



# Vintage Carriages Trust

## Members' Newsletter: August 2003

Unusually, there's only four pages to this present *Newsletter*, and it's photocopied rather than printed. As a result the quality isn't up to our usual standards, and there's only half the content – our apologies for this! There are however three good reasons for this “economy edition”. The first is to circulate to all Members information about the forthcoming special VCT visit to Cleethorpes, to see the Cleethorpes Light Railway and in particular the Sutton Collection. This will take place on **Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September** and will include a number of “special opportunities” and also a barbecue. Dave Carr is the Organiser for this visit. Please see the enclosed letter from Dave, which gives further information (including transport from Ingrow, should you wish) and includes his address and telephone number. This promises to be an excellent visit – so, if you would like to take part in this visit, please contact him as soon as is possible.

The second reason is to let you have the formal **Notice of our Annual Meeting for 2003**. As you will see from the enclosed sheet, this will be held at the Toby Beeches Hotel, Bradford Road, Keighley on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2003 at 2 pm. As in previous years, the meeting will be preceded by an informal lunch at that hotel, 12.15 for 12.30 pm (sharp!). In previous years this informal lunch has been much enjoyed – so why not join us this year?

... and the third reason is that our Printers are currently enjoying their Summer holidays!

### The late Keith Messent

We were saddened to hear of the recent death of Keith Messent. Keith joined the Trust as a Life Member many years ago and more recently had taken an active part in the work of the Trust as our Librarian. He had been working his way steadily through the great number of books making up our embryonic “Carriages” Library, adding them to a computer database for ease of reference. As, we now know, in his many other areas of interest in a very well-filled life Keith was always wishing to learn something of everything – hence on occasion rather slow progress, and the very detailed and useful (and very accurate) notes Keith has left on the database for each catalogued item. Our condolences go to his wife, children and grandchildren. We will miss him.

### “All-Aboard”

This is the name of our new guidebook – which is at last now available, is on sale (price £3.50), and has been very well received. “All-Aboard” includes full details of the Trust and its Collection. There's information about everything within our Collection, including our locomotives and the Scammell Mechanical Horse as well as the carriages. There's also a brief history of carriage evolution and a “timeline”, in both of which we show how the carriages within our Collection help demonstrate this story of steady development.

The design and production of this guidebook was with grant assistance from the Yorkshire Museums Council (now the Yorkshire Museums Libraries & Archives Council), for which we are very grateful. Without this grant, “All-Aboard” just wouldn't have happened.

“All-Aboard”, Your guide to the story of rail travel for the ordinary passenger' is in A4 format and is in full colour throughout. It is priced at £3.50, or £3.50 to include postage and packing. Copies are available at our Ingrow Museum Shop. Alternatively send a cheque or a postal order to VCT at the Haworth Station address. Or ring 01535 646472 or fax 01535 610796 with your Credit or Debit Card details.

Recommended – order your copy now!



## Yet another Extension...

As briefly mentioned in the last issue of our *Newsletter*, we have been planning a small extension to the front of our building at Ingrow, to provide a staircase to give an alternative access to our upstairs meeting room and library store. It's not all that many years since this upstairs room was built, but changing safety standards since then now mean that the present access via just one stairway just isn't satisfactory. Our intention was to provide disabled access to the upstairs room by means of a stairlift. Unfortunately Planning Permission for this was refused – the planners much preferred a lift, which would have given us a major space problem (and would have greatly increased the total cost). We therefore had to change our approach, and now have Planning Permission for a very similar scheme but without the disabled access to the upper level. In place of this, we will make provision for those unable to reach the upper level by bringing books etc down to ground level, and will provide a workstation and possibly a computer terminal either in the Sales/Reception area or in the present magazine room.

The present situation is that the necessary detailed drawings for Building Regulations clearance are now in hand. The Railway's Board has approved this intended work and we are in the process of amending our Lease with the Railway. This improved usage of the upstairs space for meetings and as an office and a library will considerably help the running of the Trust. If you would like to make a donation towards this very useful addition to the Trust's overall facilities we should be very pleased to receive this, either by cheque to the Haworth Station address or by Credit/Debit Card via the Museum phone (01535 680425) or fax (01535 610796). Your donations will be very gratefully received!

## ...*Sir Berkeley*: a further Appeal to follow shortly

We are at last progressing reasonably satisfactorily towards submitting an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a Grant under the "Your Heritage" scheme to help towards the full restoration of our Manning-Wardle locomotive *Sir Berkeley*. This is after a major rethink and realignment of just what we are doing and why, carried out with much consultation with Steve Roberts and others of the Middleton Railway, to whom we extend our thanks. This application will be on the basis of an external Contractor restoring the existing boiler, with Members of the Middleton Railway undertaking most of the restoration work on the rolling chassis and then attending to the reassembly of the locomotive. The project includes also providing six new tyres. Our repeated thanks to those who some time ago most kindly pledged donations towards this work. Hopefully it now shouldn't be too long before we will be in a position to ask you for your pledged donations – and of course will invite all other Members and friends to donate towards this highly desirable work.

## Other locomotive news

*Lord Mayor* is still in primer, awaiting repainting. The immediate problem is to ascertain just what the final livery should be. Present thinking is towards "Brunswick Green", which Philip Walton remembers as the closest he and Ben Wade could find to the green the locomotive carried when first it came into the care of the 'Lord Mayor Trust'. However, if you have other information about this colour, or about the lining-out and lettering of the locomotive, we should be very pleased to hear from you.

Sadly, we have as yet no report as to progress with our Agreement with the Foxfield Railway concerning *Bellerophon*. Our Chairman, Trevor England, has been in contact with the Foxfield Railway about this, but there seems to be little to report at this present time.

## Doncaster Works: the "Plant 150" Open Weekend

Our two Great Northern Railway coaches travelled to their birthplace for this very well-attended event, held on the weekend of 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> July. They were marshalled with Stephen Middleton's East Coast Joint Stock Clerestory Dining Car No. 189 (built 1894) and the Bluebell Railway-based Howlden Trust's GNR Directors' Saloon No. 706E (also built in 1894) to form "the Teak Train", headed by GNR "Stirling Single" No. 1, dating back to 1870. All these are of course Doncaster-built. Despite a considerable variation in sizes and shapes, this "teak train" looked superb!

We took our sales stall with us and enjoyed good success, both in making ourselves even better known by distributing the Trust's (and the Railway's) leaflets and with sales. "Thank you" to all who helped with the stall, in handing out leaflets, and in any other way: it was a very successful weekend!

## Richard Gibbon

As many will know, our Curatorial Adviser Richard Gibbon recently retired from his position of Head of Engineering Collections at the National Railway Museum. The Heritage Railway Association celebrated Richard's work with its first Award "for Outstanding Contribution to Railway Preservation". The Transport Trust similarly marked Richard's work with a Lifetime Achievement Award. Vintage Carriages Trust presented Richard with a very large and beautifully-executed "Happy Retirement" card, signed by as many Members as possible (apologies if you didn't get your name on to this card). We wish Richard all the best for his retirement, and, once he's got used to this status, look forward to seeing him at Ingrow and elsewhere from time to time – and we do hope he would like to continue as our Curatorial Adviser!

## **Bulleid Open Third No. 1469**

We are delighted to report that work on the Bulleid coach is now progressing very satisfactorily. Our part-time employee Chris Smith has very successfully completed the ceiling of the second saloon. This had become a major "hold up" job: having now completed this will allow a lot of other things to go ahead. These include the lino, which is now in position: as are the light fittings in this second saloon, together with many of the luggage rubbing strips and much of the varnished ply forming the trim for the bulkhead ends for this saloon. Chris is now working on the remaining sliding window assemblies for this end. Fortunately, he enjoys solving jigsaw puzzles.

The "new" steel cladding for most of this carriage was put in position 15 or more years ago. A recent reappraisal of this cladding highlighted several aspects which sadly are not to the "Museum" standards our Trust has to work to these days. This led to the decision that we should replace all of the present external cladding, using professional sheet metalworkers to cut, shape and pre-drill the necessary new sheets. We also decided that we should revert to the original methods of securing the glazing, rather than using a modern adhesive as we did for the first saloon.

We will contact a recommended sheet metalworking firm as soon as possible – this firm has recently and with good success done cladding work for the National Railway Museum. A necessary preliminary is to visit the Bluebell Railway to see and to discuss progress on Bulleid Semi-Open Third No. 2526 currently under restoration there. This should answer a lot of detailed questions concerning (for example) flanging around the window apertures, dimpling screw holes, precisely how steel sections overlap one with the other, and what happens at the door apertures. Again, as yet we have no price indications – but we are positive that we need to progress this carriage and intend, one way or another, to go ahead with this project. Once we do have some idea as to prices, we will let you know – it looks as if there could be not one, not two, but three Appeals simultaneously in the near future!

## **Great Northern bogie carriage No. 2856**

Progress continues, albeit more patchily than we would have liked. The recent success is that John Holroyd has now put in place all the decorative transfers on the ceilings of all four compartments. This wasn't without significant problems: they are fairly large transfers, and putting them in place on the quite sharply-curved ceiling proved to be difficult, especially in the recent hot weather. The four compartments needed a total of 16 transfers, one for each corner – we ordered 32 to allow for some wastage: the problems were such that John finished with precisely nil spares! However, the end result looks absolutely superb. Have a look when you next visit the Museum.

John Hasler recently rediscovered in his garage a section of ceiling board recovered many years ago from another Great Northern coach, contemporary with 2856. This carries an example of the corner motif, in much better condition than the various smoke-damaged sections we found in 2856. We were delighted to find that the details of this motif were remarkably close to those we had used for our transfers, and that the colour is virtually identical. So – congratulations to John Holroyd and others in making such a good job of piecing together the information we used in specifying the transfers. However, the ceiling board received from John Hasler also included extensions of the motif, each side of the main pattern. We did not, and still cannot, find any evidence of this on 2856's original ceiling panels. Perhaps this is just as well, as otherwise the transfers would have been too big to be able to successfully position on those curved ceiling corners! However, on these much clearer and less damaged motifs we can quite clearly see brush strokes – so we are now confident in saying that these motifs were originally sign-written with a brush, rather than being stencilled or even applied as transfers. So, the detail would inevitably vary slightly from one motif to the next – depending on his enthusiasm, the signwriter could have included (or omitted, depending on how he was feeling) "extras" such as the additional pattern found on the board from John Hasler.

Sadly, this degree of progress has not as yet applied to attending to the upholstery of the carriage. Adrian Cunningham unfortunately has had further external problems, but was recently able to bring over the prototype First Class seat. In the event this was not quite as expected, with the necessary buttoning yet to be done and with the seat base not as yet as it should be. Adrian is in the process of rectifying this, and we look forward to seeing his work very shortly.

Adrian's visit did however confirm that the seat base spring unit was now correct. This has allowed Robin Banner to order the necessary further nine of these.

The need for completion of the complete project within the Heritage Lottery Fund's timescale means that we have now asked Terry Brown of Messrs A S Pickering of Bradford to look at the Third Class upholstery. This will go ahead as soon as we have the necessary spring base units for the four bench seats – these should be with us very shortly. We will then be able to sort out the material for the blinds for all four compartments.

Otherwise, minor tasks on this carriage continue to be progressed. These include putting the two toilet doors in position. As these are both marked "2856" and so are the doors specific to this carriage, this should have been simple and straightforward. It wasn't. It soon became obvious that one of the doors had been re-hung to open the other way round, presumably on this carriage's conversion for Departmental use in the 1950s. However, this doesn't answer the question as to why one of the hinge positions does not coincide with what we are sure is the original door frame, or why both doors no longer hang flush with their frames. All this is yet to resolve – it's a further example of the "industrial archaeology" that we have been faced with throughout this restoration project – fascinating, but frustrating!

## Toilet fittings: help, please?

We have a problem with Great Northern No. 2856. We have found absolutely no photographs of the interior of this series of carriages – except for the one shown here, taken from part of Plate 24 of Hamilton Ellis' book "Railway Carriages in the British Isles from 1830 to 1914", first published in 1965. Obviously, if you have any photos at all of the interior of GNR carriages contemporary with No. 2856 (built in 1898), we should be delighted to hear from you. In the meantime: if you know of the whereabouts of suitable toilet hoppers (in the plural: there are two toilet compartments), or dropdown washbasins, or the unusual pump visible just behind the doorknob (this pump is immediately above the water tank, which is contained entirely *within* the toilet compartment) – we urgently need to hear from you!



## ..more filming

Towards the end of August our three four- and six-wheeled coaches will be off to an Undisclosed Destination somewhere in the West of England for a further filming session. More details and hopefully a photograph or two in the next edition of this *Newsletter*.

## Worth Valley Railway Enthusiasts' Weekend

Note the dates of this weekend: **11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October**. Hopefully two or possibly three of the Trust's carriages will be in operation on the Railway on that day. Please check with the Railway, or with the Trust, for further details just before these dates.

## Keighley Shop

After much deliberation, we finally closed our Keighley Shop on 8<sup>th</sup> June. We had been using this small space under the ramp at the Skipton end of Keighley Station's Platform 4 for a great many years. However, continuing staffing problems here, and with our Ingrow Shop being now so well established, meant that this closure although sad was inevitable – as indeed was the closure of our Haworth Shop, now rather more than four years ago.

Having all our sales activities in the one place has indeed proved to be the correct decision. It has eased the overall organisational and staffing challenge, and our overall sales figures continue at a very satisfactory level. Indeed, some of our regular customers have commented that they prefer to be able to go to just the one place!

## Jet "Big Smile" promotion

Continued thanks go to those Members who continue to use their VCT "Smile" cards when purchasing fuel from Jet garages. The 1p given to the Trust for each litre of fuel purchased continues to represent a steady source of extra income to the Trust – please keep it up! If you buy petrol or diesel from Jet fuel stations, please consider joining this scheme. It's now much easier to do so: all that is necessary is to pick up a "Smile" card when next you visit a Jet station, complete Part 1 of the form and in the section "Big Smile Account name" on Part 2 write the VCT's Smile number, which is: 02 0169 3975.

Printed and published by the Vintage Carriages Trust (Charity Registered in England No. 510776, Registered Museum No. 1202)  
Owners of the Museum of Rail Travel, Ingrow Railway Centre, Keighley

Correspondence address: The Railway Station, Haworth, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 8NJ

Museum telephone 01535 680425; fax 01535 610796. Hon Secretary telephone/daytime fax 01535 646472.

Website: [www.vintagecarriagetrust.org](http://www.vintagecarriagetrust.org) Email: [admin@vintagecarriagetrust.org](mailto:admin@vintagecarriagetrust.org)