



Vintage Carriages Trust

Members' Newsletter: December 2001

This Newsletter goes to all members of VCT with Best Wishes for Christmas and with the hope of a Good New Year in 2002.

We were going to say that it's been a quiet few months lately. These things are of course relative! So we find ourselves writing about our Annual Meeting: about the 125th Birthday celebrations of our Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway carriage: about another successful filming assignment: continued progress with the "Metropolitan bogies campaign": and about concrete. Also our Membership and our Museum visitor figures and especially our Shop sales figures continue to be very satisfactory – so maybe it's not been so quiet after all!

We will start with the seasonal reminder that Annual Subscriptions are now due. If you pay your subscriptions in this way, you should find a Subscription Renewal form enclosed. We should be very pleased if you would complete and return this as soon as possible: our new Membership Secretary Malcolm Clark expectantly awaits your reply! When so doing, please remember that we keep the Membership Subscription as low as we possibly can, at a mere £4 annually (for everyone); so, if you can add a donation towards the work of the Trust, would you please do so?

If you pay UK Income Tax and haven't already done so please consider completing and returning the enclosed "Gift Aid" authority form? This will allow us to reclaim the tax you have already paid on any donation you might like to make, either now or in the future. This increases the value to the Trust of your giving by some 28% - at no extra cost to you!

Life Members, Honorary Members and those who pay their Subscriptions by Standing Order should find their Membership Card for 2002 enclosed with this issue of the "Newsletter". If we've got it wrong and have enclosed the wrong things, or haven't enclosed that which we should have done – please let us know!

Anyway: here's our Christmas 2001 "Newsletter":

Annual Meeting 2001

The theme of the Annual Meeting for 2001, held at the Toby Beeches Hotel in Keighley on October 27th, was of steady progress and consolidation over the year. Members should find a copy of the Minutes of this meeting enclosed with this *Newsletter* – and any Member who would like a copy of the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2001 (as presented at that Meeting) should write to the Secretary at the Haworth Station address, enclosing a large (A4) self-addressed envelope (33p stamp, second class post).

The Meeting was preceded by our customary informal lunch at the Toby Beeches Carvery, and on this occasion was followed by a special celebration back at our Museum, to celebrate the 125th Birthday of our MS&L carriage – as noted below.

600 and rising

2001 saw the membership of the Trust top the 600 mark and we welcome all new members. Some of you who live within reasonable distance will have received a letter regarding our working weekends and the need to see more involvement of the membership as a whole in the day to day working of the Trust.

This doesn't necessarily mean that you have to know which way up a spanner should be held. There is much "behind the scenes" activity which involves use of one of the computers, serving customers in the Museum and/or Keighley shop, putting the Store Room into a semblance of order, cleaning coaches, showing visitors around the Museum etc. Just at the moment there's a big opening for floor and wall painters. All this emphasises that the list is endless and that there is something for everyone – so please come along!

Increasingly this could be midweek. Tuesdays and Thursdays seem to be the favoured days, but there's things to do *any* day of the week! We'll note this again later – but please remember that all are welcome both for the **Working Evenings** on the *first* and *third* Wednesdays of each month (from about 6.30 pm onwards), and for the **Working Weekends** (the second full weekend of each month – any time, from 11 am onwards).

MS&L 125: 1876-2001

We had hoped to make quite an event of the 125th year of our Manchester Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway carriage, to include seeing it in use on a celebratory train. Unfortunately, things didn't quite work out that way – mainly due to the

constraints imposed by the Railway's Heritage Lottery-funded works at Oxenhope. However, we did manage to gather for a small Carriage Birthday Party at the Museum immediately after the Annual Meeting. This involved a rather fine Birthday cake, some quite decent champagne, and a few words being said by the MS&L's Caretaker, Philip Walton – see the photo.



Philip fell over backwards (literally) at the sight of the special cake, but recovered in fairly quick time! There was some thought of smashing a bottle of champagne against the coach, but it was felt that would not only have ruined the champagne but, at 125 years old, the coach as well – so we drank it instead!

Mid-week Rendezvous

Jackie Cope describes midweek activity at our Museum:

"The day dawns reasonably bright for the time of the year. Ingrow yard is quiet. Cyril the grey squirrel is hopping around the various litter bins hoping to make a good breakfast of the odd potato crisp and discarded sandwich. Whatever happened to squirrels who are nice, russet red and eat nuts.

The first human to disturb the "rural" calm is a small and rather well-used sports car out of which emerges John Heaton.

The shop shutters are raised and in goes John to ensure that the Museum is clean and ready for visitors. Four toilets, a shop floor and a very long central access walkway take some keeping clean; add to this vacuuming the upstairs room and the staircase and keeping pace with the workshop where all manner of dust and grit together with unmentionable pools of grime appear as if by magic. It is in the workshop where the job is to tackle the evidence left by the Ingrow Branch of the "Nothing Ever Gets Put Back in Its Place" Club.

Today John has an extra problem on his hands. Preparations are in hand to concrete the walkways on each side of the Museum. We are replacing the concrete paving slabs which have served us well for the past eleven years but are tending to become uneven and are difficult to keep clean. In order to ensure that laying the concrete does not affect the carriages Michael Cope has been covering everything in sight with large black polythene sheets. When the concreting is completed we will have a stronger and a safer floor area which will be so much easier to keep clean.

John now has mop and bucket in full operation when the door opens and another John arrives. By this time it is about 10 o'clock and John Stephenson has travelled from Leeds, hopefully avoiding the worst of the morning rush-hour. John's jobs for today include "cleaning the silver". No he hasn't mistaken his location; this *is* Ingrow, not Harewood House. The silver is the fine tableware we have on loan from the National Railway Museum. The display is very good but needs a bit of careful sprucing. John's skills in dealing with valuable and sometimes fragile pieces of railway relics is well known and much valued by the Trust. Since retirement from earning his daily crust he is a regular weekday team member and his work so far was recognised in his winning this year's "Wallis and Grommit" Award, presented at the Annual Meeting!

The normal opening hour of 11 am, and Bob Stott arrives to look after the shop and welcome area. Hopefully although it's now autumn he will see at least some visitors and customers for our souvenirs, confectionery, hot tea and coffee and most importantly railway books, magazines and relics. Just at the moment Bob is restoring a beautifully-constructed block bell which would have seen use in a signal box. He has put it on display showing the interior brass fittings and polished wooden case, contrasted with a similar one which he has not yet "fettled". We still continue to marvel at the care, craftsmanship and attention to aesthetic detail shown in the construction of even the smallest components of early railway items.

John Stephenson and Bob are very happy to be contacted by people seeking to sell or donate items of railwayana. It is necessary however to realise that the relics, books and magazines on sale are there to make money for the Trust. We offer fair prices knowing that in order to make commercial sense we must take into account the VAT and a reasonable profit. It is through the hard work of volunteers such as John and Bob in seeking, obtaining, cleaning and presenting the wide variety of items we have for sale that our whole Sales enterprise is so worthwhile for the Trust.

A Special call to all Members and Friends:

- ◆ Are your bookshelves sagging?
- ◆ Do your floors need strengthening?
- ◆ Have you a need for a railway book purge in your house?

We can help! Donations of railway books (also of any other railway-associated items) are always very gratefully received. We will consider purchasing larger collections and often can collect.

All profits from our sales activities go towards the Trust's activities.

Ring the Museum on 01535 680425 or email us on admin@vintagecarriagetrust.org

The next two Museum arrivals have come on very different missions, and are Paul Bodnarchuk and Robin Banner. As shown in the photo, Paul is tackling a backlog of magazine sorting in the Magazine Room. Selling back-number magazines continues to be a vital part of our commercial activities. Recent sales recorded by Bob include one for £114.50 and another for £80. We can now accept telephone sales by Credit Card, so do tell your friends about this facility which is now just a phone call (01535 680425) or email away.



Robin Banner on the other hand continues with the complicated problems of the footboards of Great Northern No. 2856 of which more later. The various mid-weekers are now busy with their various tasks when the Garthwaite Laundry Service arrives in the form of Lesley with a large bag of clean towels and an

unerring instinct for seeking out the even larger box of somewhat grubby ones for her attention (did I say grubby!!). Washing towels does not spring to mind when one mentions railway carriage and locomotive restoration but it is these small tasks which make the Trust the success it is.

Michael Cope arrives to continue his on-going and seemingly endless task of painting the bogie frame of the First Class Metropolitan coach. This frame has been professionally blast-cleaned and now needs its anti-corrosive primer before the weather closes in and the cleaned metal gets wet. This is followed by further coats of specialist "underframe black" paint. The actual wheel sets have just returned from Bury Locomotive Works where they have been re-profiled. A certain amount of shunting – well, a *lot* of shunting – means these are safely in the workshop. The wheels themselves together with the axles of course now need cleaning, which is a time-consuming process, to be followed by primer, undercoat and two coats of black topcoat. The end result of all this activity will be the re-uniting of wheels with frame and the replacement under the coach.

Meanwhile John Heaton has abandoned his mop and bucket and turned into a volunteer. He has crawled into the very confined space under the coach in question, the First Class Met, seeking out and finishing many little odds and ends of painting on the underframe. This is the sort of job which requires patience and dedication and an ability to fit into very small spaces. Certainly not a job which some of the other working members could tackle, for a variety of obvious reasons!!

Chris Smith, our second part-time employee, has arrived and is also working on the coach when a taxi draws up and out pops Dennis Brewer. Dennis has communication difficulties. Shipley Social Services help to ensure that he has this weekly visit during which he cleans the footboards of the coaches and helps to keep us all cheerful. We enjoy his company and his obvious enjoyment of the activities around him – particularly if there is a locomotive out on the Worth Valley Railway: that really makes his day!

During the morning a new face has now arrived on scene. Keith Messent volunteered his services to the Trust quite recently, and has immediately been put to work computer cataloguing our reference library. Michael is introducing Keith to this task which takes place in the upper room and he soon begins to wrestle with this project. Our library is not huge, with the books relating to our Collection or to passenger travel and the history of railways generally. It is however a valuable resource not just to the Trust but to others who may care to come and browse, and is steadily growing. We hope that over the coming weeks Keith will be able to catalogue the books and make it possible for us to know what is there and what subjects are covered.

A brief glimpse of a racing Walton passes by as Philip calls in to see Geoff Swales who has arrived and is working on various electrical matters.

So Bob, Dennis, Chris, Geoff, John, John, Keith, Michael, Paul and Robin pursue their various activities on a fairly typical VCT mid-week day. It may be that they will not always be

around at the same time and others may come and go including surprise visits from our "weekenders". Half-term holidays, occasional days of in lieu and flexitime allow another John, Trevor, Mike, Dave (often accompanied by little Vickie), Paul, and Mark to name but a few to pay a surprise and welcome weekday visit."

Yes – this is an amalgamation of days: not everyone calls in simultaneously! However, this is a good representation of the considerable activity which happens at our Museum each week: so why not join us?

There are of course the weekends as well, when we welcome anyone and everyone who would like to help the Trust, whether in looking after the Keighley Shop, or the Shop and Museum at Ingrow, or in restoration or other work at the Museum. We look forward to seeing you. And remember: free tea and coffee!

Thank you: Hugh, Bob & Gail, John

Both Hugh Beck and Bob Stevenson (often accompanied by his wife Gail) have spent many hours over the last few years in the Magazine Room sorting, labelling, stacking and making this room the fine place it is today. It can be a frustrating task – as the last magazine is sorted from the recent donations, very often a car draws up at the door and in come the next several boxes! Bob, helped by Gail, has also put in many hours as our Membership Secretary over the last year or so and will doubtless miss the excitements of wrestling with our Membership system and with the idiosyncrasies of the computer and its printer. Hugh for some time past has put in sterling service as Shop Manager at Keighley.

Bob and Gail have now moved to Keswick, and Hugh has decided that it is time to hang up his magazine sorters and Keighley Sales hats. We extend the Trust's, and our, very grateful thanks to all three for their work for the Trust and we wish them well for the future.

We welcome Malcolm Clark as our new Membership Secretary and Paul Bodnarchuk as Keighley Shop Manager. Paul, together with Paul Holroyd, is also now looking after the Magazine Room.

John Wallis one of the Trust's very long standing working members has decided to move to Lerwick in the Orkneys. John will be much missed by the Trust. Over the years he has been happy to "fill in" wherever there was need. He could be found at Keighley Shop mid-week in the summer months or helping Philip Walton as part of the now famous (or is it infamous?) 'Wallis and Grommit' team which has become part of the Trust's history. If the Museum needed opening early for some reason or there was need for a caretaker to stay late and guard the place John was nearly always able to help. He has worked tirelessly on the Bulleid ceiling rubbing down. Philip made sure that he was well supplied with Rosemary's choice cakes and biscuits. His penchant for hot drinking chocolate and Caramac bars is well known. We will miss you, John. All the very best for the future and come and see us Sassenachs occasionally.

Filming News

We have just seen on our screens a whole rake of VCT coaches in the Sunday evening series of Anthony Trollope's "The Way We Live Now" – and very fine they looked too (GNR, ECJS, Midland and MS&L).

One of our other carriages has since been filmed for a TV drama. This latest assignment involved only one coach and is a little more macabre. Metropolitan Railway 9-compartment carriage No. 465 saw service in ITV Drama's production "A for Acid" which we are told will be on our screens next Autumn. This tells the story of the serial killer John George Haigh who went down in criminal history as the 'Acid Bath Murderer'. These gruesome happenings, or at least his journeyings on the railway, were re-enacted at Oakworth with our Met. coach being joined by two Worth Valley Railway coaches and the Taff Vale locomotive.

News on the locomotive front

Sir Berkeley (as reported by Ian Smith in the last *Newsletter*) awaits its overhaul at Middleton Railway. The VCT Committee keeps in close touch with Middleton and with them looks forward to gaining some indication of costing. We recently heard that it's planned to lift the boiler from the frames early in the New Year and to immediately take it to Israel Newton's boiler works in Bradford for assessment. We will then have some idea as to just how much work will need to be done, and what the cost will be. There is no doubt that there will have to be a "*Sir Berkeley* Restoration Appeal" this coming year! We know that work is necessary on one of the coupling rods, and that the tyres on all six wheels need replacing – so the total cost will be quite substantial!

Over at the Foxfield Railway, *Bellerophon* also awaits developments. At Foxfield the present main emphasis is to complete the track to the mine. This project has received Heritage Lottery Fund money is a vital part of the Railway's future activities. In the meantime, *Bellerophon's* Caretaker Mark Astley is looking after the annual boiler inspection and general maintenance. It doesn't look as if the hoped-for photo-charter will take place before Christmas, as was originally intended. All being well this will take place some time in the New Year – we can only suggest you keep an eye on the Railway press for any further information.

Great Northern Railway No. 2856

Before proceeding with news of this coach, here's part of a letter received at the end of August from VCT Member Graeme Walton-Binns:

"Dear Editor, I'm not sure if you publish letters in the Newsletter but if you do maybe you would like to pass on my thanks to all those people who contributed to the superb restoration of Great Northern railway coach 2856. To see it now, newly restored, is a joy.

I like to think that my letter to the VCT when the coach was in such an awful state on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway was the trigger that caused her move to Ingrow and the eventual restoration by the VCT.

After she was set on fire by vandals, I dared not hope to see her as she now is.

Nostalgically, for me, the coach is a real "time warp" as I still have vivid memories of the GNR gas lit coaches (filthy externally) on journeys from Keighley to Ingrow (GNR Station), and stations beyond. Most of them were close coupled, articulated, commuter sets, hauled by Ivatt 0-6-2 N1 side tanks. Even as a boy, those GNR coaches seemed "antique" compared to the LMS types (with electric lighting), which ran between Keighley and Skipton and the Worth Valley branch, although a softer ride than the "modern" LMS types, despite their filthy external appearance at that time.

Could you pass on my thanks to everyone who have worked so hard to achieve the splendid results depicted in the photograph on page three of the issue for August 2001. Words cannot describe the pleasure the beautiful restoration has given me, especially to see her in the company of the whole vintage train, hauled by the Taff Vale Railway 0-6-2 Tank Engine. It is real 1970s "Dream Come True" and sums up what membership of VCT is all about!

Yours sincerely, Graeme Walton-Binns."

All those who have worked or are working or hopefully will be working on the coach thank Graeme for his comments. It does boost morale to know that there are members out there who do appreciate the work which is taking place in the Trust. If you

were so bowled over by the black and white photo wait until you come along and see the beautiful 'GNR' with the bright blue of the 'N' shining out on each door.



Back to the coach – The photo to which Graeme refers in the August edition shows the obvious absence of footboards. The last *Newsletter* says: "the only remaining exterior work to be finished is the provision of stepboards and brackets and the preliminary work is now well in hand." This makes the sorting, manufacturing and fitting of the footboards sound as easy as falling off a log.

As so often happens in the Trust, when a task needs doing a man for the job appears. Robin Banner has joined the merry team of volunteers and is applying his engineering skills to this particular puzzle, and a puzzle it is. Robin has studied endless photographs of similar

carriages in service and what few drawings are available. He has designed brackets and arranged for their manufacture. The wood has been delivered and the whole is now beginning to look very much more complete, giving a rather different (and a much more correct) appearance to the coach as it would have been for so many years – the photo (below) gives an indication of what's happening.

We have now submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund our grant application to cover the interior restoration of this carriage. Hopefully by the next *Newsletter* we will have some positive news about this – so perhaps in the not too far distant future Graeme will be able to again experience something of his youthful travels!



Other news of our carriages

There has been some recent progress with the “**Bulleid**” in that Bernard Norbury has kindly taken over from John Wallis and has carried out further preparation work on the ceiling. We wish him all the best with this, and look forward to the time when completion of the ceiling will allow us to replace the rest of the glass, put down lino, and then put back all the seating and interior trim. All this last was completed some years ago and is in our Storeroom at the Museum.

Steady progress continues with the **Metropolitan Railway Brake**, notably with the Brake compartment itself, which is now approaching completion. On a less happy note, a teak body panel has recently decided to split, underlining the fact that of the three Met. carriages this is not only the oldest but is also the one in the least good condition. This vehicle is next but one in line for “the bogie treatment” – we suspect that we will find matters requiring long-term attention once we have a detailed look at the running gear and underframe of this carriage! In the meantime this vehicle is available for service – it’s certainly fit to run, but in the longer term considerable attention looks to be inevitable.

Talking of “the bogie treatment”: work on the second bogie of the **Metropolitan First Class carriage** continues steadily. The intended grit-blast eventually took place. This was with good success and (finally) at a reasonable price – but delays with this led to problems. The first of these problems was the need to get a coat of primer on to the bare metal. In late November, out of doors, with a poor weather forecast, this was fairly important! In the event Michael Cope and Chris Smith managed this immediately after the grit blast team had done their job – albeit finishing very much in the gloaming. Over the next two days the weather was sufficiently kind for Michael to get the first coat of “Williamson’s underframe black” on to the coat of primer. The urgent need then was to get the bogie frame into our Workshop to allow cleaning and painting to continue, out of the weather. The resident team of Chris Smith and Michael (again!) managed this in quick time. This involved bringing a diesel locomotive from Haworth, taking everything out of one side of the Museum to be able to roll the wheelsets from the Workshop, putting everything back that side, waiting for Powerrun to arrive with a rather large wagon complete with a Hiab crane on the back to lift the bogie frame on to the wheelsets, then taking everything out of the *other* side of the Museum to be able to roll the bogie back into the Workshop, then putting everything back again, and taking the locomotive back to Haworth. Nothing to it, really.

With the bogie now safely inside the Workshop the final cleaning and painting is now in hand. Two minor cracks in one side of the bogie frame will receive attention in the near future. It’s interesting to see that these have been (fairly badly) welded at some time in the past, presumably in London Transport days. There are similar minor cracks on the other side of the frame, but at least these have been competently attended to by rivetted-on plates. Incidentally, a check for any similar problem on the other bogie of this coach disclosed minor constructional

differences between the two bogies – so we’ve a coach on its two bogies which are nearly but not quite identical, with the four wheelsets between them mustering three different designs! There’s not a lot to say about the **Chatham, Midland, Metropolitan nine-compartment** or the **MS&L** carriages other than to say that “care and maintenance” continues and they remain in good order. As already noted, the nine-compartment Met. saw filming use. A missing French bolt on the corridor connector of the Chatham has been dealt with, and replacement drop light straps for this carriage should be with us shortly. We are now preparing a PRISM Fund application to allow us to restore the **East Coast Joint Stock** carriage. Preliminary investigations have revealed nothing seriously adrift with this vehicle. In particular, Dave Johnson’s intensive look at the roof has shown it to be in remarkably good order – indeed, in much better order than we had dared hope for.

Sadly, neither the **Scammell “mechanical horse”** nor its trailer have progressed significantly in the recent past. The trailer still awaits the final linkage in its brake system, also lights and mudguards. The tractor unit is currently in store in Keighley, and still awaits, in particular, an investigation as to why the engine is overheating.

Concrete

This exciting project has taken rather a lot of our time lately. Essentially, we realised that the concrete flags on the two outer walkways in the Museum are past their “best by” date. With advancing years, and with perhaps not being quite perfectly laid in the first place, they were showing signs of unevenness and in particular of randomly-opening spaces between one and the next. Also we had managed to crack a few of these flags – so, one way and another, the need to replace them by a more constant medium had become very apparent. So, the “Shop” side walkway was replaced by concrete in late November and we are very pleased with it. It wasn’t cheap – but it’s already been remarked that it is cheaper than litigation!

This exercise of course was rather more than just “calling in the Builders”. We had to move the two display cases, the waiting room bench, some of the displayed signs. We had to protect the carriages and other signs by securing plastic sheeting over them – and for the second of the two “pours” (see the photo on the next page) had to move the carriages outside, out of the way. Once again this needed bringing a diesel locomotive from Haworth for the purpose. This time Chris Smith was not available, so the merry crew (departure from Haworth: 7.30 am!) was Ken Cook and Michael Cope, with Mark Croasdale replacing Ken for the late-afternoon return journey – with Ken then acting as the Railway’s Responsible Officer, in place of David Kay who at rather short notice had taken that position for the morning’s excursion. Our thanks go to the Railway for once again allowing the use of the locomotive: especially to Roger France as Chairman of the Railway’s Management Committee, and in particular to David Kay, Ken Cook and Paul Brown who (amongst others) have so kindly helped the Trust in this and in other ways in the recent past.



The concrete saga is of course not yet finished. Repainting the walls where the concrete had splashed has now been dealt with – in any case, they were about due for a freshen-up! All this new concrete is at the time of writing yet to seal and then to paint. We took the opportunity to replace the rotting wooden floor of the Staff toilet and shower room with concrete: so that room is yet to clean, paint, and bring back into use. Yes, railway carriage preservation at our Museum never lacks excitement and challenges!

Sad news

We are sorry to record the deaths of the following:

Brian Mennie, a long-standing Member who was quite often to be found midweek or on a Saturday working in the magazine room, sorting magazines for the Trust. He always brought an apron to wear, which somehow did not seem incongruous with the cap which he sometime sported. He loved people and chatting to those customers who wandered into the magazine room seeking back numbers for their Collections. He was always full of fun and brightened the day with his coming. He will be very much missed at VCT and we all extend our sympathy to his wife and family.

Eric Wright (“Dad”). Eric died very suddenly on November 22nd. Eric was a long time volunteer on the Worth Valley Railway and for some years past was employed by the Railway at Haworth to help with the midweek maintenance of the locomotive fleet. Eric was a locomotive driver but had not been driving unaccompanied for some time past due to health problems. It was at Haworth Loco Yard that he died. Eric was a valued friend of the Trust and worked on both *Bellerophon* and *Sir Berkeley* during the restoration of these two VCT locos and on their ongoing maintenance. Eric had a straightforward South Yorkshire manner and undoubted skills in engineering. He will be very much missed in so many ways by many areas of the Railway and its associated organisations. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife Jackie.

We are also sorry to report the death of **Mrs Higgins**, the mother of Robin Higgins, our President. Mrs Higgins was very much part of the “Ladies’ Committee” in the early days of the Worth Valley Railway. Our sympathies are with Robin and Marjorie at this time.

The VCT Website and other matters

The good news is that Michael Walton (the son of VCT Trustee Philip Walton) is progressing very, very well in his IT employment in Wisconsin, USA. The bad news is that this has left him with very little time to progress that which he would much like to do concerned with VCT and in particular to keep the VCT website up to date. After considerable thought, we’ve now moved the website to: www.vintagecarriagestrust.org and it’s now administered from Ingrow. Some changes have been made to it – so if you are web connected please have a look at it and let us know what you think of it, together with your suggestions as to how it can be improved. The Trust can now be contacted at: admin@vintagecarriagestrust.org. This should be extended shortly to allow direct contact via the “vintagecarriagestrust” address with those of the Committee who are Internet connected (now the majority) – we will let you know when this is in position: in the meantime, please use the above address, for all enquiries to VCT.

Michael Walton continues as our “Internet supremo” and we take the opportunity to thank him for what he has done in the past, in particular in setting up the website in the first place. Michael doubtless will continue to support the Trust as actively as his work will allow him – and will continue to look after the **Carriage Survey on-line database**. This last has had its problems lately and is currently “off air”. The reason for this was that our “free, for life” previous web space provider was taken over and the service suddenly stopped: the “life” obviously was theirs, not ours! Finding a free site with sufficient capacity – we are here talking about 400MB or so of space, which is a lot! – has proved difficult. Michael found one

supplier who could do this, but unfortunately the arrangements for updating information on to the web space were so restrictive as to make this impossible. At the time of writing, the Carriage Survey database seems likely to move to yet another site Michael has found, with delicate negotiations currently going on as to who will pay the necessary \$14.95 a month for this space. We are also in touch with the (British) Heritage Railway Association and with Mark Dewell to see if free, or cheap, space might be available via either the HRA or via the "ukhrail" site Mark looks after. Regardless, we do hope to be back "on air" as soon as we possibly can be!

The CD-ROM version of the Carriage Survey continues to be available from the Trust, price £20 at either Shop or by post £20.60 inclusive of post and packing.

Whilst on the subject of the Internet and what it can offer: we are pleased to report that VCT has been successful in being selected for the second tranche of the **Association of Independent Museums (AIM) "EdWeb" project**. This project will provide advice and tutorial assistance to develop our educational material for the Internet.

LNWR Carriage Portfolio

"London & North Western Railway: Thirty Foot One Inch Carriages." This 48-page A4 booklet by Philip Maitland is No. 15 in the London & North Western Society's "Premier Portfolio" series.

Its title is both specific and misleading. Specific, in that it deals only with the major series of 6-wheel carriages to this length built to the design of C A Park at Wolverton from 1887. This series continued right up to 1900 with but few design changes and is not to be confused with the earlier (1870s), and completely different, 30' design. Misleading, in that the title may lead to this booklet being dismissed as the carriage equivalent of a rivet-counter's manual. Not so: it tells the fascinating story of this important series of coaches, with many useful illustrations and diagrams. These latter include fold-out A3 sheets being examples of Arthur Gunn's detailed drawings made on-site in the 1920s and 1930s, also five reproduced General Arrangement drawings.

All four surviving such carriages are illustrated, three of these in colour.

All in all, a very worthwhile book for anyone interested in carriages and with some interest in the LNWR: and particularly recommended for modellers and railway historians.

This booklet is available at the price of £6.95 (post free) from: Sales Officer, L&NWR Society, 15 Park Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 2ED.

Dates for your Diary

We hold regular **Working Weekends**, on the second *full* weekend of each month. So: the dates of the next few are: **January 12th/13th: February 9th/10th: March 9th/10th: April 13th/14th**. Any time, from about 11 am each day.

We also hold **Working Evenings** on the **First** and **Third Wednesday** evening of each month, from about 6.30 pm onwards.

You are invited to join us for any of these. There are jobs of all sorts, not just in the Workshop. Let us know your interests and we will try to find you a niche. We look forward to welcoming you!

The **Heritage Railway Association's AGM Weekend meeting** will take place from Friday 1st to Sunday 3rd February. It will be based in Norwich, with the Sunday visit being to the North Norfolk Railway.

HRA's next midweek meeting will be held at the Alex Suite, Crewe Alexandria Football Club, on Wednesday 10th April.

FEDECRAIL's next annual conference will be held from Friday to Tuesday May 24th to 28th and will be based in Riga, Latvia. This will include visits to preservation projects and museums in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

If possible, please contact the various organisers direct. Otherwise please write for further information to VCT at the Haworth Station address.

Other Notices

AJECTA

AJECTA is our French twinned body, the Association de Jeunes pour l'Entretien et la Conservation des Trains d'Autrefois. Information about their activities should be available via their website, www.ajecta.org

Data Protection Act

VCT Membership records are kept on a computer. These are not made available to any outside bodies. If nevertheless any Member does not wish their records to be kept in this way, please contact the Secretary.

Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) 'Give as You Earn' Scheme

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