the people of the day this completely changed life, with this increased mobility transforming their view of the world.



The second of the two coaches to be used on 10th January is the **“Matchboard” Brake Third No. 3554**, designed by the South Eastern & Chatham Railway but built by the then very young Southern Railway in 1924. This “Matchboard” carriage was preserved by Mr Roy Edwards and was initially intended for the Westerham Valley scheme – when this scheme failed it was purchased from Mr

Edwards by the Worth Valley Railway. This coach is quite a star having appeared in many film and television sequences, mostly due to its corridor, which lends itself to situations that bring about confrontations, and plots full of mystery.

These two carriages (the MS&L and the “Chatham”) were the first to arrive on the Railway and passed the site of our Museum at Ingrow for the first time fifty years ago, on Saturday 6th March 1965. Both carriages had arrived at Keighley a few days prior to this date and formed part of the second train of the Railway’s first significant stock movement, which took place on that day.



What a fantastic opportunity to see this locomotive and these carriages in action – all of which were among the very first to arrive on the Railway 50 years ago (come 2015) and no doubt have travelled many times since that day past Ingrow. In these early days Ingrow was a very different place, with the original Station derelict (and later demolished) and with the Yard abandoned, unused and unkempt – including the area where our Museum now stands.

The “Rearwards Extension” Project

We are again delighted at the response we receive from Members when seeking funding for our activities. This has once again been seen in the response to the “Rearwards Extension” Appeal, for which we have to date received donations of around £8,000. This is encouraging and we do thank all those who have shown their support so generously. However, if you are among those who have experienced building work and building repairs etc you will know that there is a need for further donations if we are going to successfully complete this project. If you have not as yet been able to make a donation, please be aware that further contributions would be very welcome! Donations in kind thus far have included gifts of models, books and photo slides. All these are greatly appreciated and will in due course be turned into the cash needed. Further gifts of this sort would be very much welcomed – anything you like so long as they are *railway* associated! Progress on site so far has involved firstly an Ecological Survey to establish that our activities are not damaging any rare plants or animals. Bats and newts are the ones most often quoted. Fortunately the Survey did not find any evidence of any animal life or of any rare plants which could be damaged by our activities. Secondly, the very necessary site clearance has now taken place.

This has been in the capable hands of Charlie Waddington, who specialises in this type of work. The site of our extension is not the easiest location to access and from which to remove the debris collected. For Charlie, an extra problem included a failed and immobile rail tamper, blocking access down the rail side of our Museum building. This machine should have been at work on the Worth Valley Railway, primarily for crew training but obviously also doing invaluable work for the Railway’s Civil Department. This was not to be on this occasion! No sooner was the tamper repaired and out of the way that a further obstruction arrived in the shape of the equipment and van of an asbestos removal Contractor – of which more later. This further obstruction again delayed Charlie’s access to our “rearwards extension” site. Anyway: this particular job of site clearance has now been completed.

Its importance is illustrated by the “before and after” photographs on the next page. The “before” photo shows, to its left, virtually the whole of the end wall of our Museum’s workshop. The extension will be from there over Gingerbread Clough (which lies at the foot of the diagonal slot, just to the left of the wire fence to the right) and almost to the wire fence itself.



Photos: "Before" (left) and "After" (right).

The project moves slowly onwards and we once again thank you for your continued support.

It may not seem a major project but it will make a great difference to our workshop space and Trevor, Bill, Dave and Jackie (the lead team for this project) are keen for it to progress rapidly once these preliminaries are sorted. There is one further Survey to be completed before actual construction work can start. This is a required "topographic and utility mapping survey",

Workshop

Other than making the final two brackets for the second set of the roof mounted destination boards, the work on the "**Chatham**" coach as described in the last *Newsletter* is now complete. This coach was then exchanged for the

Metropolitan Brake coach, No. 427. Bringing the Met. Brake back into the Workshop was to allow attention to the wiring between the underframe and the body of the coach. This had not been reinstated since the body had been replaced on to



the underframe, now well over a year ago.

There is a need to be able to energise at least some of the coach's lights as display lighting when in the Museum, with a requirement also for basic lighting to be available when the coach is in actual service – in particular for the Worth Valley Railway's two tunnels. The advent of LEDs (Light

emitting Diodes) has allowed what seems to be a viable scheme to achieve this, the other key components being two 12 volt sealed batteries and a modern electronic battery-conditioning "fit and forget" battery charger. Hopefully all this should be in position within the relatively near future.

We are also pleased at the number of members who have indicated on the form send out with the last *Newsletter* that they are willing to offer a **loan** if needed. Our collecting box is still very much on the table! Please do help us to see this project completed and again many thanks to all those who are showing their interest and are giving such generous support.

Meantime, Ian Wild and Michael Cope together with enthusiastically-welcomed new Volunteer Ernest Dodding are well on with restoring a further compartment within this seven-compartment coach. This involves dismantling all the wood trim within the compartment, removing the many layers of cream paint, varnishing (which is what we are aiming towards – we think the first few layers of the cream paint date back to the War) and then reinstating everything. A similar exercise involving the ceiling and all four sides of the compartment is also in hand, mainly by Ian Wild (see photo).

These will be painted rather than varnished: but this doesn't necessarily make things any easier! All this work is rather repetitive and needs some care, but is within the reach of just about anyone. If you would like to join us please don't hesitate to come to the Workshop any time from about 10 am onwards: Tuesday or Wednesday for preference, otherwise Thursday. If possible please contact Chris Smith, Ian Wild or Michael Cope beforehand: the Museum telephone number is 01535 680425.

Since the last *Newsletter*, the **six-wheel Great Northern Brake** Third No. 689 has left the Workshop after a rather long stay. It too is very nearly (but not quite) complete. It lacks power to its "gas" lighting (actually small 12 volt capsule lamps contained within the gas mantles), also completion of the communication cord emergency brake equipment. With Stuart Mellin now having made a necessary wooden pattress for the brake release valve, Chris should be able to complete the latter in the fairly near future – hopefully it won't be *too* cold in the Museum, compared to the nice warm Workshop!

As mentioned in the last *Newsletter*, **Railbus E79962** is now in the Workshop, occupying the space vacated by the GN 6-wheeler. One thing we could have done without was to find a little more asbestos. We had no choice but to call in specialist asbestos removal Contractors. This time it was Messrs Rhodar of Leeds who did the job on Thursday and Friday 27th and 28th November. We could also have done without the considerable additional costs of this further asbestos removal, but we really had no choice in the matter. However, with what we trust is the last of the asbestos removed it does mean that Chris Smith as a "second priority" can start work on this vehicle. There are significant engineering and cost challenges ahead but there is a great deal which can be dealt with immediately, simply and cheaply. Again, if anyone preferably (but not essentially) with demonstrable engineering skills would like to help with this longish-term project would you please contact Chris Smith in the Workshop? Anyone with pipe-fitting skills would be especially welcomed – challenges include remaking some of the small bore air system, also replacing the cooling water pipework as removed by the Contractors (not Messrs Rhodar) in the first stage of asbestos removal. We look forward to welcoming you!

An unusual mid-November visitor to our Workshop was pioneer **Hunslet diesel mechanical 0-6-0 shunter Huskisson**, built in

Leeds in 1944. This visit was to allow Chris Smith to repaint this locomotive for its private owner as a VCT contract job. This he did to his now-customary very high standards, to the full satisfaction of *Huskisson's* private owner and everyone else involved. The one thing we didn't do was to take a photograph of the locomotive whilst in our Workshop. The only available photo since this repaint was completed is that shown. This is at Haworth on a typical Haworth grey, cold, dark and wet day and certainly does not show the quality of this repaint – take a close look at the locomotive if you can the next time you



visit the Worth Valley Railway!

Huskisson departed our Workshop towards Haworth just in time to allow our own **Sir Berkeley** to take its place in our Workshop, having travelled on a low-loader from the Middleton Railway on Wednesday 26th November. This locomotive will be in operation – all being well – on Saturday 10th January, as previously mentioned. It will stay with us for several weeks before returning to the Middleton Railway and hopefully will see some further operation on the Worth Valley Railway before then. Opportunity will be taken before 10th January to attend to a few outstanding maintenance items on *Sir Berkeley*, including some drawbar maintenance.

Annual Membership held at £10!

Jeanette Achilles, our Membership Secretary, draws attention to our subscription renewals which she expectantly awaits at this time of the year. She writes:

The good news, as you will see, is that in this special VCT 50th year of 2015 it has been possible to hold the annual renewal subscription at £10. We have been very heartened by all the donations to help fund the cost of our 'backwards extension' and the supportive letters from members, old and new. You really are making an investment in the future of the Trust and

next year you will hopefully see concrete evidence (pun intended) of our growth and expansion.

Thanks also to everyone who attended the AGM in October and came with us for an all too brief trip in the Great Northern six-wheeler. It was lovely to see you all on the day. Some of you are able to pop in to Ingrow during the year and you are always welcome. We know you are also 'ambassadors' for the Trust and we thank those who mention us favourably to others – our reputation certainly seems to be a good one.

We are progressing steadily towards our transition from VCT as Registered Charity 510776 to VCT as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). However we are as yet not at a stage where we need to ask Members to renew as Members of the CIO. So, if you pay your subscription annually it's a question of "business as previously" – please use your enclosed "Annual Member" renewal notice. Transition to membership of the new CIO will come later.

For everyone else, whether as a Life or Honorary or "Standing Order" Member, again we're not quite at the stage where we need to transfer

The Annual Carriage Restorers Weekend

Mike Holmes reports on his attendance at this event, held this year on the 18th/19th October: *"A very worthwhile gathering which this year was held on the Llangollen Railway at the Pentrefelyn Carriage and Wagon workshops. This yearly gathering was originally set up by Stephen Middleton at the Embsay Railway. It allows those interested in carriage restoration and maintenance the length and breadth of the country to come together for the good of all. Llangollen treated delegates to a variety of talks, slide shows and practical demonstrations, much of the content relating to vehicles based at the Llangollen.*

A Great Western Railway auto coach was in the workshop for timber body frame repairs prior to its lower sides being re-clad with new steel panelling. A Southern Railway designed 'elephant and theatrical scenery bogie van' was receiving attention to its bodywork including the fitting of new side doors.

There were a couple of Diesel Multiple Units in the shed, one of which was an extremely rare 'Cravens' vehicle which has had extensive replacement of corroded steel panelling and body frame members.

Memberships. Again, it's "business as previously". The same applies should you like to make a donation or for that matter any other payment to the Trust!

We welcome as **new members** to the Trust: Miss Emma Mountain (Keighley), Mr J A Hanson (Keighley), Mr N Overend (Todmorden), Mr Ernest Dodding (Keighley), and Mr William Snook (Crewe).

We thank Emma and Ernest who have become workshop volunteers at Ingrow in the last few months and are providing 'extra hands' in what is becoming a busy workshop.

A slide show presentation on the restoration of the Llangollen DMU fleet looked at the highly skilled work which has gone into keeping these historic vehicles running in what is their sixth decade.

Day 2 included a look at a further ex-LNER Thompson vehicle under restoration of its interior and a pair of Gresley designed vehicles, one of which, a Great Northern Corridor Brake Third built at Doncaster in 1906, was of pre-grouping origin. Stephen Middleton presented a slide show to update everyone on progress being made on the restoration to operating condition of his North Eastern petrol-electric Auto coach and trailer, these two vehicles being the forefathers of the late 1950s and early 1960s DMUs in the Llangollen Railways fleet."

Mike found the event most enjoyable and instructive, both in terms of seeing restoration work being undertaken and meeting up with fellow restorers to discuss the many projects they were involved in and the major issues involved in carriage restoration.

VCT at the Warley Model Railway Exhibition

As Mick remarked on returning from the Carriage Restorers' Weekend, it is good occasionally to take a look at the world outside one's own little patch of railway preservation. A great opportunity to do this was at the Warley Model Railway Exhibition, staged at the huge National Exhibition Centre (NEC) in Birmingham on the weekend of 22nd and 23rd November.

Our own locomotive *Bellerophon* (normally looked after by and resident on the Foxfield Railway) and Foxfield's own recently-restored North Staffordshire Railway four-wheel four-compartment Third carriage No. 61 made up the centrepiece





for this year's Exhibition, as part of Foxfield's "Knotty Heritage Train". They looked excellent as full sized 4 ft 8½ inch gauge exhibits, dwarfing the model railway exhibits and other items on display or for sale at this event. A good team from VCT including our newest Committee member Bob Sprott helped man a stall and promote our Trust among the crowd, in company

with Members of the Foxfield Railway. The Knotty Carriage Trust, based at Foxfield, is the group which has lovingly restored the NSR carriage No. 61, with the assistance of a PRISM grant. Certainly the (abbreviated) "Knotty Heritage Train" on display at the NEC made a very fine display – as illustrated by the photos by John Crane (opposite) and Dave Scragg (this page). Collecting buckets, sales of some souvenir items and the distribution of a lot of advertising leaflets made it a worthwhile project for both Foxfield Railway and the VCT. Total attendance at this Exhibition was some 17,500: so it was an excellent publicity opportunity for us and for Foxfield!

Retail News

Mick Halcrow as our Shop manager is very aware of the value of those Members who are able to give a few hours of their time to help look after the Shop and the Magazine Room, keeping both well stocked and tidy and helping to welcome visitors. The hours are approximately 10.30 am to 4.30 pm. If you can help here, please contact Mick by email, by phone or by letter: contact details are at the end of this *Newsletter*.

Keith Pitts as one of our paid Employees continues a steady sale in the Shop of railway-related pictures he has framed (ideal Christmas gifts!) and has charge of magazine sales by post. His work with postal sales (mostly back number railway magazines) brings him into contact with customers all over Britain and (occasionally) across the globe. The closing of so many local Post Offices does not help Keith in this activity as the nearest Post Office is now in Keighley town centre – and even that is in W H Smiths! A pack of magazines is not a lightweight item but one rarely hears him complain. Keith also gives up one of his Sundays each month as a volunteer in the Shop and we thank him for this.

Mick is in the midst of the annual rearrangement of the Magazine Room allowing room for 2015 magazines. He remarks that the magazine room

produces an annual income comfortably above £8,000, so this work is not in vain. Many thanks to all who have worked in the magazine room this year. The Shop and the Magazine Room are kept well stocked. John Stephenson makes sure the magazine room does not get buried under unsorted magazines and his knowledge of railwayana is a real asset to the Trust's sales. The Shop and walkways remains clean and tidy by the efforts of both John Heaton and Rose Thompson. We thank them both. Rose is also a distributor of a cheery smile and boiled sweets, which help the day along!

Mick Halcrow is also looking forward to the Worth Valley Railway's Gala Weekend in February when we once again will have a grand book sale when real bargains can be had. One man could not believe his luck at the last event in finding a very fine reprint of a Bradshaw for £2 which he had seen in a bookshop at £15. (*Remember: £2 each, or three for a fiver - bound volumes (magazines) at £5 each.*)

In the meantime we have a superb selection of donated railway books – many would make good Christmas presents or on the other hand one could stock up ready for the type of weather that does not allow gardening or watching cricket!

VCT stars again: "Testament of Youth"

Mick Halcrow provided a brief résumé of the latest film in which our carriages have been involved. The story line of "Testament of Youth" involves a middle class girl, Vera Brittain, and her searing experience of World War One. Vera is superbly played by a young Swedish actress, Alicia Vikander.

The film opens with Vera and her brother and his friends enjoying the late summer in Buxton, with the North Yorkshire Moors Railway being used for railway sequences out of Buxton.

War breaks out and the young men join up, including Vera's friend Roland and her brother Edward. Keighley Station doubles up as Charing Cross Station and is used for the farewells as the troops leave for war. Five of our coaches feature. The Chatham has the interior shots (by reason of its corridor) and GNR 589 has the best of the exterior shots in quite a long sequence, with troops hanging out the windows as the train departs from "Charing Cross".

Mick commends "Testament of Youth" as a must-see film and says this is probably the best film VCT has played a part in making.

And finally...

Are you worried?

Are you depressed?

Do you ever think "we will never be able to finish this" – whether "this" is the Railbus, the Midland six-wheeler or even the Rearwards Extension?

If so: take heart! This early photo (date unknown, photographer unknown: any information would be welcomed) shows our Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway carriage a great many years ago at an early stage of its restoration. We fixed this – so we can fix *anything!*



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@vintagecarriagetrust.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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