

VCT News

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Winter 1980/1981

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Editorial

Greetings to all VCT members and best wishes for the New Year. Now, you might ask, whatever happened to 1980? A good question: indeed some of our more discerning members may be wondering if 1979 was a good year for preservation! Well, having been on the "sidelines" for a while until getting involved with VCT, I can assure all who, for various reasons, are unable to visit the Worth Valley, that some jolly hard graft has been going into the task of keeping our various historic possessions in running order, and to ensure that those that are not runners at present do not "fade away".

This is the time of year when it is traditional to make resolutions, even though they usually tend to get "lost in transit" as the year progresses. It is hoped to keep you all better informed this year (no, we are not making a bid for the "Times"!), by producing at least two more newsletters during the year, and I am pleased to say that we have two very interesting contributions in hand to start the new series off with the Spring issue.

EGC.

Exhibitions

The VCT will again be taking part in the Rochdale Model Railway Exhibition, and Michael Cope has sent the following note for inclusion:-

"Book the dates: Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th February;
Town Hall, Rochdale.

Now reach for the phone, or for letter-writing kit. You are asked for your assistance in manning our stand, even for an hour or so. This year Malcolm Loukes is co-ordinating the manning of the stand; so please ring him or write to him at home.

Transatlantic Thanks.

Many thanks to both Mike Tisdale, for magazines safely received -will certainly be out to good use-and to F. William Rugg, for letter about "Sir Berkeley" and a donation. These gentlemen wrote from Sacramento and from Seaford, Delaware, respectively.

MWC

Rolling Stock News.

First Class Met. 509

Progress continues steadily if slowly. The major problem remains replacing one of the vehicle's corner posts: this is being done as a contract job, but seems beset by delays- principally the difficulty of finding a piece of sound hardwood 7" x 6" x 8'6" or so. This almost certainly will mean a laminated construction.

The present activity is stripping the accessible side down to bare wood, to allow varnishing in due course. The decision to go to ~~teak~~ varnished teak on both sides has now been made: previously it was intended to varnish one side and paint the other! Remaining problems here - other than that ~~cleaning-up of wood on such a scale is very~~ boring - include the several aluminium panels and the need to replace quite a lot of the external trim.

Internally, five of the seven compartments are virtually complete. The other two cannot be completed until the aforementioned corner post and associated woodwork has been dealt with, so allowing the roof and ceilings of the two compartments at that end to be re-instated. Almost all of the surviving trim is now cleaned up and varnished (internal). Toughened window glass is now on order at Enormous Expense. Our (contract) electrician has largely completed re-wiring the lights. As ever the standard request for help: anyone interested in working on this coach please contact Michael Cope.

G.N.R. 6-wheeler.

This was unexpectedly evicted from Oakworth Shed when Haworth foot-bridge moved into this shed for the Army to work on it. This came as a bit of a surprise not only to us but to the Railway as a whole - Civil appear to have omitted to tell anyone of this move!

This coach is now in Oxenhope Exhibition Shed. As we would much like to improve its rather weary appearance as soon as possible, we have now contracted with Mr. Whitaker (of the Oxenhope firm of Messrs Whitaker Heaton) to prepare the exterior for re-varnishing and to attend to some necessary exterior ~~woodwork~~ renovation. Unfortunately we may not be able to do anything with the interior for the time being mainly because there are already three VCT coaches being worked on and we had not intended (paid) work being done on this coach for a year or three yet. (Ed. note: Robin Higgins is curator of this coach and he has mentioned that there is some interior paint-stripping required in various compartments, and that if any members feel qualified to help with this would they please contact him).

Bulleid TSO E1469S

Quotations are being sought from Horwich Works to have at least some work done on this coach, in particular in renovating the areas around the windows. The size of the quotation, and expenditure elsewhere, will determine what (if any) work we will be able to do here.

Rolling Stock News (continued).

My thanks to Michael Cope for collating the above notes for the Newsletter - Paul Waite advises that work is going on steadily so far as the M.S.&L. four-wheeler is concerned. He is particularly anxious to hear from anyone who can provide any information on what the interior of the coach would look like, from photographs or other sources, and also if anyone may have relatives who just might recall having travelled in such a coach, and who might recall the appearance of the oil-lamps: it is understood that these were "dropped-in" to the holders by someone walking along the roof of the vehicle.

Trevor England advises that the Midland Railway 6-wheeler has had a professional re-paint by the KWVR contract painter as a preservative measure, to avoid any further deterioration until any major work can be carried out. EGC.

Metropolitan Coach No. 465.

The nine compartment 3rd class Metropolitan coach, No 465, is still undergoing major internal and external restoration work at Oxenhope.

Although most of the bodywork was completed over a year ago the long dry spell last Spring and the direct sunlight cracked several panels along one side of the coach. Therefore extensive work has been carried out over the past few months to repair this damage and to seal the whole body again against water ingress. Half a dozen or so windows and several new droplights have also been fitted.

As far as internal restoration goes, the target set three years ago was to restore all the compartments to a condition as close as practically possible to that of 1919 when the coach was built - true restoration, not just a facelift! Four compartments have been completed to date and work on the fifth is well advanced. The sixth has been started while the seventh and eighth are awaiting structural woodwork repairs to be carried out by a joiner. Work has generally been given a boost with a few extra helping hands (Mr. & Mrs. P. Bowen) found in recent months.

It is rewarding to note that this coach continues to earn money by way of filmings - the most noticeable since the last edition of VCT News is YTV's "Good Companions".

Chatham Coach S3554S.

This coach is, as usual, available for traffic and has been used frequently throughout the year on Super Train specials.

As a result very little work has been carried out on it during 1980 however a lot of the exterior woodwork was replaced above the windows just before the 1979 Santa Train.

The paintwork was a little rushed at the time to guarantee availability for Santa but has been adequate for this year. Next Spring the Chatham will be painted in BR(S) green and with the exception of a joiner making some new droplights it is hoped that no other external work will be required in 1981.

Internally all the ceilings will probably need repainting and these will be white rather than the present cream colour. Spare ventilators have been polished and lacquered and these, fitted, will complete all the internal work for the near future.

VCT Shop Key. Will all concerned please note that the shop is currently on a standard Haworth Shed mortice lock.

CGS.

Membership Recruitment.

1980 has been a fairly good year - the shop has made a fair profit and, as members will see from the pages of this newsletter, work has proceeded on several of the coaches.

However, our membership remains below 100 - this year a concerted effort will be made to bring the membership well into three figures, hopefully including a number of individuals who are not already committed to other regular railway projects. Members who have any ideas for attaining this object, please contact the Chairman, Chris Smyth c/o Haworth Station.

CGS.

CHARITABLE STATUS

No News, as they say, is Good News. Following the approval by our Extraordinary General Meeting (minutes enclosed) of the required Constitutional Changes and the completion of a Charity Commissioners Form, there has been no word of any progress. Our Honorary Auditor, Richard Coulson, points out that the Commissioners are seriously overloaded and that being sent the Form did in fact represent considerable progress. It looks as if all is going well here, but it may be several weeks before we hear further on this matter.

MWC

"SIR BERKELEY"

Informal discussion after the E.G.M. fully approved the suggestion of bringing "Sir B." into VCT's area of interest; subject to our attaining Charitable Status; to the agreement of the Trust in formal General Meeting; and subject to either purchase at a low price or gift from the owner. We await the Charitable Status decision before proceeding further.

MWC

"BELLEROPHON"

Avid readers of the correspondence columns of "Push & Pull" will have noted prolonged discussion concerning the future of this locomotive. A letter from your Secretary in the last issue suggested as a possibility VCT acting as an "umbrella" to provide a link between those wishing to finance restoration and those wishing to physically do the restoration, whilst emphasising that although VCT could possibly provide very limited finance it certainly couldn't provide labour.

At the time of writing (Christmas afternoon, recovery proceeding satisfactorily!) the response to this has been precisely nil. If you, as a member of VCT have strong views one way or the other on this matter, Michael Copewould be pleased to hear from you.

MWC

"Sir Berkeley" - Trevor England advises that a total of £339.25 has been paid out towards the transport and machining of the wheels. At present £255 has been received in donations, with others promised, and at a future date a full "Thank You" list will be published.

MEMBERSHIP - a report by the Membership Secretary.

Inflation is up, unemployment is up, vandalism is up and VCT membership is up - 96 this year compared with 81 for 1979. The Trust is flourishing, with members as far afield as Seaford, U.S.A.; Port Credit, O ; Kowloon, Hong Kong; even sunny Castleford! Although many members are restricted in giving manual help by the distance, they give invaluable support, both financially, and with donations to the VCT Relic Shop at Keighley, which is always in need of re-saleable items (advert!). For this we are very grateful. We will always welcome new members, no matter how much work they can (or can't) put in. Anyone who is coming to the railway from one of the more distant outposts can always drop us a line to say they will be coming, and we can arrange any sort of job according to their abilities, from carpentry to carriage washing at Oxenhope; although there is nearly always someone there - if you just turn up in your working gear we will find some work for you.

May I extend my thanks to those who have handed out the hundreds of membership application forms. These have really helped to boost the number of members. Also thank you to those who went through them and altered the membership subs to £1.50 - they were printed (by a bit of good planning by I know not who) a few weeks before the increase.

Membership subs for 1981 are now due, and at the knock-down price of £1.50, we still represent wonderful value for money - after all, is it so much to ask to sacrifice three pints in favour of our rolling stock collection? O.K., well how about 40 cigarettes? No? Why not cut down on the wife's housekeeping ... (loud cries of "Not on your Nellie" from the kitchen! - Ed.).

Finally, if you move house, could you please let me know - it was a bit disconcerting to receive a "Return to Sender" packet marked "Reason - House Demolished"!!!

KJG

SALES

Members are reminded that they may obtain a reduction of one eighth (12½%) off marked prices at the shop and at our sales stands at the various exhibitions.

Items currently available include:

Bound Volumes:-

The Locomotive Magazine: Volumes 4 (1899) and 5 (1900). Publishers' bindings, complete with Supplements: £26 each.
Volumes 8 & 9 (1903: weekly publication): £12 each or £22 the two.
Volume 11 (1905). Publishers' binding, but many colour plates missing: £21.

Trains Illustrated: Volume 5 (1952) (£16.50), to volume 14 (1961), (£10), inclusive.

Model Railway News: Volume 1 (1925) (£20) to volume 10 (1934) (£15), inclusive.
Volume 26 (1950) (£12).

Railway Modeller: Volumes 4 (1953) (£) to 8 (1957) (£), inclusive.

Railway Magazine: 1969 (£6.75) to 1975 (£5), inclusive.
Railway World: Volumes 20 (1959) (£15) to 34 (1973) (£6), inclusive!

All the above are BOUND volumes

ALSO!- VOLUME ONE OF "RAILWAY MAGAZINE", plus a number of other very early volumes: Publishers' bindings. Write for details, preferably with your offer!

We also have a very considerable number of UNBOUND magazines, e.g., RM, RW, MRC, Model Rlys., Rly. Modeller, plus bus, tram and various Society magazines. Send your "wants" list to Michael Cope.

SPECIAL OFFER!-for 'Full years': any FIVE full years from any of those listed below: only £13.50! (good used condition, unbound: delivery extra at cost):-

Modern Railways: 1963 (usually £8)

Railway World: 1969 (usually £5.50) through to 1976/7/8 (usually £3) and 1979 (usually £3.50)

Railway Magazine: 1968 (usually £6) through to 1976/7/8 (usually £3) and 1979 (usually £3.50)

Other items available include: Leeds City Departure blind, weekdays from 1300 hrs and all Sunday departures: early 1963 (£8); rail chair labelled "Talyllŷn Railway: original chair for f.b. rail 1865/6: chaired sleeper complete (fortunately, narrow gauge) labelled "Gorseddau Tramway N.Wales closed c.1875".

All the items listed above are subject to Members' one eighth (12½%) discount, as are our own REPRINTS of Metropolitan/London Transport carriage cards:

Single colour Line diagram, showing Brill branch 50p each

'What to do in Air Raids' 50p each

Two (or more) colours:-

In Air Raids / In the Blackout 60p each

Billy Brown of London Town - "I trust you'll pardon my correction, that stuff is there for your protection" (air raid precautions, in reference to protective netting on the windows) 70p each

Map of extension lines into Metro-Land 80p each

MWC

VCT "WHO'S WHO"

President: Mr. R. Higgins
Vice-President: Mr. P. Kilburn
Chairman: Mr. C. G. Smyth
Vice-Chairman: Mr. P. Eastham
Secretary: Mr. M. W. Cope
Treasurer: Mr. T. R. England
Committee Members: Messrs G. Bentley, E. G. Cope, M. Leving, and M. Symm.
Membership Secretary: Mr. K. J. George.
Purchasing Manager: Mr. W. G. S. Henderson.
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